

## 33 +/- acres on Sandhill Road

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

### ***Balsam Gardens, LLC***

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Steven Beltram  
8 Phifer St.  
Asheville, NC 28801

steven@balsamgardens.com  
O: 828-713-0450

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# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

33 +/- acres on Sandhill Road

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Balsam Gardens, LLC

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

For-Profit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

*[Unanswered]*

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Acquisition

## Scope of Work

## Project Schedule

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

Sandhill Road

### Parcel Number

962712116900000

### Acreage

33

### Zoning Designation

CI in Asheville City

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$1,633,400.00

## Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$2,125,484.00

## Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$492,084.00

## Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

Mountain True is contributing \$422,484 to the project with a grant from the NC Land and Water Fund for \$382,484 and a grant of \$50,000 from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation for creek bank restoration in order to reduce erosion, protect the watershed, and increase safety on the banks of Hominy Creek, which is a major tributary of the French Broad River. Balsam Gardens, LLC is contributing a permanent conservation easement along the creek banks in support of this project with an estimated value of \$19,600.

Additionally, there is one acre of this property (map attached) that a neighbor, who is an environmental engineer, would like to purchase for \$50,000 because it adjoins their home and it is on the other side of a creek from the rest of the farm. She would like to take over management of that property in order to remove invasive species and restore to native habitat. They are happy and willing to support the green way project through that parcel.

## *Project Summary*

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

The purpose of the project is the acquisition of 33 acres of riparian land consisting of approximately a mile of creek frontage along Hominy Creek by Buncombe County in order to preserve the land as open space, protect

the sensitive watershed, provide safe and easy access to nature for County residents, including low and moderate income residents, as well as ensure the success of the proposed green way.

## *Eligibility*

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### **Eligibility Summary\***

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

The land is entirely within the City of Asheville, Buncombe County. The property could be immediately acquired by the County and the current Landowner could vacate the property by December 31, 2024 after cleaning up the 2024 organic tomato crop. The County would acquire the property and manage the property in perpetuity. There are additional interests in the property that also contribute to maintenance. MSD, Duke Energy, and Dominion Energy all have easements on the property now and contribute to maintenance. Dominion Energy just constructed two very costly walls along Hominy Creek in order to reduce erosion. Additionally, Mountain True has acquired a grant to do a creek bank restoration project. The Landowner is contributing a riparian conservation easement that will be held by River Link. The County green way proposal also includes about a mile of gravel path through the property along Hominy Creek. The proposed maintenance of the future green way by the County can be leveraged to maintain the rest of the property since it would be on the same parcel. The off street parking on the property provides easy access for County staff to maintain other areas of the green way as well.

## *Acquisition Narrative*

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### **Acquisition Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for the acquisition of land for future passive recreation development. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The bond funds will be used to purchase the property by Buncombe County.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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### Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The amount of development surrounding the project over the past decade is astounding. There is almost no contiguous wildlife habitat left in an area. This is a gem of a wildlife corridor in the City of Asheville. The Landowner often spots deer, bears, coyotes, rabbits, groundhogs, raptors, owls, and even bobcats on the property during the course of farming activities.

This property is below the flood plain and much of it is in the flood way. There is about a mile of creek frontage on Hominy Creek, which feeds directly into the French Broad River. Hominy Creek is currently a major source of pollution and turbidity to the French Broad. This is a very sensitive watershed. Protecting a large, long, and wide riparian flood plain on Hominy Creek is imperative to the protection of the French Broad River. Hominy Creek is currently an environmental disaster. Converting this flood prone property from an annual cropping system based on regular tillage and fertilizer applications to perennial plants, grasses, and perhaps trees would reduce sediment and nutrient pollution in the watershed as well as allow the existing native river cane and other native plants to expand population.

This property, with its extensive border along Hominy Creek, is a very important storm water feature that absorbs precipitation and flood waters.

This property is entirely prime agricultural soils that will be protected by this acquisition (soil map attached).

### Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This is an acquisition project and so the entire funding from the Bond would be to add additional open space for public access, recreation and natural resource restoration. It is directly across the street from the land owned by the Enka Youth Sports Organization that already has funding for construction of the Enka Heritage

Trail. Approximately a mile proposed green way expansion is on the property proposed for acquisition by the County.

The current use of the land does not permit public access because it is both private property and federal regulation requires the exclusion of the public on commercial vegetable farms for food safety reasons.

Our overall goal for the restoration project organized by Mountain True is to reduce sediment influx into Hominy Creek by restoring the most severely eroding riverbanks. This work would include restoring 370 linear feet of riverbank with appropriate engineering measures, and thus reduce sediment loading by 106 tons per year collectively. It also includes 720 feet of buffer enhancement to improve buffer quality.

Acquisition of the property from the County and the conversion of the property from an annual tillage management to perennial plants and trees will also reduce sediment entering the watershed. Annual tillage involves exposed soil for a period of time each year.

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The property adjoins two public schools. It is likely that students will spend time on the green way and on the property with their science classes. Riparian lands are one of the most interesting and bio diverse landscapes because it is a location where aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems meet. Already, a local foraging class is planning to spend time on the property this summer. It is a certainty that public ownership of this property will result in more public engagement with the land. The activities that could be organized by local non-profits, schools, governments, etc. are endless. The fact that it is in the City of Asheville means that it is very accessible to the highest population density in the County. As already mentioned, the current landowner observes wildlife on a regular basis.

Mountain True plans to engage with students at Franklin School of Innovation, to teach about watershed stewardship and conservation. They use the river and its banks as an outdoor classroom on a regular basis. The quality of its water is important to the work they do with their students.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

The environmental benefits will be measured by Mountain True. The Riverkeeper, regularly tests and monitors water quality. The data from those activities are recorded and tracked. The restoration project will also have measurable results. The work is being designed by Jennings Environmental, PLLC and overseen by Mountain True.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)*

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### How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?

The applicant will agree to sell the property to the County and ensure that the conservation easement associated with the creek restoration is made effective. The applicant is engaged with the restoration project by communicating directly with Mountain True, River Link, and Jennings Environmental to ensure success of the restoration.

### What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

The applicant sees no major risks or impediments to the proposal.

### Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

The property is available for immediate purchase. The applicant will have to lease the property back from the County to finish the 2024 crop season if the purchase is completed before that time. The environmental engineers are designing the bank restoration project at this time and are expected to commence construction in 2024.

### Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

Balsam Gardens, LLC is the current landowner. The Company will convey a conservation easement. The Company will convey deed of the property to Buncombe County fee simple for an agreed upon price. Mountain True is funding the construction of the restoration project with a grant by the NC Land and Water Fund. The restoration is being designed by Jennings Environmental, PLLC. River Link will hold the conservation easement.

### Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The land was purchased by the current owner from Lucy Crowell who used it with her family in the dairy business. The Applicant believes that the Crowells purchased it from the Enka Plant. The Crowells grew corn and hay on the property. When it was purchased by the current owner it was being leased to a Conventional tomato farmer. The current landowner raised poultry and pigs on the property for three years in order to convert it to Organic and has since produced certified Organic vegetables on the property. The other part of the original farm was sold by Lucy to a developer and is now a 687 apartment unit development called The Farm at Pond Road.

### Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The applicant sees no physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)***

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**Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.**

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

The project is on Sandhill Road in West Asheville in the City limits. The property has an off street parking area that can support a number of cars and could be expanded. The property adjoins two public schools, The Enka Intermediate School and the Franklin School of Innovation. The property adjoins land owned by the Enka Youth Sports Organization where the Enka Heritage Trail segment that has already been funded is and that is connected to the Buncombe County Sports Park. The property has about a mile of the proposed Connect Buncombe Greenway project on it. The property has about a mile of creek frontage on Hominy Creek. The property entrance is directly across the road from Warren Haynes Drive where a Habitat for Humanity development is. The property adjoins thousands of residential units. Over 1,000 of them are multi-family housing. The connectivity that the proposed greenway will provide to this property is almost impossible to measure.

The entrance to this property is on the Mountain Mobility Enka-Candler Trailblazer route.

### **How does the project address public access and use?**

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

The property has an established off street gravel parking area. Whatever amenities that are contemplated for the currently funded portion of the Enka Heritage Trail will be accessible to this project. The main limitation is that there are limited sidewalks in the surrounding area. The entrance to this property adjoins the currently funded portion of the Enka Heritage trail that connects to the Buncombe County Sports Park which has restrooms, water fountains, a frisbee golf course, parking and many other amenities.

### **If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?**

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

This project is accessible by car, bicycle, and foot for a large number of people. The landowner has allowed some of the residents of the adjoining neighborhoods of Biltmore Commons, which is a large adjoining apartment or condominium development and the Enka Hills neighborhood built by Habitat for Humanity to walk and jog on the property on a case by case basis. Those residents access the property by foot. Unfortunately, as a commercial farming operation the landowner has to deny free public access because of federal food safety regulations. The applicant also understands that the community will be able to access the property from the Buncombe County Sports Complex by way of the Enka Heritage Trail. The green way

project will connect this property by trail to large swaths of Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. This property is entirely in the City of Asheville and adjoins thousands of residential units. This project is in a densely developed area.

### **Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.**

The property has off street parking already established and will be part of the County greenway project which must comply with ADA. The entrance to this property is on the Mountain Mobility Trailblazer route.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)***

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### **How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?**

The street entrance to the project is directly across from Warren Haynes Drive, which is a community built by Habitat for Humanity to help provide home ownership to underserved families. The property adjoins two public schools and will provide access to the students and their families. The project is in the City of Asheville which puts it in close proximity to a large diverse population. This entrance to the property is on the Mountain Mobility Enka-Candler Trailblazer route.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

The proximity to so many multi-family housing units and public schools ensures that community members of all backgrounds will have easier access than projects that may be in rural areas of the County.

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

The street entrance to the project is directly across from Warren Haynes Drive, which is a community built by Habitat for Humanity to help provide home ownership to under served families. The property adjoins several other neighborhoods and developments consisting thousands of units that have values well below the county median including multifamily housing, mobile homes, and modular homes.

### **What are the historical or cultural features of the land?**

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

This property is part of the proposed next phase of the Enka Heritage Trail and adjoining the portion that is already funded. It will be connected by the Enka Heritage Trail the historic clock tower close to AB Tech Enka and other historic features of Enka.

### Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

The project has matching funds by Mountain True through the NC Land and Water Fund and will consist of an easement held by River Link. The property is included in the proposed county green way and Enka Heritage Trail.

### How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

The project has off street parking already available and has foot and bicycle access by way of the already funded portion of the Enka Heritage Trail.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

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### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

The project can be included in the plans for management of the green way by the County. The County, local non-profits, and local businesses that have an interest in protecting the water shed, public lands, and the greenway will have easy access and opportunities to help maintain this property. They can organize volunteers to clean up trash, maintain trails, cut down privet, and plant native species.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The restoration project is being designed by Jennings Environmental, PLLC. They were hired by Mountain True and the easement will be held and maintained by River Link.

### Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The construction financials of the restoration project will be managed by Mountain True. The County will manage the acquisition.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

The County will be responsible for long-term maintenance. The applicant has spoken with Thomas Gull and Allison Dains of Buncombe County Parks and Rec who have both expressed support for the project. The applicant assumes that the County will have Parks and Rec manage and maintain the property.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Being that this will be publicly owned property the opportunity for local organizations to participate in management and maintenance of the project will be available at the County's discretion. The applicant does know that Connect Buncombe is proposing construction of a green way along approximate a mile of the property and Connect Enka is a sub group of that organization. The applicant can only assume that these local organizations will engage volunteers to help manage and maintain the greenways and connected properties. Additionally, Mountain True and River Link have an interest in this project as described. They are local non-profit organizations that regularly organize litter clean up and other volunteer opportunities.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

#### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

Acquisition of the property. The costs for the bond are estimated based on an estimate of fair market value of the property. The acquisition will save the County the cost of acquiring an easement for the green way proposed through the property.

#### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

The project has \$420,000 of funding through Mountain True for restoration of the creek bank in order to protect the watershed and increase the safety of the eroding banks. The neighbors would like to purchase 1 acre for their own restoration project. They are supportive of the greenway.

#### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

Fair market value must be rewarded for the acquisition aspect to take place. The current Landowner/Applicant is an active farmer and would use the funds to acquire farm assets elsewhere. The Landowner is willing to negotiate the price.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

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### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

Acquisition of this property will ensure that the county will be able to build the proposed green way because the county will hold title to the property. This property is ideal for public access recreation because of its unique location in the City. The location of this property make is highly accessible to tourists and community members. It is close to many businesses and restaurants that will benefit by public traffic. Being in the city makes it close to public health services and provides easy access for law enforcement and other public services to maintain the safety of the visitors.

The ecosystem benefits of protecting this property are many. This property is very important from a storm water management aspect which is of paramount concern for public safety in this rapidly changing climate. The highly eroded banks of Hominy Creek are a physical danger to people and property. The storm water services this property provides the community are a matter of public safety as climate change leads to more frequent heavy rains and resulting floods.

### Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

Acquisition of this property will ensure the opportunity to build the proposed green way because purchase or eminent domain of an easement will not be required. The County will own the property. Unfortunately the current use of the property by the landowner would be in conflict with public access along the proposed greenway because of federal laws regarding food safety. The landowner is required to exclude the public from the fields without supervision. All guests must sign in at the main office and be accompanied by trained farm personnel during the production season to protect the public from food borne illnesses per federal regulation.

The restoration project along the creek bank is important for the green way proposal as well because the highly eroded banks are a physical danger and often have landslides. The two walls that were already constructed along the creek bank are very expensive mitigations that have already been done to ensure safety and security of the proposed green way trail.

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Thomas Gull, Parks and Recreation, Thomas.gull@buncombecounty.org Allison.Dains, Parks and Recreation, Allison.dains@buncombecounty.org

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)*

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### How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?

The restoration project is very important for safety as mentioned above because the eroding creek bank is a danger to person and property. Additionally, the County will manage the property for safety. The property is located in the City of Asheville. Therefore, this property provides easy and fast access for local fire services, law enforcement, quick access to hospitals and urgent care facilities, and other public services.

### How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?

The property will be owned by the County and therefore County staff and law enforcement will have free access to care for the project.

### How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

The County will have the right to develop rules to reduce such conflict.

### Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.

The County will have the opportunity to develop and signage.

## *Applicant Experience*

---

### Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:

- Time in service
- Staff

- Fiscal Capacity

Owner

### Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

The applicant has been managing the property since 2014. The applicant has maintained an Organic Systems Plan on the property since 2015 and was awarded a USDA Organic Certification in 2018. The applicant has planted pollinator habitat and expanded the riparian buffers on this property since taking over management in 2015. The applicant has used extensive cover cropping and conservation practices to care for and enhance the land and soils.

### Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

Mountain True and River Link are well regarded local organizations. Jennings Environmental, PLLC is a well regarded local environmental engineering firm.

Please note that I could not figure out how to load more than one file into each section below and so could not figure out how to put more than one letter of support into the correct section, etc. And so I loaded files as I could. Please see all attachments and use accordingly. I just uploaded wherever I could and so it is not all filed correctly here.

### Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

### Resumes of Key Staff

## *Budget*

### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

\$1,633,400 is for the purchase of approximately 33 acres. The current owner is negotiable on this price, but does need full fair market value in order to re-invest the funds into other organic farming activities.

The applicant estimates that the property is worth \$50,000 per acre despite the fact that the surrounding properties are valued at multiples higher because it is a highly restricted property per flood zone rules. 67% of the property is in floodway which only leaves 1/3 of the property able to be built on. The owner does speculate that several acres up by the access gate could be removed from the floodway with a FEMA petition because of the way the road, which is basically at base flood elevation, runs perpendicular to Hominy Creek therefore making it impossible for that area to be a passageway for debris. \$50,000 per acre makes the 34.06 acres worth \$1,703,000. The value of the conservation easement granted to River Link is estimated to be \$19,600. The one acre proposed acquisition by the Parris family by their home is estimated to be \$50,000. That leaves the value of the proposed sale to the County of 33 +/- acres \$1,633,400. The NC Land and Water

Fund has contributed \$382,484 and the Dominion Charitable Foundation has contributed \$50,000 which puts the contribution managed by Mountain True to be \$422,484.

## **Project Budget**

Soil Map.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

---

### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

### **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

map.pdf

## **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Letter of support for Sand Hill on MountainTrue Letterhead(4).docx

## **Letters of Support**

Letter of Support - RiverLink.docx

## **Other Documentation**

UPDATED 9-14-22 2022-422 - MT - Hominy Creek Reach 1\_Application\_UPDATED.docx.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

---

### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Soil Map.pdf
- map.pdf
- Letter of support for Sand Hill on MountainTrue Letterhead(4).docx
- Letter of Support - RiverLink.docx
- UPDATED 9-14-22 2022-422 - MT - Hominy Creek Reach  
1\_Application\_UPDATED.docx.pdf

Soil Map—Buncombe County, North Carolina



Map Scale: 1:6,720 if printed on A landscape (11" x 8.5") sheet.

0 50 100 200 300 Meters

0 300 600 1200 1800 Feet

Map projection: Web Mercator Corner coordinates: WGS84 Edge tics: UTM Zone 17N WGS84



## MAP LEGEND

### Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

### Soils

 Soil Map Unit Polygons

 Soil Map Unit Lines

 Soil Map Unit Points

### Special Point Features



Blowout



Borrow Pit



Clay Spot



Closed Depression



Gravel Pit



Gravelly Spot



Landfill



Lava Flow



Marsh or swamp



Mine or Quarry



Miscellaneous Water



Perennial Water



Rock Outcrop



Saline Spot



Sandy Spot



Severely Eroded Spot



Sinkhole



Slide or Slip



Sodic Spot



Spoil Area



Stony Spot



Very Stony Spot



Wet Spot



Other



Special Line Features

### Water Features



Streams and Canals

### Transportation



Rails



Interstate Highways



US Routes



Major Roads



Local Roads

### Background



Aerial Photography

## MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:12,000.

**Warning:** Soil Map may not be valid at this scale.

Enlargement of maps beyond the scale of mapping can cause misunderstanding of the detail of mapping and accuracy of soil line placement. The maps do not show the small areas of contrasting soils that could have been shown at a more detailed scale.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Web Soil Survey URL:

Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Buncombe County, North Carolina

Survey Area Data: Version 21, Sep 13, 2023

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Apr 1, 2022—May 9, 2022

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

## Map Unit Legend

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
BeA	Biltmore loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2.2	7.3%
CuD	Clifton-Urban land complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes	0.0	0.1%
DrB	Dillard loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes, rarely flooded	12.2	40.4%
IoA	Iotta loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	8.1	26.6%
RsA	Rosman fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	4.1	13.7%
StB	Statler loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes, rarely flooded	0.6	2.1%
UhE	Udorthents-Urban land complex, 2 to 50 percent slopes	0.3	1.0%
W	Water	2.7	8.9%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>30.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





Subject: Letter of Support for Selling Sandhill Property to the County for Open Space Bond

3/18/24

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of MountainTrue to express our wholehearted support for the sale of the Balsam Gardens, LLC property on Sandhill Road to the county for the purpose of preserving it as open space. The protection of this property is paramount for several reasons, including the potential recreation corridor by connecting this property with the Buncombe County sports complex, its significant conservation and environmental impact, the need to mitigate the effects of extensive development in the surrounding area, and the preservation of vital wildlife corridors.

Recreation Corridor:

This property is unique because it is about a mile in length and owned by one landowner right on the banks of Hominy Creek. This corridor is listed for a future greenway and provides recreation connection to the upstream Buncombe County sport Park. It is a rare opportunity to add so much property to the greenway system at one time.

The Sandhill property plays a crucial role in maintaining the health of our watershed. Its preservation is essential to safeguarding water quality, supporting biodiversity, and mitigating the adverse effects of urbanization on our natural environment. As part of our ongoing efforts, we have already initiated a watershed project aimed at restoring over a mile of eroding stream banks and improving stormwater pollution.

Costs and Leveraged Funding:

We are pleased to note that substantial progress has been made in securing funding for the preservation of the Sandhill property. With a grant of \$420,000 already secured, coupled with contributions from the landowner in the form of matching resources such as a conservation easement, we are well on our way to ensuring the long-term protection of this invaluable resource. These funds will not only facilitate land acquisition but also cover the

29 North Market Street, Suite 610 Asheville, NC 28801 828.258.8737  
121 Third Ave. West, Suite #1 Hendersonville, NC 28792 828.692.0385  
90 Tennessee St. Suite D Murphy, NC 28906 828.837.5414  
164 South Depot Street Boone, NC 28607 828.719.7624  
[mountaintrue.org](http://mountaintrue.org)

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE MEMBER



costs associated with ongoing management and maintenance, thus ensuring the sustainability of the project.

In conclusion, we urge the county to consider the purchase of the Sandhill property as a strategic investment in the preservation of our natural resources for future generations. By acting decisively now, we can ensure that this invaluable asset remains intact, serving as a testament to our shared commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable development.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Hartwell Carson  
French Broad Riverkeeper  
MountainTrue

29 North Market Street, Suite 610 Asheville, NC 28801 828.258.8737  
121 Third Ave. West, Suite #1 Hendersonville, NC 28792 828.692.0385  
90 Tennessee St. Suite D Murphy, NC 28906 828.837.5414  
164 South Depot Street Boone, NC 28607 828.719.7624  
[mountaintrue.org](http://mountaintrue.org)

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE MEMBER



Subject: Letter of Support for the Purchase of the Balsam Gardens, LLC Property on Sand Hill Road by Buncombe County through the Open Space Bond.

3/25/24

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of RiverLink, I am writing to express our full support for the sale of the Balsam Gardens, LLC property, located on Sand Hill Road, to Buncombe County for the purpose of preserving the property as open space. By acquiring this property, the County would be protecting 34 acres of floodplain and nearly a mile of stream frontage for Hominy Creek, a significantly impaired stream in the French Broad River Watershed. In addition, the acquisition of this property would give the County a foothold to expand their greenway system in a priority corridor.

The Enka Heritage Trail is planned to extend directly across Sand Hill Rd. from the Balsam Gardens, LLC property. By acquiring this property, the County would have a strong foundation to extend the Enka Heritage Trail eastward, to eventually connect to the future Brevard Rd. greenway, when resources allow. This corridor has been identified as a priority as part of the Buncombe County Trails Master Plan and would add a significant recreational resource to the County. In addition to the opportunity to add another mile to the greenway system in one purchase, this property has considerable potential for passive recreation.

RiverLink has a rich history of protecting and restoring riverside parcels and transforming them into parks, as the benefits of passive recreational greenspace in a floodplain are numerous. Some of these benefits include: flood and stormwater runoff mitigation, protecting water quality, supporting biodiversity and wildlife habitat, and preventing development along our waterways. The protection of this property would support all of these environmental benefits and in addition, it would enhance greenway connectivity and create a natural resource for Enka/Candler residents to enjoy.

RiverLink is currently partnering with MountainTrue on a stream restoration project on this property in which we will hold the required conservation easement to protect the restoration in perpetuity. With \$420,000 in grant funding secured by MountainTrue and the support from the landowner in establishing a conservation easement, we have made great progress in protecting this critical natural resource.

The funds from the Passive Recreation Bond will not only facilitate the acquisition of the land, but also cover the costs associated with ongoing management and maintenance, thus ensuring the sustainability

of the project.

We urge Buncombe County to consider the acquisition of the Balsam Gardens, LLC property as a strategic investment in the protection of our natural resources. By acting decisively now, we can ensure that this invaluable asset contributes to our shared commitments of environmental stewardship, sustainable development, and equitable access to the outdoors.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact us if you require any additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,



Hannah Coats  
Land Resources Manager  
RiverLink



170 Lyman Street, Asheville, NC 28801 | [hannah@riverlink.org](mailto:hannah@riverlink.org) | (828) 252-8474



## 2022-422 - MT - Hominy Creek Reach 1

Request: \$382,484 | Match: \$19600 | 1090ft

### Buncombe County

## SECTION 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

**Organization Name:** MountainTrue

**Organization Type:** Non-profit

**Contract Administrator:** Hartwell Carson, French Broad Riverkeeper

29 N MARKET ST  
610  
Asheville NC 28801

hartwell@mountaintrue.org | 8282588737212

**Project Manager:** Anna Alsobrook, Watershed Outreach Coordinator

anna@mountaintrue.org | 8282588737212

**Contract Signee:** ,

**Fiscal Year of Applicant/Contract Administrator**

January 1 - December 31 (Calendar/Annual)

**Correction Context (after June 15)**

# SECTION 2 - PROJECT INFORMATION

## 2.1 - Project Name

Hominy Creek Restoration Phase 1

## 2.2 – Duration

12-24

## 2.3 - Primary County

Buncombe

## 2.4 - Other County

## 2.5 - Project Coordinates

Lat/ Long: 35.544045, -82.630913

## 2.6 - Nearest Town

Asheville, NC

## 2.7 - Total Request

\$382,484

## 2.8 - Total Match

\$19,600

## 2.9 - Total Budget

\$402,084

## 2.7 - Project Description & Need

Sediment is the number one pollutant to the French Broad watershed. Transporting toxins, smothering aquatic habitats, and increasing water temperatures, sediment has a negative effect on our water quality. It comes from different sources- eroding riverbanks and poor land management. The impacts of these sediment sources are exacerbated by increasing development in the region and more frequent, intense rain events caused by climate change.

Sediment in Hominy Creek, especially, is a major concern. Bare banks reach 10-20 feet tall, continuously dumping sediment into the creek. We can see its impact by the turbidity data from a USGS gauge located downstream, where it spikes on a regular basis. All of this sediment is polluting Hominy Creek, but is also washing downstream to the French Broad right above one of the most recreated stretches of the river.

Clean water is a major component of MountainTrue's organizational mission. The sole goal of the French Broad Riverkeeper program within MountainTrue is ensuring safe and healthy waterways in the French Broad River watershed. Based on MountainTrue's long-term water quality monitoring efforts, Hominy Creek is one of the most polluted tributaries in the French Broad River basin. Located west of Asheville, the stream is consistently turbid.

We have paddled and/or walked every reach of Hominy Creek, and decided to focus our 2021 NCLWF planning grant on a 1.75-mile reach that is one of the most eroded along the entire creek. Through our 2021 planning grant, we developed a plan to address the specific water quality impairment of sedimentation in Hominy Creek and prioritized critical areas for restoration.

We have identified four potential restoration projects as Phase 1, with several more projects to propose in the coming years. All four of these projects are on one landowner's property, who owns one mile of riverbank and has agreed to work with us. We plan to address two of these projects with this 2022 NCLWF Restoration grant. Dominion Energy will address the other two projects, as those degraded sections are near to their oil pipeline.

Restoration on these two project sites would include toe wood revetment, boulder toe protection with soil geolifts, erosion control matting, and vegetation restoration.

## **2.8 - Causes of Impairment**

Coupling poor land management with increasing development, and flashy rain events has led to major erosive forces within the Hominy Creek watershed. Upstream of these project sites is a mix of farmland and urban development; while downstream is mostly urban. We have been studying and monitoring this creek closely for more than seven years, documenting its water quality issues. Sediment from these banks is a major contributing factor to its poor water quality.

Hominy Creek is recently listed on the State's Draft 303d list of impaired waters for fecal coliform, but turbidity is a major player in the Creek's sources of pollution also. Data from the USGS gauge about 6 miles downstream show routine spikes in turbidity, well over the State standard. With nearby development underway, and more planned in the near future, sediment influx to Hominy Creek is likely to only get worse. Working with willing landowners now is vital to improving the creek's water quality.

In prior years, we planted thousands of live-stakes as a low-cost means to mitigate the banks in some areas. This effort didn't work, however, as the banks are too steep. We believe we can facilitate actual water quality improvements for Hominy by restoring the most severely eroding riverbanks with proper engineering practices, thus, improving its waters and surrounding ecosystem for the long term.

## **2.9 - Project Location**

Hominy Creek's headwaters start near Canton, NC, flowing down towards west Asheville. Land use is a mix of farming, industry, rural and urban development. Our proposed restoration projects take place within City of Asheville limits, on a property near the juncture of Sand Hill Rd. and Idle Hour Dr. All two restoration projects will take place on one property—a farm located immediately downstream of the Sand Hill Road Bridge on the river-left side of the creek. These banks are some of the most egregious in the stretch, and we plan to start with these projects first.

There is a Dominion-owned gas line on this same property that is in danger of damage from severe erosion. Dominion is planning to restore this section of bank this fall. These sections are labeled as Project 1 and Project 2 in our attachments. We have met with them and discussed our proposed projects.

### **2.10.A - Type of Work**

	<b>Reach Name(s)</b>	<b>Linear Feet</b>	<b>Acres (if applicable)</b>
<b>Restoration</b>	Hominy Creek	370	
Enhancement	Hominy Creek	720	
Stabilization			
<b>Wetland/floodplain restoration</b>			
<b>Stream length protected by easement only</b>			
Other			

**2.10.B - 'Other' Type of Work Explained**

**2.10.C - Total Linear Feet**

1090

**2.10.D - Total Acres**

**2.11.A - Scope of Work**

Consult with relevant permitting and regulatory agencies, Draft and complete engineering designs and plans, Secure all required local, State, and Federal permits, Secure conservation agreements on riparian areas, Construct project per engineering design and plans, Secure Stewardship Agreement, Manage the project in total and report to the Fund, Develop educational features, Develop Maintenance Plan

**2.11.B - Scope of Work Additional**

**2.12 - Scope of Work Complication(s)/Special Notes**

**2.13 - Water Quality Objectives**

Our overall goal is to reduce sediment influx into Hominy Creek by restoring the most severely eroding riverbanks. This work would include restoring 370 linear feet of riverbank with appropriate engineering measures, and thus reduce sediment loading by 106 tons per year collectively. It also includes 720 feet of buffer enhancement to improve buffer quality. We also plan to engage with students at Franklin School of Innovation, to teach about watershed stewardship and conservation. They use the river and its banks as an outdoor classroom on a regular basis. The quality of its water is important to the work they do with their students.

Working with the biggest landowner in this reach, this grant will set the foundation of restoration practices in the area, as well as be a telling visual to other landowners in the stretch. As a farmer with over a mile of riverbank, he wishes to see the quality of the watershed improve for the future.

### **2.14 - Methods to Achieve Water Quality Objectives**

The Creek is too flashy and the riverbanks are too vertical for live stakes to take root before winter and spring rains wash them out. Our engineers have made appropriate measurements and plans to fix these eroding project areas.

### **2.15 - Review Team**

Greg Jennings, PhD, PE, Principal Engineer for Jennings Environmental  
Zan Price, PE, Engineer for Jennings Environmental

### **2.16 - Easement Holder**

We have gotten a verbal pre-agreement from Riverlink, who is an accredited land trust with Land Trust Alliance. Jack Henderson is our point of contact with Riverlink on this project.

## **SECTION 3 - ADDITIONAL PUBLIC BENEFITS**

### **3.1 - Recreational Uses and Public Access**

No recreational component

### **3.2 - Recreational Use & Public Access Explained**

### **3.3 - Public or Scientific Education**

Active promotion of an organized educational effort open to public educational institutions.

### **3.4 - Public and/or Scientific Education Explained**

We will partner with Franklin School of Innovation students to teach about water quality and conservation.

### **3.5 - Establishment of Riparian Greenway**

No greenway to be developed.

### 3.6 - Riparian Greenway Explained

### 3.7 - Location Relative to Existing Public Drinking Water Supply

Project watershed is not within 5 stream miles upstream of an existing public water supply

## SECTION 4 - RESOURCE SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 - Receiving Waters

	Name of Receiving Water	Waterbody Classification (DWR
1	Hominy Creek	C
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

### 4.2 - Aquatic Habitat

### 4.3 - Protection or Improvement of Waters with Special Uses

### 4.4 - Water Supply Proximity Details

## SECTION 5 - PROJECT DETAILS

### 5.1 - Regulatory Mandates

### 5.2 - Proximity to Other Water Quality or Conservation Projects

	Name	Type of Project	Stream Miles	Upstream/Downstream
1				
2				
3				

### 5.3 - Local Measures to Protect Water Quality

Local measures include stormwater management program, ordinances, and/or planning; and local buffer, wetland and/or floodplain protection ordinances.

### 5.4 - Ordinances Protecting Waterbodies

Both Asheville and Buncombe County have stormwater management programs, aimed at controlling the impacts of stormwater runoff. The City of Asheville recently created a Stormwater Taskforce that is intimately reviewing the City's ordinance, infrastructure, and other policies. They are currently making recommendations on how to improve Asheville's current stormwater system.

### 5.5 - Expected Land Use Change

Moderate rate of change is expected.

### 5.6 - Development Pressure in Watershed

There is significant development pressure in this watershed. Increased development all over the greater Asheville area, has put tremendous pressure on any and all available open land. These project sites sit on land that is in floodway, so development of these particular sites is unlikely, but any open land in Asheville and Buncombe County is currently under extreme development pressure.

### 5.7 - Conservation/Basin-wide Plan Coverage

Yes

### 5.8 - How does the plan mention/support your project?

Type generally supports the goals of a surface water plan as defined above

### 5.9.A - Plan Information

1)	2015 NC Wildlife Action Plan	NC Wildlife Resources Commission, 2015	548
----	------------------------------	----------------------------------------	-----

2)			
----	--	--	--

**5.9.B - Plan Details – Context**

Page 543 of the 2015 North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan states "Sedimentation and turbidity are more or less chronic problems in most of the larger streams in the lower elevations of the Asheville watershed and surrounding area, including the mainstem French Broad River." The French Broad Riverkeeper is listed as a potential partner for future cooperative efforts on page 548.

**5.9.C - Plan Screenshot**

[Screenshot\\_2022-01-27\\_113740.png \(401 KB\)](#)

**5.10.A - Site Conditions**

Laterally unstable, Excessive Sediment Supply, Bank Erosion, Degraded riparian buffer,

**5.10.B - Site Conditions Other Explained**

**5.11.A - Restoration Approaches**

Bench construction, Riparian buffer plantings, Removal of invasive species, Geolifts, Instream Structures, Toe Wood,

**5.11.B - Restoration Approaches Other Explained**

Minimum 50-ft native buffer throughout restoration and enhancement reaches.

720 feet of buffer enhancement includes adding trees and shrubs along streambanks that are not restored to enhance buffer quality.

Plantings will include diverse community of grasses, shrubs, and trees in the form of live stakes, bare root seedlings, and containers to provide optimal early success.

**5.12.A - Plan and Design Status**

An existing conditions survey of the project site has been completed, a reference site has been identified and conceptual plans have been developed (Plans and specifications are not ready).

**5.12.B - Current Plan/Designs/Survey Upload**

[Hominy Creek maps 011022\\_1.pdf \(6.16 MB\)](#)

### 5.13 - Project Maintenance Org

MountainTrue

### 5.14 - Water Quality Monitoring

MountainTrue will take turbidity measurements pre and post restoration work. We will also monitor the turbidity data from the USGS gauge on Hominy Creek on a regular basis. We plan to engage students from Franklin School of Innovation for some of these monitoring efforts.

## SECTION 6 - EFFECTIVENESS & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

### 6.1 - Ecological Uplift Option Used: **Option A - Sediment Load Transport Reduction**

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#### **OPTION A - Sediment Load Reduction to Predict Uplift**

##### **6A.1 - Estimated annual sediment load reduction (tons/year)**

Project 1 (Dominion Energy) - 71 tons/year

Project 2 (Dominion Energy) - 41 tons/year

Project 3 - 47 tons/year

Project 4 - 59 tons/year

##### **6A.2 - Annual Sediment Load Calculation Explained**

BANCS was used to estimate annual lateral erosion rate based on BEHI and NBS. The lateral erosion rate was multiplied by bank height and the length of eroding bank to determine annual erosion volume which was multiplied by soil density to determine annual mass erosion rate.

##### **6A.3 - Other pollutant reduction, if applicable.**

---

#### **OPTION B - Ecological Uplift Model to Predict Effectiveness**

##### **6B.1 - Ecological Uplift Option – Explained**

### 6B.2 - Uplift Data Results

	Reach name/number	Reach Length (ft)	Present Habitat Condition	Predicted post-project condition
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

### 6B.3 - Additional Uplift/Reaches

### 6B.4 - Uplift Data Upload

## SECTION 7 - BUDGET

### 7.1 - Budget Upload

[REST\\_app\\_budget\\_2022.pdf \(674 KB\)](#)

### 7.1.UC - Updated/Corrected Budget Upload (after June 15)

[Updated\\_2022\\_NCLWF\\_Budget.pdf \(953 KB\)](#)

### 7.2 - Costs Incurred Before Award

## SECTION 8 - UPLOADS & AFFIRMATION

**Location Map**

[Planning\\_stretch\\_hominy\\_map\\_1.pdf \(319 KB\)](#)

**Project Map 1**

[Hominy\\_Creek\\_maps\\_011022.pdf \(6.16 MB\)](#)

**Project Map 2****Shapefile****Letter of Intent****Other Attachment**

[FSI\\_Letter\\_of\\_Support.pdf \(54 KB\)](#)

**Grant Withdrawal Acknowledgement**

Yes, applicant commits to entering into a construction contract within one year of the award date.

**Affirmation of Application Contents**

I affirm the above statement.

**Name of Affirming Party**

Anna Alsobrook

# Deaverview Mountain

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy***

---

Michelle Pugliese  
372 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

Kristy@appalachian.org  
O: 8282530095

## ***Michelle Pugliese***

---

372 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

michelle@appalachian.org  
O: 8282530095 x207

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Deaverview Mountain

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC)

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

Although not a co-applicant, SAHC is partnering with Buncombe County on this project. Buncombe County will be the future owner and long-term manager of the public park.

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Acquisition

## Scope of Work

Scope of Work\_Buncombe Bond PRL\_Deaverview Mtn.docx

## Project Schedule

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

99999 Mariposa Way, Asheville, NC 28801

### Parcel Number

961859466200000, 961887421300000 and 961887338800000

### Acreage

345

### Zoning Designation

R-LD (Low-Density Residential District)

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$1,000,000.00

## Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$8,950,000.00

## Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$7,950,000.00

## Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

The following matching funding sources are either secured or pending for this project:

1. North Carolina Land and Water Fund - \$4,250,000 (acquisition) + \$122,130 (transaction costs, administration and stewardship). Grant funds are secured.
2. Private philanthropic donor - \$1,000,0000 (acquisition). Grant funds are secured.
3. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program - \$2,700,000 (acquisition). Pending, grant application due 4/3/24.

## Project Summary

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

This grant will unlock other funding sources to enable SAHC to purchase the 345-acre Deaverview Mountain property, in order to create a new public park. SAHC will transfer the property to Buncombe County, who will be the long-term owner and manager of the park. It will be the county's largest park, and the only immersive nature experience for the surrounding communities. Deaverview Mountain's peak is visible throughout

Asheville. It contains a network of trails leading to a stunning 180-degree view of the city and surrounding mountains. The park will provide passive outdoor recreation opportunities including hiking, nature viewing and picnicking. The property's urban location will serve lower income populations that have limited or no access to hiking or long-range scenic views of this quality. With the nearest bus stop only 1/4 mile away, and the potential to extend the bus line to Deaverview Mountain, this project will increase equitable access for people without personal transportation. Deaverview Mountain is the last large undeveloped tract in West Asheville. The bond funds will leverage federal, state and private grants to purchase the property. The purchase will save it from development, protect wildlife habitat and water quality, and create the county's largest public park to date in a location that is absent public recreation opportunities of this scale. Users of the park will include the neighboring community, Asheville residents, and visitors to Buncombe County.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

The Deaverview Mountain project meets all of the following eligibility criteria:

- The Bond funds will be used for fee simple acquisition of the land.
- The project is located within Buncombe County.
- The project timeline will allow the Bond funds to be allocated to the land acquisition before the 2030 Bond schedule. SAHC must purchase the land by March 2026 to fulfill its option to purchase contract.
- SAHC will own the property for the short term (a period of time estimated to be less than one year), and then transfer it to Buncombe County. If SAHC owns the property for more than one year, it will complete a Land Management Plan. The county will be responsible for the long-term management and maintenance of the property.
- Under SAHC's ownership, the public will be invited to the property when accompanied by SAHC staff for guided hikes and outings. After it is transferred to Buncombe County, the property will become a public park.
- SAHC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1974.

## Acquisition Narrative

### Acquisition Narrative

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for the acquisition of land for future passive recreation development. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

This Bond funding is needed to demonstrate local commitment to the project, which will unlock federal, state and private grants to purchase of the Deaverview Mountain property. SAHC will own the property temporarily, for an estimated period of less than one year, until Buncombe County is able to acquire the land from SAHC and create a public park. The park will feature passive recreation opportunities, including hiking, nature viewing and picnicking.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The project will protect natural resources on Deaverview Mountain, including priority waterways, native forests and wildlife habitat. The NC Natural Heritage Program created a state-designated Deaverview Mountain Natural Area (Rank: Very High) on the property. Approximately 337 acres are forested, and about 6.5 acres consist of two open scenic viewpoints. The forest communities are dominated by Montane Oak-Hickory Forests, Low Montane Red Oak Forest, and Chestnut Oak Forests, with small patches of Rich Cove Forest. The Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment ranking is moderately high for a majority of the property. There are several nonnative invasive species, including a large patch of kudzu at the scenic viewpoints. SAHC and Buncombe County will manage and control the invasive species, contributing to the enhancement of natural communities onsite. There are 16 headwater streams that originate onsite, totaling nearly three linear stream miles. These streams feed three tributaries of the French Broad River, a major watershed in Western North Carolina. Smith Mill Creek, which is a 303(d) Impaired waterbody, plus nine additional headwater tributaries of Smith Mill Creek, originate on the property. It is a priority of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of North Carolina to protect the state's impaired streams. The park will contain interpretive education features, and both SAHC and the county will educate the public through press and social media.

## Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

The Deaverview Mountain project will acquire new land that will become a public county park. The park will feature passive recreation, including hiking, nature viewing and picnicking. There are two existing scenic views available on the property. The primary viewshed is at the 3,100-foot peak on top of the mountain and provides stunning panoramic views from Bearwallow Mountain to Craggy Knob. The secondary scenic view looks west to Mount Pisgah and Pisgah View State Park. In addition, there are several opportunities for natural resource restoration. Management of the kudzu in the existing open areas will allow native species, including pollinators such as milkweed for monarch butterflies, to expand onsite. In 2023, a wildfire burned a portion of Deaverview Mountain. Much of the impact was outside the proposed park boundary on an adjacent property. In order to control the spread of the fire, the firefighters bulldozed a firebreak on the northeast side of the property. This area will be restabilized and revegetated as feasible.

The property is not adjacent to existing open space due to its location in the urban corridor of Asheville. The purchase and protection of Deaverview Mountain will fill a notable absence of protected land in an urban and disadvantaged community. Due to the large size of the property, its protection will stand alone to enhance landscape-scale habitat and resource protection. SAHC is in the process of protecting a nearby tract of land.

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The purchase of Deaverview Mountain will provide multiple opportunities to educate the public about the property's conservation and wildlife protection. SAHC will publicize the acquisition in our newsletter and social media, and through press releases shared with local, regional and statewide media outlets. In addition, SAHC will feature the property in our public outings program by hosting guided hikes and gatherings on the property. We have already engaged with several educational programs, including Muddy Sneakers (The Joy of Learning Outdoors) and the nearby Johnston Elementary School, to allow children and teachers to use the property as an outdoor classroom. When the land is transferred to Buncombe County and opened as a public park, there will be amenities to educate the public about the protection of the land, and the natural resource found onsite.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

The success of the project will be measured by the successful fee simple acquisition of the land itself. When SAHC closes on the purchase of the property, a state-held conservation easement will be placed on the majority of the property as a requirement of the grant awarded by the NC Land and Water Fund. This belt and suspenders process of ownership by SAHC and a state-held conservation easement will eliminate the threat of development and ensure the permanent conservation of the property. There may be opportunities during SAHC's short-term ownership of the property to partner with organizations or individuals to conduct biological inventories and monitoring for native species. These activities will continue to document the type and distribution of natural resources protected through the acquisition.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

SAHC and Buncombe County are partnering to collaboratively raise funds for SAHC to purchase the property by March 2026. SAHC has received funding commitments of \$4,250,000 from the North Carolina Land and Water Fund, and \$1,000,000 from a private philanthropic donor, both of which will be applied to the purchase. SAHC and Buncombe County have partnered with the State of North Carolina to apply to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program for \$2,700,000. If that grant is not approved, we will continue to seek public and private grants in order to purchase the property. SAHC has obtained a vote of approval from its Board of Trustees to purchase the property and transfer it to Buncombe County for a public park. SAHC received accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2008, demonstrating SAHC's commitment to upholding the high standards of the Land Trust Standards and Practices. SAHC has protected over 80,000 acres since 1974, and currently owns 116 preserves and monitors 187 conservation easements annually, which demonstrates our ability to manage the scope of this land purchase.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

The greatest risk to the acquisition phase of the project is not raising the full funding to purchase the property. However, over half of the acquisition funds have already been firmly committed and the remaining funds are being sought through this Bond application and the LWCF Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program. We have received verbal support from both funding sources and have a high degree of confidence that these funds will be approved. If either of these grants are not fully funded, SAHC and Buncombe County will continue to seek public and private grants to raise the acquisition funds. Other factors that may impede the project timeline are a lack of support or outright opposition from the local community to the project. However, Buncombe County has initiated a public engagement process and the initial results, although small in scale, have demonstrated overwhelming support in the local community of creating a public park on Deaverview Mountain.

### **Please describe the readiness of the project.**

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

The Deaverview Mountain property was listed on the market for \$10 million in 2023. As a leading land trust in the region, SAHC was contacted by multiple organizations and concerned individuals to step in and save the mountain. SAHC enlisted the support of a conservation-minded individual to purchase the property and take it off the market. That individual (Deaverview Mountain LLC) was able to purchase it at a reduced price and is holding it until SAHC and Buncombe County can raise the funds to purchase it to become a public park. SAHC has entered into a three-year option agreement with Deaverview Mountain LLC to raise the funds to purchase the property and conduct necessary due diligence. The timeline to completion is for SAHC to purchase the property by March 2026, at which time the State-held conservation easement and Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions will be recorded. If all of the funds cannot be delivered by March 2026, SAHC will consider converting the option to a loan in order to extend the project timeline. However, it is the goal to complete the purchase by the end of the option period. The timeline of the park's grand opening to the public, based on Buncombe County's projected planning process, is 2029.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

The project partners are:

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) - Fundraising for the fee simple purchase of the property. Purchase and own the property for the short-term (estimated to be less than one year). Manage as a nature preserve. Monitor the state-held conservation easement for the long-term.

Buncombe County - Fundraising for the fee simple purchase. Conduct public engagement and park planning.

Future phases: Acquire the property from SAHC for long-term maintenance and management as a public park, and conduct a parkwide trail assessment.

State of North Carolina - Place a conservation easement and Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions over the property.

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The Deaverview Mountain property has been undeveloped forested land for its recent history. The previous owner did not live on the property and allowed local residents to hike to the viewpoint. This was a popular hiking destination for Asheville locals for decades due to the convenience of its urban location, and the stunning panoramic scenic views offered at the top. The previous owner then planned to build a 20,000-square foot mansion in front of the scenic viewpoint, and suspended hiking permission. The owner's plan then shifted to market the property for sale as a residential development, for which a subdivision plat was prepared and approved. One site was graded and cleared, presumably for a spec home, and a gravel road was improved to that location. No additional site preparations were completed before the conservation-minded buyer purchased the land.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The physical aspects of the property will support, rather than impact, the project completion. The forested communities, aquatic resources, wildlife habitat and topographic features highlight the proposed use of the property as a public park. These natural features have enabled the project to receive critical funding for SAHC to purchase the property.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways

- **Public Transportation**

To property can be accessed by vehicle on the state-maintained Deaverview Road. The nearest public bus stop is approximately 1/4 mile south of the property entrance. Buncombe County will assess the possibility of extending the bus line to add a stop at Deaverview Mountain in order to make the park more accessible. Due to its urban location in a disadvantaged community, there are no greenways in the vicinity that connect to the site. From Deaverview Road, there is a graded and well-maintained gravel road that enters the southeast side of the property and ascends approximately halfway up the mountain. At that point the road becomes an all-wheel drive double-track soil road leading to the center of the property, then running along the central spine of the property. A network of single-track hiking trails extend across the property from the central soil road.

## How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

SAHC will be the short-term owner of the property for an anticipated time of one year, to enable all of the grant funding sources to be administered and received. SAHC has an outings program through which we provide experiences on protected land that are available to the public. These outings are limited in number and are accompanied by SAHC staff and/or SAHC's AmeriCorps Associate(s). During SAHC's ownership, we will highlight the Deaverview Mountain property in our outings program with guided hikes and other activities such as picnics, yoga, birdwatching and more. After the property is transferred to Buncombe County, there may be a period of time during which the county is preparing the property for full public access as a park. Under Buncombe County's ownership, the park may be available to rent for private events. The future management of the property as a public park will include restrooms, a parking area, drinking fountains, benches, picnic tables and wildlife/scenery viewing platforms. There currently is one composting toilet and two picnic tables at the top of the property.

## If the project is in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The property is located within the heart of the Deaverview community and 1.5 miles from the Deaverview Apartments public housing, managed by the Asheville Housing Authority. The residential neighborhoods and businesses in the vicinity of the southern end of the property are economically disadvantaged, with poverty levels higher than the national, statewide and county-wide levels. There are no sidewalks along Deaverview Road where it approaches the property. There is a public bus line that stops approximately 1/4 mile south of the property boundary. This line may be extended in the future to add a stop at the property, which would become the only public access point for the community to reach an outdoor recreation site.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

SAHC and Buncombe County are assessing the needs and amenities that would enhance visitation opportunities for people with disabilities. SAHC has been in conversation with a Buncombe County resident who is a conservation supporter and outdoor recreation enthusiast, who is confined to a wheelchair. He has offered to advise SAHC and Buncombe County on helping to bring the property into ADA compliance.

Currently, there is a well-maintained gravel road leading halfway up the mountain. The current condition of the soil road beyond the gravel requires a high-clearance vehicle. If a vehicle can transport the equipment needed by people with disabilities to the central soil road at the property's ridgeline, the path to the primary scenic viewpoint is relatively flat and can be improved for ADA access. Future planning and design considerations by the county will be completed with the goal of making the park ADA compliant.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)***

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### **How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?**

SAHC and Buncombe County are currently working with multiple partners to learn about ways to collaboratively promote diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) on Deaverview Mountain. SAHC's Equity and Education Manager engages with organizations that have DEI missions. One such partner is Pathways to Parks, whose mission is to motivate Americans of color to get outdoors and enjoy the benefits of nature in our national, state and local parks and to help make it easy and accessible for them to do so. Another partner is Color My Outdoors, whose mission is to change the outdoor narrative to celebrate all people of color and move towards a future where people of all colors are recognized and revered as outdoor enthusiasts. These groups have already accompanied SAHC to Deaverview Mountain, and we will continue to explore these and other DEI connections to support an inclusive future for the project. In addition, Buncombe County has created a Communication and Public Engagement Plan to engage with the neighborhoods within the Deaverview community, and with stakeholders such as the Deaverview Housing Development, nearby religious organizations, and other nonprofits.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

Yes, the Deaverview Mountain property serves a disadvantaged community. According to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, the Deaverview census block (25.06) qualifies as disadvantaged and is in the 94th percentile for low income households. Buncombe County has participated in two events at the Deaverview Apartments, during which the Deaverview Mountain project was shared with its residents. In addition, SAHC has engaged with Johnston Elementary School, a public school located less than two miles from the property. 99% of Johnston students are enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program, far exceeding the state average of 61%. SAHC and Johnston Elementary are collaborating to create an outdoors club at the school that will use Deaverview Mountain as its neighborhood hiking and exploring destination.

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

Yes, the Deaverview Apartments is an existing Asheville Housing Authority public housing community located 1.5 miles east of the Deaverview Mountain property. It contains containing 160 family housing units that are available to families earning 60% or less of the region's median income. In addition, there are many individual low-income residences in close proximity to Deaverview Mountain along Deaverview Road. According to 2022 Census data, the Deaverview area contains more than triple the percentage of mobile homes as compared to the City of Asheville and more than double the percentage in Buncombe County.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

There is some historical and cultural significance on the north-adjointing Spivey Mountain, which lies less than one half mile along the same ridgeline running north from Deaverview Mountain. This was the site of the Spivey Fire Lookout Tower. The tower was constructed in 1928 as a 35-foot steel tower. This was one of the first steel fire lookout towers built in North Carolina. The original tower has since been removed and its top was relocated to Holmes Educational State Forest in Henderson County. It is on display along the Crab Creek Trail along with several other historical monuments of North Carolina's fire fighting history. The site of the tower also holds cultural significance. It currently contains the radio tower for WBMU FM, located at 91.3 on the radio dial. WBMU stands for "Where Black Meets Unity" and is a Black owned and operated radio station. The radio station began in 1974 for the sole purpose "to address the informational and musical needs of the Black community in this Western North Carolina city with Pride and Unity!". This radio station still operates today, utilizing the tower on the adjoining Spivey Mountain.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

Buncombe County recently completed a Community and Public Engagement Plan for Deaverview Mountain. The goals are:

1. Develop public lands for outdoor recreation purposes that are in, or are directly accessible to, neighborhoods or communities that are underserved for parks and recreation and have significant populations of economically disadvantaged people.
2. Make sure the community has opportunities to share input on how Deaverview Mountain should be developed, especially those closest who are historically underserved.
3. Identify preferred community uses for Deaverview Mountain.
4. Provide events that promote community collaboration with Buncombe County Government as park development progresses.

The county holds Community Engagement markets at Asheville Housing Authority locations, including Deaverview Apartments, which offer connection to food and resources at no cost. These markets will be critical in ensuring some of the area's most underserved residents have direct ownership of future Deaverview Mountain park offerings. To date, there have been two Community Engagement markets at Deaverview Apartments. Buncombe County created a survey to solicit feedback from the community after the markets. The county also created a community outreach website (<https://publicinput.com/a0407>) with the survey in order to solicit additional input. There have been 25 respondents to date, of which 96% indicated they would like to see Deaverview Mountain preserved as a public park.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

Large parks in urban areas have the potential to create "green gentrification" that could increase property values and displace low-income residents. SAHC and Buncombe County are evaluating measures to mitigate the potential for green gentrification in the Deaverview community that could result from creating a new park there. These measures include working with the Buncombe County Equity and Human Rights Office and the Asheville-Buncombe Community Land Trust. The Asheville-Buncombe Community Land Trust is a community-led effort that was formed to address the injustices of urban renewal and the region's increasing cost of living. Their mission is to establish permanently affordable residential, commercial, and community spaces that empower Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and low- to moderate-income residents to build social, economic, and cultural capital. In addition, the Buncombe County Affordable Housing Bond, which was

approved concurrently with this Buncombe County Open Space Bond, will be used to increase construction of low-income housing in the county. The application of these Affordable Housing Bond funds may help offset green gentrification in the Deaverview community.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)***

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### **What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?**

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

SAHC will transfer the property to Buncombe County for the long-term maintenance and management of the property. The top of Deaverview Mountain contains a large open area occupied by kudzu at the primary and secondary scenic viewpoints, as well as multiflora rose and other invasive species. These invasive species are fairly concentrated on this southern side of the property and also along the boundaries with private developed land, with some invasive species found along the property's soil roads. The kudzu has been actively managed by mowing to prevent its spread across the property. SAHC is committed to continuing active management of the kudzu, as well as other invasive species as feasible, during our short-term ownership. Buncombe County will continue this work under their long-term maintenance and management of the property. Trash and litter has not been a prevalent issue on the property. With increased public use as a public park, Buncombe County will address trash pickup needs on the property.

### **Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?**

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The property will be transferred to Buncombe County, who's staff will be responsible for land management and maintenance. During SAHC's short term ownership of the property, SAHC's Stewardship Director will manage the property. In addition, after the land is transferred to Buncombe County, SAHC will monitor the state-held conservation easement for the long term. SAHC has five permanent stewardship staff dedicated to upholding the terms of our conservation easements and managing fee simple preserves. We also are a host site for three AmeriCorps Associates dedicated to supporting SAHC's stewardship staff. We manage 187 conservation easements and 116 fee simple preserves. As an accredited land trust, our stewardship program is certified to uphold the highest legal and ethical standards of the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices and has been cited as a model in doing so. Our stewardship staff will prepares a Baseline Documentation Report (BDR) in connection with the conservation easement that will guide the annual monitoring. Additional monitoring visits will accompany the execution of any major reserved rights. SAHC maintain policies and procedures to properly steward conservation easements and fee simple preserves.

### **Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?**

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The property will be transferred to Buncombe County, which will manage the financial needs of the park. In the short-term, SAHC's Finance Director, Associate Director and Executive Director work in partnership to

ensure sound management of every conservation project we complete. They have a combined total of 70 years of experience of fiscal oversight with SAHC. As an accredited land trust, the financial management of our conservation projects undergo a comprehensive audit every five years to ensure technically and ethically sound transactions and financial stability. SAHC's staff development has been guided by strategic planning over the years, with the most recent strategic plan completed in 2021. The plan ensures that SAHC's financial resources are being applied to achieve our mission and accomplish our organizational goals. The three goals are: (1) Protecting our region's most crucial land and water resources; (2) Stewarding those lands and water resources for the long-term, and (3) Connecting people with land for outdoor recreation, health, fitness, wellbeing and learning.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

Buncombe County will financially plan for the long-term maintenance of the property as public park. SAHC obtains a stewardship contribution based on a calculation form for every conservation easement and fee simple preserve we close. These funds are placed in endowments held at the Community Foundation of WNC and Wells Fargo, and are dedicated to supporting both the stewardship program and the legal defense of our conservation easements. The stewardship funds for this project were calculated to be \$17,000 based on SAHC's short-term ownership of the property. SAHC was awarded a grant from the NC Land and Water Fund that includes funds to cover our short-term stewardship needs of the property. The long-term operations and maintenance costs of the property will be evaluated by Buncombe County.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

As the short-term owner of the property, SAHC will be responsible for the project management during an estimate period of up to one year. SAHC has a Connecting People with Land program, which aims to bring people to nature for outdoor recreation, health, fitness, wellbeing and learning. This creates opportunities for sustainable economic development that make economic sense for communities. Experiencing nature benefits health and wellness, positively affecting our brains. For these reasons SAHC is amplifying efforts to connect people with land. This includes guided public hikes, wildflower and birding walks, river trips, bike rides, overnight camping and cabin stays, and weddings and special events at SAHC properties. Ways in which the community can become involved in the Deaverview Mountain property during SAHC's ownership is to organize volunteer workdays for invasive species control, trash cleanup, trail maintenance, and biological inventories.

Note that a long-term maintenance and management plan (requested below) by Buncombe County has not been created yet.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)***

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### **Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.**

How were these costs estimated?

In 2023 the property was listed on the market for just under \$1 million. SAHC's non-profit conservation partner Deaverview Mountain LLC negotiated the price down to \$7.5 million, obtained an appraisal supporting that price, and then purchased the property on our behalf. The conservation partner entered an option with SAHC, which gives us three years to purchase the property for a price that reimburses what they paid, plus carrying costs during the time they own the property. With accumulated interest and other carrying costs such as road maintenance, property taxes, insurance, due diligence and land planning costs, the estimated total amount that will need to be paid at the end of the option period will be \$8,950,000. This will enable SAHC to transfer the property to Buncombe County free of debt.

### **What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?**

SAHC and Buncombe County have identified and pursued several sources of funding to assemble the purchase price needed to acquire the Deaverview Mountain property. The initial funding commitment of \$1,000,000 was obtained from a private philanthropic donor. A grant from the North Carolina Land and Water Fund was awarded to cover \$4,250,000 towards the purchase price (plus \$122,130 towards transaction costs, which fall outside the scope of this grant). SAHC and Buncombe County have partnered to submit a grant application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program for \$2,700,000 towards the purchase price. In order to qualify for the federal ORLP funds, the applicant must demonstrate commitment and participation from the local community. That local commitment can be fulfilled by this Buncombe County Open Space Bond.

### **If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?**

What are the costs of these components?

The only component of this phase of the project is the fee simple purchase of the land. If less than the full amount of this grant request is awarded, SAHC and Buncombe County will need to seek additional sources of funding to accomplish the purchase. As described above, the purchase price is estimated to be \$8,950,000 by the end of the option period (March 2026).

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)***

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### **How will this project fulfill community needs?**

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism

- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

Public recreation is the primary need being fulfilled by this project, with the ultimate outcome being a new public park at Deaverview Mountain. The area around Deaverview Mountain has no public parks and is considered a park desert. SAHC's purchase of the property will fill this gap in the recreation landscape. Creating an urban park will support tourism in Buncombe County by providing a place for people to have an immersive nature experience within the county, rather than having tourists stay in the Asheville area and then leave the county to seek out hiking destinations. The creation of a new park will also support public health through the physical and mental health benefits provided by outdoor recreation. Research shows that nature can help alleviate multiple psychological conditions, including anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Nature is shown to regulate physical health symptoms such as blood pressure, cognitive function, weight loss and more. Finally, bringing people to the Deaverview community to visit the park will help bring business to the area with the potential to spur economic growth and expansion. By purchasing this property for the purpose of creating a new public park, it will fill in a notable gap in public outdoor spaces, and support public health and the local economy.

## Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

Purchase of the Deaverview Mountain property will fulfill multiple goals identified in Buncombe County's 2025 Strategic Plan. Those goals include conservation, environmental stewardship, expanding recreational assets and equity. In 2022, the county adopted a goal of conserving 20% of its land by 2030. This project will help further that goal. In addition, Buncombe County is in the process of completing a Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan. This is a new comprehensive plan that will consist of three planning documents: a Systemwide Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Greenways and Trails Master Plan, and an Open Space Plan. The process is currently in the community engagement stage. The plans will be presented to the county in November 2024 for adoption. Creating a park on Deaverview Mountain is consistent with many of the recreation opportunities described in the preliminary public input sessions. Those include creation of parks in urban areas, protecting wildlife habitat and waterways, creating publicly accessible nature trails, restoring open spaces, improving and adding user amenities in parks, and more.

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Allison Dains: Buncombe County Recreation Services, [allison.dains@buncombecounty.org](mailto:allison.dains@buncombecounty.org). Thomas Gull: Buncombe County Recreation Services, [thomas.gull@buncombecounty.org](mailto:thomas.gull@buncombecounty.org). Jennifer Harrison: Soil & Water Conservation, [jennifer.harrison@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jennifer.harrison@buncombecounty.org)

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

Buncombe County will manage the property to address safety concerns for the long term. In the short term, SAHC maintains a locked gate at the entrance to the property to prevent trespass before the property becomes open to the public. Visits to the property during SAHC's ownership will be limited to guided outings accompanied by SAHC staff.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

During SAHC's ownership, the property will be secured with a locked gate to prevent trespass and any vandalism or deterioration that may occur by unsupervised visitors. One issue that has occurred within the past year was erosion of certain trails due to trespass by motorized dirt bikes. In response to this, the current owner extended the gate at the property entrance. When the park is owned and managed by Buncombe County, they will prepare a plan to protect it from future vandalism.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

During SAHC's ownership, the property will not yet be open to the public and therefore the potential for accidents between different user groups is low. When Buncombe County owns and manages the property as a park, they will prepare a plan to mitigate against potential conflicts. In general, the primary use of the trails is anticipated to be hiking. The use of the trails for different user groups, such as nonmotorized mountain bikes, is currently being considered. After Buncombe County's ownership, they will conduct a trail assessment to ensure there is a sustainable network of multi-use trails on the property.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

During SAHC's ownership, the property will not yet be open to the public and we do not anticipate installing signage onsite. Under Buncombe County's ownership, signage will be designed to include trail directions, interpretation of the site, and more. The county has not yet completed a plan for signage on the property.

## ***Applicant Experience***

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### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

Founded in 1974, SAHC is one of the oldest land trusts in the southeastern US and will be celebrating our 50th anniversary this year. We received accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2008, followed by accreditation renewal in 2015 and 2020. Accreditation demonstrates SAHC's commitment to upholding the high standards of the Land Trust Standards and Practices. SAHC has a robust land conservation

program, having protected over 87,500 acres through fee simple acquisitions, conservation easements, assists with public and private conservation partners, and land transfers to public agencies. SAHC has an outstanding track record of successfully drafting, completing, monitoring and enforcing 187 conservation easements and 116 fee simple preserves. There are 19 full time staff at SAHC, plus four AmeriCorps Associates and several seasonal interns that support the staff and programs. Throughout SAHC's history we have employed Strategic Planning in periodic cycles to establish thoughtful organizational goals, and a rational pathway to achieve them. We completed our most recent strategic plan in spring 2021.

### **Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

SAHC was first formed as a chapter of the Appalachian Trail Conference (now Appalachian Trail Conservancy) in the 1960s, and incorporated as an individual land trust in 1974. Our operating region encompasses six distinct focus areas covering 10 counties in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee, spanning the landscapes from the Highlands of Roan to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Deaverview Mountain property is located in SAHC's French Broad River Valley Focus Area. During SAHC's 50 years of operation, we have protected over 87,500 acres of land through fee simple acquisitions, conservation easements, assists to conservation partners and transfers to public agencies. Our current conservation holdings include 187 conservation easements and 116 fee simple preserves. The largest fee simple preserve owned by SAHC is 7,500 acres, and many other preserves are several hundred acres in size.

### **Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.**

SAHC, Buncombe County and the State of North Carolina are the project partners. The fee title ownership will be held by Buncombe County, which will be responsible for the physical day to day management of the land and park amenities. Buncombe County has a credit rating of AAA/Aaa in line with issuance of new general obligation and limited obligation bonds.

The state-held conservation easement will be monitored by SAHC. SAHC was one of the first land trusts in the country to receive accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2008. Accreditation demonstrates SAHC's commitment to upholding the high standards of the Land Trust Standards and Practices. SAHC has an outstanding track record of successfully drafting, completing, monitoring and enforcing conservation easements and fee simple preserves.

The State of North Carolina will hold a conservation easement on the majority of the property. The North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) is administered by the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and receives revenue from annual appropriations, special registration plates, and hazard mitigation funds. It is authorized to use funds to acquire land and conservation easements to protect and improve water quality, and to preserve natural habitats and the ecological diversity of North Carolina, for recreational, scientific, educational, cultural, historic and aesthetic purposes.

### **Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)**

2017.11.03 IRS 501(c)(3) letter.pdf

## Resumes of Key Staff

Staff Qualifications\_Deaverview Mtn.docx

## *Budget*

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### **Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.**

The total project value of \$8,950,000 is an estimate. Folded into this purchase price is interest and other holding costs that will increase over time. SAHC may incur additional interest after acquisition of the land until it is sold to Buncombe County. The timing of that transfer is uncertain and may take one or more years after SAHC purchases the land.

- The private philanthropic donor approved \$1,000,000 in acquisition funds for this project in December 2022. This was the first funding source that leveraged the state funds described below.
- The North Carolina Land and Water Fund grant was awarded to SAHC in September 2023. The effective date of the grant contract is March 8, 2024 and it expires on May 31, 2026. The grant includes \$4,250,000 towards land acquisition and \$122,130 in transaction costs.
- SAHC will submitted a preliminary grant proposal to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program on April 3, 2024 for \$2,700,000 towards purchasing the Deaverview Mountain property. The Notification to Apply decisions will be made in November 2024. If the Deaverview Mountain project is selected, the full ORLP application will be submitted by November 2025. If approved, the grant agreement will be complete by February 2026.

## **Project Budget**

Budget\_Buncombe Bond\_Deaverview Mountain.docx

## *Additional Documentation*

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

SAHC Board Approval\_Deaverview Mtn.pdf

## **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Maps\_Deaverview\_Mountain reduced.pdf

## **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Photos\_Buncombe Bond\_Deaverview.docx

## Letters of Support

Mountain True Support Letter\_Deaverview Mtn.pdf

## Other Documentation

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Scope of Work\_Buncombe Bond PRL\_Deaverview Mtn.docx
- 2017.11.03 IRS 501(c)(3) letter.pdf
- Staff Qualifications\_Deaverview Mtn.docx
- Budget\_Buncombe Bond\_Deaverview Mountain.docx
- SAHC Board Approval\_Deaverview Mtn.pdf
- Maps\_Deaverview\_Mountain reduced.pdf
- Photos\_Buncombe Bond\_Deaverview.docx
- Mountain True Support Letter\_Deaverview Mtn.pdf



## Buncombe County Open Space Bond Passive Recreation Lands Application

### Deaverview Mountain Project – Scope of Work

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) will purchase the 345-acre Deaverview Mountain property in fee simple on or before March 2026. SAHC will hold title to the property for the short term until it can be transferred to Buncombe County. The estimated time of SAHC's ownership is anticipated to be less than one year.

The property will ultimately be owned and managed by Buncombe County as a public park. SAHC was awarded a grant for this project from the North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF). As a condition of receiving the NCLWF funds, the State of North Carolina will hold a perpetual conservation easement on approximately 319 acres of the property. The conservation easement will be monitored by SAHC. The State will also hold a Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions (DCR) with third party rights of enforcement on approximately 25 acres. The purpose of the DCR is to allow more relaxed restrictions than a conservation in the portion of the property that will contain the majority of the park infrastructure.

Before SAHC's fee simple purchase of the property, SAHC will:

- complete due diligence, including contracting for two appraisals, a boundary survey, title review and an environmental site assessment
- purchase the 345-acre property
- convey a conservation easement to the State of North Carolina on 319 acres
- record a Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions to the State of North Carolina on 25 acres
- transfer the property to Buncombe County

After SAHC's the fee simple purchase of the property, SAHC will enter into a stewardship contract with the NCLWF to monitor the State-held conservation easement at least annually and complete required monitoring reporting.

During SAHC's short-term ownership of the property, it will partner with Buncombe County to support the county's planning and design needs for the future park.

OGDEN UT 84201-0029

In reply refer to: 4077967774  
Nov. 03, 2017 LTR 4168C 0  
62-1098890 000000 00  
00020703  
BODC: TE

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS  
CONSERVANCY  
372 MERRIMON AVE  
ASHEVILLE NC 28801-1222



001793

Employer ID Number: 62-1098890  
Form 990 required: Yes

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your request dated Oct. 05, 2017, regarding your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in April 1975, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).

Our records also indicate you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509(a) because you're described in IRC Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading of this letter, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If a return is required, you must file Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, or 990-PF by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. IRC Section 6033(j) provides that, if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked on the filing due date of the third required return or notice.

For tax forms, instructions, and publications, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 1-877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific Time).

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Nov. 03, 2017 LTR 4168C 0  
62-1098890 000000 00  
00020704

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS  
CONSERVANCY  
372 MERRIMON AVE  
ASHEVILLE NC 28801-1222

Sincerely yours,

*Stephen A. Martin*

Stephen A. Martin  
Director, EO Rulings & Agreements



## Key Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy staff Deaverview Mountain project

Qualifications/Summary of Resumes for SAHC Staff:

### **Carl Silverstein**

*Executive Director*

Carl joined the SAHC staff in 2000. He graduated from Stanford University in 1984 with a BA in History, and the University of Alabama Law School in 1988. Carl practiced law in Seattle before moving to Asheville in 1995. Carl serves on the Claims Committee of TerraFirma Risk Retention Group. TerraFirma is a charitable risk pool created by the national Land Trust Alliance to insure its members against the legal costs of defending conservation interests.

### **Kristy Urquhart**

*Associate Director*

Kristy Urquhart has been Associate Director for SAHC since 1997 and has served on the staff since 1991. She graduated from King College with a BA in Business/Economics and worked in orchard management in Ithaca, NY, before moving to Asheville in 1991. Kristy is very active with the Asheville Humane Society.

### **Lisa Fancher**

*Finance Compliance Director*

Lisa joined the SAHC staff in 2011. She has a BSBA in Accounting from Mississippi College, and has 15 years of for-profit experience, including 9 years in the area of consumer finance. She relocated to western NC in August 2010. Lisa oversees the financial accounts of the organization.

### **Michelle Pugliese**

*Land Protection Director*

Michelle joined the SAHC staff in 2007. Michelle previously served as the St. Simons Land Trust Director of Land Protection. She graduated from Lafayette College with a BA in Biology and from the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University with a Masters of Environmental Management degree. Michelle manages the organization's land and conservation easement acquisitions.

### **Kyle Shute**

*Land Protection Associate*

Kyle joined SAHC in 2022. He graduated from the University of Maine in 2017 with a B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and from Clemson University with an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology in 2020. While at Clemson he conducted his Masters research on habitat ecology of threatened bat species, with a focus on private lands in coastal South Carolina. Kyle now works for SAHC's Land Protection Team coordinating landowner inquiries about private lands conservation.

### **Sarah Sheeran**

*Stewardship Director*

Sarah joined our Stewardship staff in 2014. She served on the Land Management Committee since 2010 and has been a long-time volunteer. She oversees the organization's program of monitoring and managing our conservation easements and properties we own, manages SAHC-owned land outside of the Roan Highlands and assists landowners with caring for their property's natural resources. Sarah previously received her BS in Biology from James Madison University and her MS in Ecology from UNC-Chapel Hill. With a background in plant conservation and horticulture, she previously worked as a plant ecologist for a local environmental consulting firm and later served as Director of Education and Conservation at an outdoor recreation and adventure company.

**Buncombe County Open Space Bond Passive Recreation Lands  
Deaverview Mountain Project Budget**

<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>Buncombe County Bond Request</b>	<b>Matching Funds</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Land Acquisition	\$1,000,000	\$7,950,000	\$8,950,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$7,950,000</b>	<b>\$8,950,000</b>

<b>Matching Share Contributors</b>	<b>Match Amount</b>	<b>Type (cash, donated land, etc.)</b>	<b>Match Status</b>
North Carolina Land and Water Fund	\$4,250,000	Cash	Committed
Private Philanthropic Donor	\$1,000,000	Cash	Committed
Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership	\$2,700,000	Cash	Application Submission 4/3/24. Early decision November 2024, final decision ~February 2026
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,950,000</b>		

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF  
THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY  
September 25, 2022 • Lake Logan, Candler, NC**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy was called to order at 9:04 am by Nancy Edgerton, President of the Board.

Present: TRUSTEES – Nancy Edgerton, Chris Soto, Larry (Pender) Pender, Sheryl Aikman, Janet Garret, Rich Preyer, Tom Williams, Randy Hunter, Hannah Latragna; STAFF – Carl Silverstein, Kristy Urquhart, Michelle Pugliese, Sarah Sheeran, Lisa Fancher, Cheryl Fowler, Travis Bordley, LaKyla Hodges, Chris Link, Kyle Shute, Hanni Muerdter, Angela Shepherd, and Jess Laggis; AMERICORPS AND SEASONAL: David Hagler; SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE BOARD: Jay Leutze

Not present: Sarah Davis, Mary Fanslow, Pam Kelley, John McLendon, Allison Williams

**Future meeting dates:**

Saturday, December 3, 2022 – from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Saturday, March 4, 2023 – from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Friday, June 23, 2023 – from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

**Other Business:** Nancy noted that the Waterrock Knob celebration on Saturday, marking the expansion of the Blue Ridge Parkway to include land conserved by SAHC and our partners, and the trail opening the preceding week at Strawberry Gap were both joyous occasions and wonderful opportunities to see the tangible impact of SAHC’s work, and to celebrate that impact of dedicated conservationists.

**Prior Meeting Minutes:** Sheryl Aikman made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes; Rich Preyer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Summary:** Carl referenced the Executive Summary in the pre-meeting packet and recommended that the board move to committee reports.

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**Committee Reports:**

Executive Committee. Nancy Edgerton and Carl Silverstein presented the Executive Committee report.

The Executive Committee met via Zoom and discussed the board retreat and board meeting agenda, and other organizational business.

Governance Committee. John McLendon has joined the board. He and his wife Connie participated in a field orientation at Hampton Creek Cove with staff, board members and Governance Committee members John has joined the Land Protection Committee and plans to serve on the Roan Stewardship Committee as well. Leandra Taylor hoped to serve on our board this year, but work and other commitments led her to decide not to serve. We will continue to partner with Leandra through Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards and hope she’ll be able to serve on our board in the future. We currently have 14 board members. This is consistent with our Bylaws, which require a minimum of 13 board members. The Governance Committee will begin hosting small monthly ‘picnic table summits’ outside the SAHC office starting in October.

Considerations:

- Excluded from the conservation easement are approximately 39 acres containing an historic farmhouse, a hay barn converted to the owners' residence, a tobacco barn converted to office and gathering spaces, a guest cottage, and a tiny house. Also excluded are sites for a proposed small cabin and a 2-3 tiny rental homes.
- The conservation easement area may be accessed by guests to the excluded area, which may be associated with offsite small-scale commercial activities.
- Reserved rights within the conservation easement include agricultural uses (grazing, and possibly crops within limited permitted open areas), a water tank for fire prevention, and water supply to support limited structures in the excluded area.
- Stewardship hours are expected to be slightly above average staff time due to the potential for oversight associated with the uses in the excluded area that may impact the conservation easement, and ongoing communications with the landowners.

**RESOLVED: That SAHC approve the bargain purchase of a conservation easement from [REDACTED], on the property with an address of [REDACTED], and more particularly described as the properties in the deed recorded in Deed Book [REDACTED] at Page [REDACTED], Yancey County Registry, to be in accordance with the recommendation of the Land Protection Committee, and with the price, terms, and funding sources contained in this memo to the Board, and SAHC's Land and Easement Acquisition Policy, dated 3/7/2020; and**

**FURTHER RESOLVED: That Carl Silverstein, as Executive Director, or if he is unavailable, Kristy Urquhart, as Associate Director, be and hereby is authorized to execute, acknowledge, and deliver in the name and on behalf of SAHC all contracts, deeds, affidavits, tax-related documents, and any and all other documents necessary to effect the protection of this real estate.**

**Chris Soto made a motion to accept the resolution as presented. Sheryl Aikman seconded, and the motion passed unopposed.**

- 4. Deaverview/Spivey Mountain** – 343 acres (+/-), fee simple purchase with subsequent transfer to Buncombe County for creation of a new public park, Black Mountains and French Broad River Valley Focus Areas.

Project summary: We envision a 340-acre (+/-) mountaintop passive park owned and managed by Buncombe County. Relatively little additional infrastructure would be required, other than parking areas, a bathroom, trail heads, and hiking trails. Visitors will be able to walk through mature forest to an open area with spectacular long-range scenic views. The park will create new opportunities for people in Asheville to experience nature and benefit their health and wellness without having to leave town and drive to national forests or state parks. There will be rich opportunities to see and learn about native southern Appalachian plants, animals, and ecosystems. Twelve headwater tributaries originate on or just off the property, flowing into Ragsdale Creek, Dix Creek, Lee Creek, and Smith Mill Creek. This will be a nationally significant story of our community leaders preserving a forested mountaintop from real estate development, and instead creating a park for the benefit of present and future generations.

The Buncombe County Commission recently asked SAHC to secure the property on behalf of the County for the purpose of creating the new park. This has been done in an informal quiet way in order not to

disadvantage the negotiation of as low a purchase price as possible for the property. The Commission made the request unanimously by consensus, without any Commissioner opposing. We want to emphasize the importance of confidentiality about this exciting project opportunity, as with all potentially SAHC land transactions presented to the board.

Summary of Conservation Significance: This large tract has been locally treasured as a hiking destination, private but accessed by landowner permission, for decades. It contains perhaps one of the largest blocks of intact forest habitat in close proximity to West Asheville and downtown Asheville. Most notably, the property rises to a large meadow providing stunning views of the City of Asheville, the Biltmore Estate, the Grove Park Inn, and the mountain ranges surrounding the city. The property is listed on the market. Its features make it an ideal location for a public park, providing recreational access to a part of Buncombe County that lacks hiking opportunities.

Project Finances: The property is listed for \$9,995,000. SAHC explored purchasing the property, financing part of the purchase through a bridge loan from our non-profit lending partner Nuthatch LLC/Green South Foundation. We presented the opportunity to the lender to discuss a potential bridge loan.

They were enthusiastic about helping us protect the property and create a park. In fact, they would like to buy the property directly, and hold it on behalf of SAHC and Buncombe County, until funding can be secured for the County to take on ownership of the property as a park. This scenario would be attractive for SAHC because it would enable our role to be that of an “assist” rather than purchaser of the property ourselves.

One advantage is that the private buyer may be able to negotiate a lower purchase price from the seller than SAHC could, given that we would be acting on behalf of county government, while a private buyer could potentially drive a harder bargain from the seller.

The approval we are requesting from the board is for two alternate acquisition strategies:

1. Private conservation-minded partner purchases the property and holds it until SAHC can facilitate transfer to Buncombe County. SAHC assists in the purchase by raising private funds and helping Buncombe County secure public grants for the acquisition.
2. SAHC purchases the property using private funding and a bridge loan, and holds it until public funds would enable Buncombe County to acquire it from SAHC.

After the property is purchased by either the private partner or SAHC, we will have up to three years in which to raise all the public grants and private philanthropic gifts needed in order to pay off the financing, and transfer the land to the County for the new park.

Assuming our private partner closes on the purchase by the end of this year, by December 2025, we will need to have secured all the private donations and Federal, State and County grants, and administered those grants with the government agencies and received the private donations so that the money is available to re-pay our lender.

The annual interest rate will likely be a favorable rate of 2%. If the purchase price is \$10 million and the interest rate is 2%, there will be approximately \$200,000 in interest each year. As stated above, our private partner will attempt to negotiate the lowest-possible purchase price for the property.

While the most likely scenario is that Nuthatch LLC/Green South Foundation will purchase the property and hold it while SAHC and Buncombe County work to secure funding for eventual transfer the County. we are also requesting approval by the board for SAHC to purchase the property in case that scenario turns out to be preferable.

Nuthatch LLC/Green South Foundation also has a proposed back up plan in the case that Buncombe County is unable to raise funds to acquire, which would be to provide for limited development on a portion of the property subject to a conservation easement on the majority of the acreage. We are confident that the preferred scenario of creating a park will happen and avoid the need for the back-up plan.

Potential funding sources to pay the purchase price and loan interest:

- For the purchase-price, loan interest and other transaction costs, we could potentially need up to \$10.5 million, depending how low a price our private partner can negotiate. We foresee SAHC and the County partnering on federal and state grant proposals, with staff from both entities working together to prepare, submit and administer grants.
- Private philanthropic gifts. \$3 to 4 million.
- Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside program (LWCF) and Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP). We will aim to secure \$3 million from these federal sources.
- State of North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (NC PARTF) and Land and Water Fund (NC LWF). We will aim to secure \$3 million from these state sources.
- Dogwood Health Trust and other private philanthropic foundations
- Asheville Buncombe Tourism Development Authority
- Buncombe County. We foresee needing some funding from Buncombe County, depending on how much funding is raised from other sources.

Prior Board Action: None.

Considerations:

- This is a high-profile property in which many members of the community are interested in the outcome. With that comes both a great potential for broad community support, and a need to maintain confidentiality during our assessment of the project.
- There are two primary access options to the property, one off Deaverview Road and the other off Spivey Mountain Road. Each are being examined by SAHC and Buncombe County, and each have both benefits and drawbacks.
- Buncombe County is considering the financial burden of owning and managing this property as a park. It is difficult to estimate this cost.
- There is an area of invasive species (including kudzu and tree of heaven) at the base of the meadow that will require active management. A Forest Management Plan will be needed to assess treatment of the invasive species

**The motion was presented from the Land Protection Committee resolution:**

RESOLVED: That SAHC approve the fee simple purchase from John T. Ward on the property with an address of Cowan Cove Rd, Asheville, NC, 28806, and more particularly described as the properties in the deed recorded in Deed Book 1688 at Page 587, Buncombe County Registry, to be in accordance with the recommendation of the Land Protection Committee, and with the price, terms, and funding sources contained in this memo to the Board, and SAHC's Land and Easement Acquisition Policy, dated 3/7/2020; and

FURTHER RESOLVED: That Carl Silverstein, as Executive Director, or if he is unavailable, Kristy Urquhart, as Associate Director, be and hereby is authorized to execute, acknowledge, and deliver in the name and on behalf of SAHC all contracts, deeds, affidavits, tax-related documents, and any and all other documents necessary to effect the protection of this real estate.

**Tom Williams made a motion to accept the resolution as presented. Larry Pender seconded, and the motion passed unopposed.**

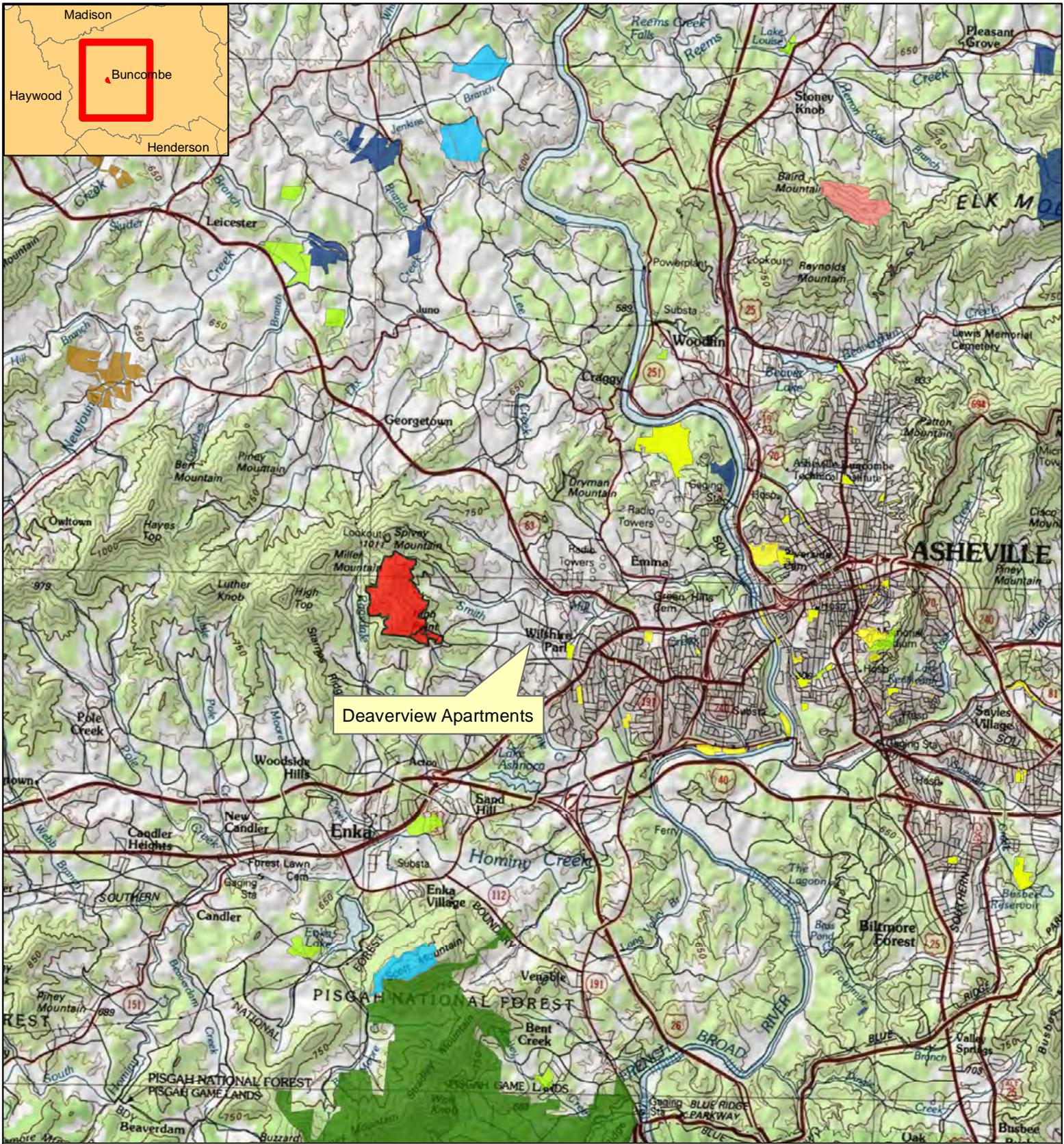
5. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] acres (+/-), fee Simple Purchase, French Broad River Valley Focus Area, Elk Mountains to Black Mountain Crest Priority Zone. Approval sought to increase price we offer to purchase the property.

Project Summary:

[REDACTED]

Conservation Values:

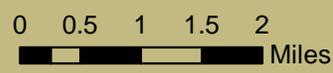
- The property contains the following conservation values, and lies within the following designated areas, which make it worthy of protection:
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Contains a vernal pool at the lower elevation along the floodplain, a NC State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) priority community type.
- Within the French Broad Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA).
- Nearly the entire property is overlain by the state-designated [REDACTED] Natural Area (rank High).



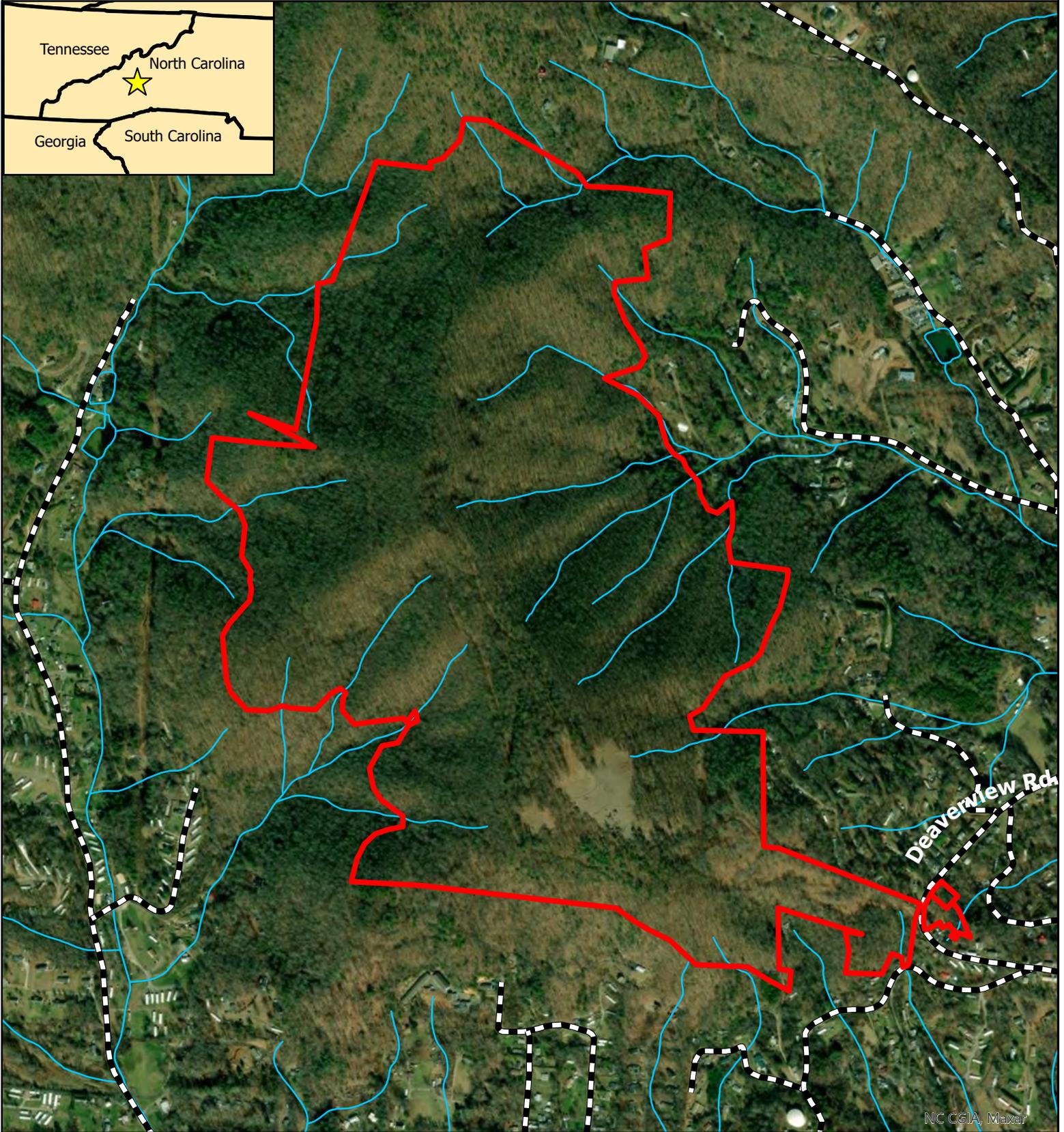
Deaverview Apartments

## Deaverview Mountain Contextual Map

- Deaverview Mountain Property 345 acres (+/-)
- Asheville Public Parks
- SAHC Owned Property
- SAHC Conservation Easement
- US Forest Service
- NC Department of Agriculture
- Conserving Carolina
- County Owned Land



# Deaverview Mountain Property Aerial Map

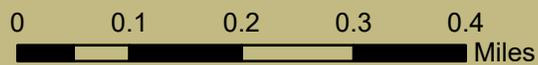


NC CGIA, Maxar

 Deaverview Mountain Property - 345 acres (+/-)

 Public Roads

 Streams



Map by SAHC, March 2024

Buncombe County Open Space Bond Passive Recreation Lands  
Deaverview Mountain Photographs



**Buncombe County Open Space Bond Passive Recreation Lands  
Deaverview Mountain Photographs**





9/15/2023

To: Land and Water Fund Board of Trustees

Re: Deaverview Mountain

Dear Land and Water Fund Board of Trustees,

I am writing on behalf of MountainTrue in regards to the application for the Deaverview Mountain property to the Land and Water Fund. I have lived near the foot of Deaverview Mountain for the better part of 25 years and have had many opportunities to visit it. My experiences on the mountain and in the local community lead me to recommend that the Land and Water Fund support the purchase of the property.

Deaverview Mountain sits near the terminus of the Newfound Mountains, a 30 mile-long mountain range that runs from the Tennessee state line to the city limits of Asheville. The Newfound Mountains include two peaks over 5,000' and numerous 4,000' peaks. The Newfound Mountains are the highest mountain range in North Carolina that, aside from a narrow corridor along the Appalachian Trail, lack State or Federal public land. Canton's 900-acre Rough Creek Watershed is currently the only publicly accessible tract in this mighty mountain range. Deaverview Mountain could be the second.

Despite the paucity of public land in the Newfound Mountains, there currently exists a continuously forested corridor along the entirety of the range. Deer, bear, bobcats, turkey, songbirds, and a plethora of wildlife make their home in and migrate through the Newfound Mountains. An analysis of important connectivity corridors for wildlife by the Wildlands Network placed the Newfound Mountains in the top tier of importance for conservation. However, this corridor is also threatened by housing development along its entire length. Securing the Deaverview Mountain Tract at the southeastern terminus of the Newfound Mountains would be a key step to maintaining connectivity of forested wildlife habitat between central Buncombe County and the Appalachian Trail.

Not only does Deaverview Mountain have value for its landscape context and the recreational opportunities it offers to under-served communities, it is also a high-quality natural area in its own right. Like much of the Newfound Mountains, the bedrock geology is high in base cations like calcium and magnesium, which in turn create fertile soils and diverse plant communities. The forests at Deaverview Mountain are quite mature, and include hundreds of acres of oak forest with large diameter trees that provide excellent habitat for animals like black bear that require hard mast from oaks and hickories. The forests are also excellent habitat for birds and, because of its proximity to my home in Asheville, this is where I learned to bird by ear. During early May it is possible to observe dozens of species of songbirds

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29 North Market Street, Suite 610 Asheville, NC 28801 828.258.8737  
611 N. Church Street Hendersonville, NC 28792 828.692.0385  
164 South Depot Street Boone, NC 28607 828.719.7624  
16 Stewart Street Franklin, NC 28734 828.349.3899  
[mountaintrue.org](http://mountaintrue.org)

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE MEMBER



at Deaverview Mountain. While there are no known State or Federally listed rare species on the tract, it does harbor some of the finest known examples of oak forest in the NC mountains, including the unusual “Low Montane Red Oak Forest” described by the NC Natural Heritage Program. In addition to forest habitats, Deaverview Mountain also protects several headwater streams that serve as excellent habitat for salamanders and aquatic insects.

Deaverview Mountain is a key tract for conservation, recreation, and wildlife habitat that adjoins a working-class neighborhood at the edge of Asheville with poor access to public land and no city or county parks. Protecting the property offers a special opportunity to meet conservation goals and serve a broad swath of the public, including marginalized groups. Because of the intersection of natural values and social values, I strongly support the conservation of Deaverview Mountain by the Land and Water Fund.

Sincerely,

Josh Kelly  
Public Lands Field Biologist  
MountainTrue

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# Gateway Park :: Resurrecting a historic park on Riverside Drive

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***RiverLink***

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Lisa Raleigh  
170 Lyman St.  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

information@riverlink.org  
O: 8282528474

## ***Lisa Raleigh***

---

170 Lyman St.  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

lisa@riverlink.org  
O: 8282528474

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Gateway Park :: Resurrecting a historic park on Riverside Drive

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

RiverLink

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

## Improvements

## Scope of Work

Scope of Work \_\_ Gateway Park - Google Docs.pdf

## Project Schedule

Project Schedule \_\_ Gateway Park - Google Docs.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

706 Riverside Drive

### Parcel Number

963965987700000

### Acreage

2

### Zoning Designation

RIVER

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$200,000.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$615,037.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$554,867.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

- 1) Funding Source : Private Donor
- 2) Funding Amount: \$300,000
- 3) Funding Status: Secured

- 1) Funding Source: TDA/LIFT Grant
- 2) Funding Amount: \$268,790
- 3) Funding Status: Requested/pending

- 1) Funding Source: Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships Grant
- 2) Funding Amount \$12,287
- 3) Funding Status: Requested/pending

- 1) Funding Source: Connect Buncombe
- 2) Funding Amount \$5,000
- 3) Funding Status: Requested/pending

## Project Summary

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?

- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond’s goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

This request will support the creation of a new, climate-resilient park in a location that is currently inaccessible to the public. The future Gateway Park represents a convergence of opportunity for wildlife viewing accessible via multi-modal transit along the French Broad River. Three major bike and pedestrian projects leading to the site are in development now. These projects—one each planned by NC Department of Transportation, Buncombe County and the City of Asheville—will vastly improve connectivity & safe bike/pedestrian transit by expanding the existing greenway network, highlighting this property’s significance as a green gateway. RiverLink’s Gateway Park will be the only public greenspace in the busy 2.5-mile corridor between the River Arts District (RAD) and Woodfin’s Silver-Line Park.

This project has strong alignment with Bond Fund goals, as this riverside green space prioritizes natural resource protection and the preservation of mature wildlife habitat and ecosystem services including shade, stormwater processing, flood mitigation, and a functional riparian zone—in contrast to the majority of current land uses in this industrial corridor. This proposal seeks the final funding needed to develop a partly wooded public park in the French Broad River corridor. Natural green spaces like these increase the quality of life for Buncombe residents by providing opportunities to enjoy wildlife sightings and passive recreation in proximity to places we live, work and play.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project’s eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project’s timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

RiverLink owns the subject property and is requesting bond funds for eligible improvements, which can be allocated and encumbered within the published Bond schedule.

Gateway is located in Buncombe County adjacent to the French Broad River in an industrial and commercial corridor between the River Arts District and Woodfin. This 2.5-mile stretch currently lacks any conservation or recreational opportunities with the exception of the City of Asheville’s public river access point across Pearson Bridge from the future Gateway Park. Yet multiple bike and pedestrian improvements are planned for this corridor; this project will provide a much-needed public green space for users of this riverside corridor.

Upon completion of fundraising—this proposal would close the process—we anticipate beginning construction in late 2024 and completing the park in 2025. As an urban conservation land trust, RiverLink has an established track record of restoring and stewarding land for conservation and public access. Gateway

is designed as a public amenity with a commitment to the natural habitat elements of this property. The project budget includes an annual figure for regular stewardship maintenance and the organization is committed to maintaining all of its properties in good condition through a healthy stewardship fund.

## *Improvements Narrative*

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### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

This proposal will allow development of the new park at/near the original location of the historic Riverside Park of the early 1900s. With meandering pathways and native plantings, arched gateways at both entrances and a carousel-inspired pavilion, the proposed project will resurrect a smaller version of a historic park to delight visitors and locals alike. RiverLink's legacy and commitment to river parks and public access is evident throughout the River Arts District, and we are excited to contribute a unique amenity to what promises to be a much safer transit corridor for pedestrians and cyclists between Asheville's riverside attractions and the Town of Woodfin's visionary investments along the French Broad River.

The project has been designed to meet a convergence of opportunities coming this way with major bike/pedestrian infrastructure, while creating a natural setting to support a variety of passive recreational users. The site represents a unique location offering the only green, public respite between Asheville and Woodfin. In keeping with other RiverLink parks, this project will preserve the conservation values of property on the public side facing the street—where native plantings, attractive signage, benches, and a covered pavilion will invite people in—and also the more protected riverside (riparian) zone, where ecological values will be emphasized.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Gateway Park is adjacent to the French Broad River – with a Norfolk Southern rail track spur and its berm providing a natural separation between the developed portion of the property (the front acre between Riverside Drive and the rail track) and the riverside portion. In separate work outside of this proposal, RiverLink is investing in the restoration of the riverside portion of this parcel, ensuring a healthy riparian zone to support water quality and flood resilience.

The front acre that will become Gateway Park includes mature sycamore trees that are under significant stress due to invasive vines in their canopy. A key step in this project is to remove the invasives so the trees can thrive, in addition to re-introducing native vegetation throughout. This forested area is important habitat for birds and other animals in addition to providing shade for visitors, and soil retention during flood events.

The restoration of natural open spaces adjacent to the river is the single best use of property in the flood corridor. A one-acre green space is capable of holding tens of thousands of gallons of stormwater and returning it slowly, supporting water quality and minimizing erosion and sediment inputs to waterways. This effort will demonstrate and promote (thru education) how riverside landowners can improve water quality and mitigate the negative effects of stormwater runoff—now the #1 source of pollution in the French Broad—by harnessing the infrastructure nature provides.

### **Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).**

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This project brings a new urban green space into public use along the French Broad -- in a busy 2.5-mile transit corridor that lacks public green space along Riverside Drive. This corridor connects two important outdoor recreation destinations -- the River Arts District and the Woodfin Greenway Blueway -- so Gateway represents an important opportunity to secure a functional natural area along the river.

### **How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?**

As with all of RiverLink's public properties, this project will use artful educational signage to tell the important stories of conservation, native wildlife, and local history, including that of the riverside parks and regional greenway development. Supported by web-based educational materials, social media, and press materials, Gateway Park will tell the story of the original Riverside Park, which was destroyed by fire in 1915. These messages will be reinforced through the design of the public pavilion which will recall the historical carousel at this once-popular attraction. Given its high-profile location in a busy traffic corridor, once all the bike/pedestrian improvements arrive, this park will provide a visual "gateway" to the River Arts District to the south, and the Woodfin Greenway Blueway to the north.

### **How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?**

As noted above, there are significant invasives threatening the health of the mature sycamores that provide shade and natural wildlife habitat at this location. It is impossible to walk the entire property because of the

tangle of invasive plants. A few of these valuable trees have died in recent years, as invasive vines have smothered their canopies.

This project will remove the majority (at least 70%) of invasive plant biomass and re-introduce native plants in the non-forested, developed portion of the property that hosts visitors. We will mark success when the forest is healthy and thriving; native plants and grasses are growing in all planted areas; and visitors have opportunities to see native birds, wildlife and pollinators using this property across the seasons.

In addition, this project will mark success when the planned amenities that support public enjoyment of the site—the pavilion, benches, natural surface paths, gateway arches and signage—have been installed, and human visitors are enjoying a new park.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)*

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

Given the modest scope of the project—respecting and building on the natural features of the site—and the fact that half the funding has already been secured, this park represents a highly viable project to execute. RiverLink’s recent success in developing Karen Cragolin Park’s Greenway Phase, marshaling multiple partners, funders, and infrastructure considerations at that location is the most recent demonstration of our capacity to build Gateway Park. RiverLink’s experience in developing formerly neglected and blighted properties for passive recreation leads us to include unforeseeable contingencies in the project budget, preserving options for completing the project in the face of unexpected costs that can emerge during construction.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

Practically speaking, the risks are minimal. One source of risk is undocumented soil contamination owing to the property’s proximity to a historic City of Asheville landfill. However, soil testing over the years on the proposed project site has not indicated any contamination. To confirm this, the preliminary step in construction will be completing an environmental assessment; an unfavorable finding will prompt remedial action before the project moves ahead.

Outside of securing the necessary funds, we do not anticipate any other factor that would impact our project’s timeline. If awarded, the Open Space Bond funds would complete our funding pathway and we will be full-steam ahead in the second half of 2024. Given the site’s readiness and Equinox Environmental’s partnership we don’t foresee any issues that would prevent us from breaking ground later this year and completing the project by summer, 2025.

### **Please describe the readiness of the project.**

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion

- The timeline for public use/access

The current status of the project includes a draft project design, with a supporting budget including essential construction activities. Once all funding is secured, RiverLink will initiate a detailed design process leading to construction documents followed by construction and completion. Assuming full funding is secured this summer, with an Open Space Bond award completing our efforts, the project will be under construction by late fall/early winter and completed by the middle of 2025. Based on this timeline, the site will be ready for public use in mid-2025. The site will enjoy its full capacity when the additional bike/pedestrian amenities come online.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

RiverLink's primary partner for planning and construction is Equinox Environmental, the local landscape architecture firm which is taking the lead on all major aspects of this project in Year 1. RiverLink will lead long-term maintenance with the assistance of volunteers on scheduled work days.

Given RiverLink's rich history in this space, each park and opportunity is unique in the partnerships we create to maintain and enhance it over time. For example, Carrier Park and French Broad River Park, both founded by RiverLink, were ultimately deeded to the City of Asheville to own and operate; but Karen Cragolin Park, our most recent undertaking, is still owned and managed by RiverLink while the City of Asheville oversees the greenway component. In the case of Gateway, we have strong support from both Buncombe County Parks and Recreation and City of Asheville Parks and Recreation in the development of our parcel as a public space. It is RiverLink's plan to continue to manage the property after it is developed given its focus on conservation and passive recreation and well within our stewardship capabilities and priorities.

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

RiverLink has a long-term and unique commitment to restoring neglected French Broad River parcels and creating destinations that conserve and elevate Asheville's riverfront for public access and enjoyment. This project continues RiverLink's established approach to a small but unique site in a long industrial corridor.

By 1904, as the location of Asheville's Riverside Park, the subject property was part of a destination featuring an iconic carousel, a large boathouse, and a movie screen on the riverbank where movies could be viewed from a boat. Live music was featured in a popular dance hall. Trolleys powered by hydroelectricity generated on the French Broad brought visitors from downtown and West Asheville. Unfortunately, the historic Riverside Park was damaged by fire in 1915 and completely destroyed by the great flood of 1916.

As with so many properties along the river's industrial corridor, this parcel was surrendered to blight and neglect that continued for decades. During the 1950s and early 1960s, the City of Asheville operated a large landfill adjacent to the property. RiverLink acquired the parcel in 2011 through a generous donation, adding it to the portfolio of sites that, if restored, would advance the Wilma Dykeman Riverway as a link to a variety of regional destinations.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

RiverLink embraces the creative potential along with the challenges presented by this property. On the creative side, we're excited at the prospect of returning the carousel-inspired pavilion. This park avoids creating public river access, in part because there is a city-owned public access point directly across Pearson

Bridge Rd, and also due to constraints including existing rights of way. There is a Norfolk Southern Railroad line running through the western third of the property, and a Duke Energy powerline right-of-way. While these rights-of-way reduce the space that can be developed for amenities, it also provides an opportunity to create an inviting, intimate green space in this industrial corridor, as shown in the design created for this park by Equinox Environmental. The berm-elevated Norfolk-Southern railway provides a natural boundary (to be posted accordingly) and helps ensure flood resilience and the preservation of the riparian zone -- underscoring the importance of the shade trees on the bank of the river, where they fulfill an important stabilizing function.

Lastly, the site's proximity to a historic landfill raises the possibility of soil contamination that could emerge during construction. While recent sampling did not indicate any contaminants, an environmental assessment planned for May, 2024 will provide added confirmation and we will proceed accordingly.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

Gateway Park represents a high-priority opportunity with 3 major bike and pedestrian projects in development now. These multimodal transit projects – one each by NC Dept of Transportation, Buncombe County and City of Asheville – will improve safety and accessibility, connecting to the existing greenway network. Gateway Park will be the only public greenspace in the busy 2.5-mile corridor between the River Arts District(RAD) and Woodfin's Silver-Line Park.

-Riverside Drive Multi-use Protected Lanes (NCDOT) - Riverside Drive is the most heavily used bike road in the MPO, at times carrying as many bikes as cars. NCDOT's I-26 Connector Project will improve Riverside Dr from Hill Street to Broadway (near UNCA), creating pedestrian paths and buffered bike lanes on both sides of the road, ultimately connecting to the Reed Creek Greenway. When complete, use of this corridor is expected to increase.

-Woodfin Greenway Blueway (Town of Woodfin/Buncombe Co.) - With Taylor's Wave and Riverside Park's expansion set to begin construction this year – followed by 5 miles of new greenway – WGB will represent a unique destination.

-Wilma Dykeman Greenway Extension – North RADTIP The City of Asheville's "North RADTIP" project will deliver a missing link, extending the system from its current terminus at White Duck Taco, along Riverside Dr to Pearson Bridge. The City has committed \$4 million to this project that will connect the RAD to its northern terminus across the street from Gateway Park

## How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

We do not anticipate significant limitations to public access, although this property intentionally will not include a public parking lot as it is specifically designed to support bike and pedestrian access. We anticipate that most users will arrive on foot, bike, and even some by water craft, with others using the additional variety of modes seen on nearby greenways and multi-use paths, including roller blades, skateboards, scooters, etc. Some visitors may park at the city's public parking and boat access just across the street.

Gateway Park will offer amenities including native plantings, benches, a small covered pavilion and educational signage (but not restrooms or drinking fountains). The property will not be available to rent/lease for private events, but will be available for small groups to congregate organically.

## If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The proposed Gateway Park lies at the nexus of several local communities that will be linked by public greenways and multi-use transit corridors to be developed over the next several years by the city, county, and NCDOT. The park will be within bike and walking distance of the Bingham Heights neighborhood on the west side of the river, and the Montford Hills neighborhood to the east. Broadway St. neighborhoods will be connected via the Reed Creek Greenway. In addition, it will be a supporting asset linked to the expanded greenway network known as the Woodfin Greenway Blueway.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

Accessibility and ADA compliance is important to RiverLink and to our public spaces. Our founder, Karen Cragolin, spent her later years in a wheelchair. Karen Cragolin Park was intentionally designed with a 14-foot-wide greenway to ensure easy access and mobility for all. The same intention will be brought to Gateway with the main pathway through this parklet constructed level using hard-packed crushed granite fines. It will be built and maintained to ADA accessible standards. The width of the main trail will be a minimum of 5' wide, and the gateway structures will be designed with accessibility in mind. The pavilion will also be designed to be fully accessible.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

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### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

RiverLink has prioritized Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in its current Strategic Plan, and our staff and board work daily to ensure we are creating a watershed that is inclusive and inviting for all. We are mindful of gentrification that can follow these types of recreational and outdoor improvements. This project creates a natural and inviting green gateway in the primarily industrial/commercial corridor between the River Arts

District and the Town of Woodfin – a town whose humble socioeconomic demographic distinguishes it from that of North Asheville and the River Arts District. Woodfin Elementary is the smallest of Buncombe County Schools; the majority of its students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. This project represents an investment in a natural green space that will deliver benefits to adjacent communities that haven't enjoyed as many environmental and passive recreation investments as their Asheville neighbors.

### Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?

Not every eligible driver in Buncombe County owns a car. People who bike rather than drive -- by choice or for economic reasons -- will have a new opportunity to pause and enjoy a public green space in this busy transit corridor. The urban neighborhood of Montford Hills and the more rural neighborhood of Bingham Heights both include many low-income households who will be able to safely walk or bike to Gateway Park once the planned multi-modal transit improvements are in place along Riverside Drive.

### Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?

If yes, which projects?

Gateway Park will be a 1.4-mile walk or bike ride from the Hillcrest public housing community to the south. The Town of Woodfin is also prioritizing current and future affordable housing to preserve their working class history as new recreational amenities are being built. Seniors and low-wealth households are also present in the neighborhoods adjacent to Gateway Park, but we are not aware of new housing for this demographic planned nearby at this time.

### What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

A key element in the site's history is the former Riverside Park, a popular attraction that featured a boathouse, movie screen, dance hall, carousel, caged animal displays and more, all served by the hydroelectric trolley bringing visitors from downtown and West Asheville. As history indicates, another important element for any riverside park is the site's history of flooding and the natural flood regime. The original park was partially damaged by fire in 1915, and the Great Flood of 1916 demolished the rest. Gateway Park will tell these stories through signage that interprets both the human history and ecological history of the site.

As locals know, many of these riverside properties are now commercial/industrial or neglected, as in the case of the Gateway parcel, so the development of a new passive park allows for an investment in the return of an inviting public space led by conservation.

### Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

Community involvement has been states quo at RiverLink for the past thirty-five years. Community input was extremely important to RiverLink's earliest efforts to create a published vision for the network of riverside parks, paved paths, and other amenities now visible in Asheville's River District. From Hominy Creek to Woodfin, that vision of public green spaces connected along a healthier French Broad River has been foundational.

For Gateway, we have been in communication with the Parks and Recreation Departments at the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, where leadership supports the project. Please see the attached letters of support. Part of Gateway's "community" are these institutional partners who are bringing multi-model transit infrastructure that will deliver visitors to Gateway Park along with the parks and passive recreation spaces in the River Arts District and the Woodfin Greenway Blueway. RiverLink works closely with Lucy Crown, City of Asheville's Transportation Planning Manager; she is delighted this park will be built adjacent to their new Wilma Dykeman North Greenway terminus. RiverLink is also the nonprofit partner in this ambitious project and works closely with Woodfin Town leadership. The Gateway project represents a logical "connecting dot" between two very large regional recreation investments (RADTIP + WGB).

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

We are not aware of any significant negative impacts of the proposed improvements to this 1.5-acre property on adjacent communities. RiverLink and volunteers will provide ongoing stewardship and maintenance of Gateway Park. Trash collection, graffiti removal, weeding and mulching, and all other activities are part of the park's annual maintenance plan, led by RiverLink's Land Resources program and supported by volunteers. Expanding public use of the city's river access point at Pearson Bridge may impact the French Broad Outfitters location at 704 Riverside Dr., as tubers and paddlers pull in/out and begin using the new Gateway Park, and load/unload gear at this location. RiverLink will maintain communication with the city and the outfitter to address any concerns within our sphere of influence.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

RiverLink has a rich history of restoring formerly industrial and blighted properties and, through remediation and partnership, creating climate-resilient, inclusive recreational spaces for community members and visitors alike. While historically our public spaces have been deeded to the City of Asheville, much like our newest public asset – Karen Cragnolin Park – we will continue to own and manage Gateway Park through a detailed management plan and committed financial resources to ensure the park thrives. Invasive species management is a key element of the long-term management plan. Gateway Park is designed to be easily maintained through its focus on native species, preserving the existing woodland and providing natural-surface pathways to connect the new amenities. As an accredited land trust, RiverLink has a dedicated Land Program focused on caring for these types of properties. Program staff create the management plans required for all our fee-simple properties and coordinate teams of volunteers throughout the year to maintain them. In addition, we secure a stewardship fund as part of our fundraising efforts to ensure we have the financial resources to maintain these parks going forward.

RiverLink's legacy and commitment to parks and public access is observable throughout the RAD and we are delighted to turn our attention to this essential connector between Asheville's riverside amenities and the Town of Woodfin's visionary investments in the WGB Project.

## Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

RiverLink's Land Resources Manager, Hannah Coats, will oversee the management and maintenance of Gateway Park. Serving for two years as an AmeriCorps Project Conserve member at RiverLink before becoming a permanent staff member, she now coordinates and works alongside volunteers to remove invasive plants, clean up litter, remove graffiti, and manage all aspects of the stewardship of RiverLink's portfolio of protected properties with support from our AmeriCorps Stewardship Coordinator. She has a B.S. in Environmental Science with a minor in Natural Resource Management from Western Carolina University and has extensive experience identifying and managing invasive plants, coordinating and leading volunteer groups, and planning conservation-oriented improvements to RiverLink's park properties/easements.

In addition to our Land Resources Manager, our AmeriCorps Project Conserve Stewardship Coordinator provides full-time support to our land program, particularly to the volunteer program. They serve eleven-month terms with us (often serving two consecutive terms) and greatly enhance our capacity to steward our properties.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

RiverLink enjoys a lean but highly capable team. Martha Goss, our Finance and Operations Manager -- an attorney by training -- is skilled in all aspects of RiverLink's financial management. In conjunction with Hannah Coats, Land Resources Manager (background provided above) and Lisa Raleigh, Executive Director (an experienced nonprofit fundraiser and leader who holds a PhD in hydrology) plus a dedicated 15-member Board of Trustees (including two financial experts), there is a strong team that oversees the organization's finances. The Land Resources team recently successfully oversaw the design and building of the \$1.1 million Karen Cragnolin Park greenway phase, in addition to its ongoing stewardship and management projects. This same group is overseeing all aspects of Gateway Park and is confident in its ability to complete this project, which is more modest in financial scope and ongoing management.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

\$50,000 has been secured to maintain the Gateway site for the first ten years. After that, RiverLink will incorporate Gateway's stewardship into its annual operations. Please see the attached Gateway Park Management Plan for an overview of the annual investment for the next several years. As we previously shared, as an accredited land trust, RiverLink has a dedicated Land Program focused on caring for these types of properties. Program staff create the management plans required for all our fee-simple properties and coordinate teams of volunteers throughout the year to maintain them. In addition, we hold and reserve a stewardship fund as part of our routine fundraising effort to ensure the financial resources to maintain our portfolio of properties going forward.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

RiverLink's legacy and commitment to riverparks and public access is observable throughout the River Arts District and we are delighted to turn our attention to this essential connector between Asheville's riverside amenities and the Town of Woodfin's visionary investments in the WGB Project. As with Karen Cragnolin Park in the RAD, RiverLink's Land Program will schedule quarterly volunteer days for Gateway Park — expanding to monthly during the growing season — to remove emerging invasives and ensure the new plantings are thriving. Volunteers are recruited through our monthly newsletter and managed through a cloud-based system, which gathers signups on RiverLink's website. In addition, staff will inspect the new structures (pavilion, benches, and signage) on a weekly basis across the year to remove graffiti and address any damage to the built amenities.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

Gateway Park Management Plan.pdf

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

The total cost is projected at \$615,037 with \$466,162 meeting the Bond eligibility criteria. We request \$200,000 to fully complete all the structures (including the carousel-inspired pavilion, 2 arched gateway entrance signs, 8 benches and signage), surface trails and all the native plantings (including trees, shrubs, plugs and seed) totalling \$204,348. See the attached Scope of Work.

Please note: our funding mix includes a private donor and a Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Legacy Investment From Tourism (LIFT) grant request in addition to some smaller requests. However, we are not guaranteed to receive a full or partial TDA grant.

In addition, our goal from the beginning was to have the private donor, the BC Open Space Bond and the TDA all make \$200,000 contributions to this project. We feel strongly that a private donor should not carry the largest commitment in a nonprofit-owned and managed public recreational space when other County funding sources exist for supporting such a development.

To be competitive for the TDA/LIFT grant which opened in late 2023, we needed 50% of the project funding secured. Hence we asked our donor if they would increase their commitment to \$300,000. We would like to restore the donor's commitment to \$200,000 and the TDA/LIFT also back to \$200,000 (if they award support). The remaining \$100,000 private donor dollars would be invested in future amenities at Gateway Park and in other much-needed watershed commitments and improvements.

## What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

RiverLink has secured a major funding commitment from a private donor, and is awaiting notice of support now pending from the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority, Buncombe County Strategic

Partnership Fund, and Connect Buncombe. In addition, outside of the scope of work for this proposal for Open Space Bond funds, we are also pursuing CFWNC Pigeon River Fund for support of restoration activities in the protected riparian zone along the river bank.

As shared above, if Passive Rec funds our \$200,000 request, we are confident between the other pending requests we will have the commitments necessary to be fully funded and move forward immediately with the project's full design and construction. Your \$200,000 commitment would ensure our success even in the event the TDA/LIFT funds were not awarded or were less than our ask.

## If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

This project could still be carried out as currently budgeted with a minimum award of \$28,960 from the Open Space Bond -- but only if the TDA/LIFT funds are awarded at our full request (together with the funds in hand from our private donor and the two smaller grant requests shown above). However, as explained above, we respectfully ask you to consider the full request amount of \$200,000 as it will enable RiverLink to move forward with Gateway, and if we do receive TDA support (where recent communications suggest a favorable outcome), we will achieve the goal of balancing the investments of our three major stakeholders into equal portions. This feels appropriate and inspiring for a project where a nonprofit is developing and managing a new public space for locals and visitors and is leading with conservation and passive recreation values for decades to come.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

**Recreation:** During 2021-22, some 2,688 new residents moved to Buncombe from elsewhere, creating a net gain in population. Yet a 2019 study by National Recreation Parks Assoc shows the amount of park facilities in Buncombe is below that of comparable communities nationally. We will need to add more recreation and passive green space to keep pace with an attribute a majority indicate is important to the quality of life.

**Tourism:** As the number of hotel rooms in Buncombe continues to increase, complaints of a slowdown among hoteliers must be contextualized: 2021 and 2022 were some of the busiest years for tourism this community has ever seen. Recent data from Explore Asheville show January 2023 and 2024 bookings are up compared to pre-pandemic figures from January 2019; this trend continues the strong upward trend in overnight visitors marked in recent years. The surge of visitors in 2021-22 was likely because Asheville, with its many outdoor

attractions, was considered a safe destination to visit in the mid- & post-pandemic times, and it is a “drive market,” meaning many visitors don't have to fly here. For those who walk/own bikes – or rent them from one of several new bike rental outfits – this project will enhance their experience.

Public Services: Project anticipates Buncombe’s development of the multi-modal transit amenities now planned for Riverside Drive, where it will provide the sole public green space for pedestrians and cyclists utilizing this busy transit corridor.

## Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

This project is in strong alignment with state and local plans for transit improvements and new green spaces connecting existing and proposed outdoor amenities in the RAD, Reed Creek, and Woodfin:

1. NCDOT improvements – Riverside Drive Multi-use Protected Lanes: Riverside Drive is the most heavily used bike road in the MPO, at times carrying as many bikes as cars. NCDOT’s I-26 Connector Project will improve Riverside Drive from Hill Street to Broadway (near UNCA), creating pedestrian paths and buffered bike lanes on both sides of the road, ultimately connecting to the Reed Creek Greenway. When complete, use of this corridor is expected to increase.
2. The City of Asheville has allocated funds to create protected bike and pedestrian infrastructure along Riverside Drive from the greenway terminus at White Duck Taco to the intersection of Broadway, where users will be able to continue on the Reed Creek greenway or on item 3) below
3. Buncombe County has committed to creating protected bike and pedestrian lanes along Riverside Drive heading north toward Woodfin, where and expanded greenway network will be developed through the nearly fully funded Woodfin Greenway Blueway.
4. Buncombe County and Asheville Parks + Rec departments are both in the midst of developing new parks & greenways master plans, with their requirements for community engagement. RiverLink looks forward to new opportunities to promote and participate in the planning process.

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

City of Asheville D. Tyrell McGirt, dtmcgirt@ashevillenc.gov; Pete Wall, pwall@ashevillenc.gov; Lucy Crown, lcrown@ashevillenc.gov Buncombe County: Allison Dains, Allison.Dains@buncombecounty.org Thomas Gull, Thomas.Gull@buncombecounty.org

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

Gateway Park's design addresses safety concerns through the following:

The park's public access is designed to be in the front ~1-acre portion of the parcel, away from the Norfolk Southern rail track and berm. While these tracks are not used often if at all, we will post signage between the berm and the developed park alerting visitors not to enter this area and to please stay off the track and berm.

The understory of the sycamore forest will be cleared of invasive vines and plants in order to maintain visibility for safety purposes as well as the health of the trees.

Until the NC Riverside Drive protected multi-use bike lanes are constructed, Gateway's pathways and user amenities will not connect to Riverside Drive until the improvements are made – keeping folks safely in the park interior.

Gateway Park will not create river access; as described above, the City owns a river access point across the street. Gateway visitors can reach this access point by crossing Pearson Bridge Road. Either way, we won't be creating or managing any river access.

RiverLink will address any additional safety concerns as they emerge both during construction and upon completion as we are agile and able to adjust accordingly. Like Karen Cragolin Park, RiverLink's General Warranty Liability insurance will cover the public usage.

Overnight camping will not be allowed. Posted signage will support this, as will our relationship with Homeward Bound.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

RiverLink is experienced in dealing with property deterioration and vandalism that arises in a public park. We intentionally use park infrastructure materials that are coated for easy removal of graffiti (on signage, park benches, etc.) and routinely paint over graffiti as needed. We also are experienced and thoughtful in assisting houseless people in their relocation to more appropriate locations through our relationship with Homeward Bound and other services to ensure encampments do not develop on our properties. Lastly, staff visit, inspect and manage our properties on a regular schedule as part of our management plan and are capable and skilled in this space.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

Gateway is being designed as a passive and natural outdoor park amenity to enjoy after arriving on foot, bike, or water craft. We will post tasteful signs at both ends asking cyclists to dismount before entering the park and we will seek additional funding after park construction to place bike racks to allow cyclists to enjoy the amenities on foot. Beyond that, we don't envision user groups competing with one another given the park's design and projected use.

## Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.

Gateway Park will be plainly visible to travellers along Riverside Drive and Pearson Bridge Rd. Because Gateway is located at a nexus of future multi-modal travel in a well-marked North-South corridor – including the bridge over to Richmond Hill Park (also well marked) – we don't believe we will require any navigation signage at this time but will happily adjust and create it if deemed necessary as construction progresses to completion. As described above, we are planning for artful historical and environmental signage throughout the park as part of its experience and design.

## *Applicant Experience*

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### Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

RiverLink is an accredited land trust working to advance the health of the French Broad watershed through projects in three program areas: Water Resources, Land Resources, and Education. Over the past 35 years, RiverLink has led the charge to revitalize a highly degraded section of the French Broad River and its urban tributaries through the restoration of contaminated lands and degraded streams and development of parks, greenways, volunteer stewardship, and more.

In the past year, RiverLink measured its success through dozens of innovative stormwater and stream bank restoration projects installed; over 500 volunteers engaged in ecological restoration and stewardship activities; opening of a new riverside park (Karen Cragolin Park) on a former brownfield along Amboy Rd.; and providing hands-on freshwater ecology lessons to some 5,000 K-12 students at no cost to their school/program. These activities and more are supported by 11 full-time staff (seven permanent and four Americorps members). Our fiscal capacity is indicated through a balanced annual budget and a 6-month operating reserve. RiverLink also holds a significant endowment whose interest earnings help sustain the organization's operations in the long term.

### Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

Following the completion of the Greenway Phase of Karen Cragolin Park in 2023, RiverLink is turning its attention to Gateway "Pocket" Park in 2024. RiverLink has a rich history of securing formerly blighted properties and thru remediation and partnership, creating climate-resilient, inclusive recreational spaces for the community. While historically our public spaces have been deeded to the City of Asheville, we will continue to own Karen Cragolin Park, executing a detailed management plan with committed financial resources to ensure the park thrives. This scenario will likely hold true for Gateway Park, designed to be easily maintained through its focus on native species, preserving the existing woodland and maintaining natural-surface pathways to connect the new amenities. As an accredited land trust, RiverLink has a dedicated Land Program focused on caring for these types of properties. Program staff create the management plans required for all our fee-simple properties and coordinate teams of volunteers throughout the year to maintain them. In addition, we secure a stewardship fund as part of our fundraising efforts to ensure we have the financial resources to maintain these parks going forward.

RiverLink's legacy and commitment to riverparks and public access is observable throughout the RAD and we are delighted to turn our attention to this essential connector between Asheville's riverside amenities and the Town of Woodfin's visionary investments in the WGB Project.

## Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

In addition to RiverLink, whose extensive qualifications were outlined above, Equinox Environmental Landscape Architecture Firm is a premier Asheville-based firm working to design and build outdoor park projects throughout the southeast. Equinox is a consulting, planning, and design firm with a focus on conservation, sustainability, and environmentally responsible land development projects, particularly those of the moist southern Appalachian Mountains. Their clients include a wide range of private, public, and nonprofit entities, as well as individual landowners. Equinox is a trusted partner and regional leader in design, planning, ecology, and sustainability projects. As a result, the firm has received numerous honors and awards.

## Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

501c3 Determination Ltr\_RiverLink.pdf

## Resumes of Key Staff

Resumes - Merged.pdf

## *Budget*

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### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

The project is ready to move from the preliminary design phase into the creation of construction-ready documents. The \$615,037 proposed budget takes the project from today through completion. As previously stated, \$466,162 of the project budget is eligible for bond funding consideration. Equinox Environmental created the proposed budget and is committed to completing the project within this cost amount.

The attached budget itemizes all components and associated costs for the project including:

- Mobilization, site preparation (environmental assessment, clearing and grubbing, grading, invasive removal, storm drainage and erosion control),
- Hard surface and trails (natural surface and crushed stone),
- The carousel-inspired pavilion structure,
- All plantings (tree, shrubs, plugs and seeds),
- Interpretive signage, gateways, benches),
- Project contingency,
- Design and permitting,
- Project administration/oversight; and
- Long-term stewardship.

This \$200,000 request would fully fund the following components:  
all the structures (including the carousel-inspired pavilion, 2 arched gateway entrance signs, 8 benches and signage),  
all the surface trails  
all the native plantings (including trees, shrubs, plugs and seed)

## **Project Budget**

BC Passive Rec Gateway Budget - Pearson.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

Gateway Board Resolution 03282024.pdf

### **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Gateway renderings merged-compressed.pdf

### **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Gateway Images as PDF.pdf

### **Letters of Support**

LOS merged - AVL and Woodfin.pdf

### **Other Documentation**

Gateway site photos LR.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Scope of Work \_\_ Gateway Park - Google Docs.pdf
- Project Schedule \_\_ Gateway Park - Google Docs.pdf
- Gateway Park Management Plan.pdf
- 501c3 Determination Ltr\_RiverLink.pdf
- Resumes - Merged.pdf
- BC Passive Rec Gateway Budget - Pearson.pdf
- Gateway Board Resolution 03282024.pdf
- Gateway renderings merged-compressed.pdf
- Gateway Images as PDF.pdf
- LOS merged - AVL and Woodfin.pdf
- Gateway site photos LR.pdf

## **Scope of Work :: Gateway Park**

Environmental Assessment + Follow Up – \$12,500

Complete Design + Permitting - \$88,875

Contractor Mobilization - \$20,000

Site preparation and construction including: clearing and grubbing, rough and fine grading, invasive removal, stormwater control measures, erosion control, project contingencies. – \$214,314

Natural surface trails – wood chips or pea gravel – \$25,248

Construction of structures including: carousel-inspired pavilion (500 square feet); two arched gateway entrances, eight benches and signage: \$160,600

Native plantings including: trees, shrubs, plugs and seed – \$18,500

Project Administration, Oversight, Management and Stewardship – \$75,000

**Project Total: \$615,037**

**Open Space Bond Eligible: \$466,162** (excludes disallowable costs including design, admin, maintenance and stewardship)

## **Project Schedule :: Gateway Park**

RiverLink is donated the property: **2011**

Selection of Landscape Design Firm: **2019, Equinox Environmental**

Updated design + rendering + draft budget: **Fall 2023**

Secure 100% funding: **August 2024**

Environmental assessment—including additional soil testing: **August 2024**

Finalize design documents: **October 2024**

Initiate construction: **December 2024**

Project completion: **Summer 2025**

# Management Plan: Gateway Park

706 Riverside Dr., Asheville, NC 28801

Created: 3/26/2024

Hannah Coats, RiverLink Land Resources Manager

## **Site Description:**

In July 2011, RiverLink was donated 2.5 acres (with today ~1.2 acres to be developed into a public park) from Richmond Hill Inc. located at 706 Riverside Dr., Asheville, NC 28801. The property is located between the French Broad River (on the river-right side) and Riverside Dr. and features a Norfolk Southern railroad line that divides the property, as well as several utilities (Duke power lines, MDS sewer line) throughout the property. While no evidence suggests that the previous landfill (located across Pearson Bridge Road from the property) ever extended to our property, it was entered into the Brownfields Program when it was donated to RiverLink. No further progress was made in the Brownfields Program, and as mentioned, we have no reason to believe the landfill ever existed at this site.

At the time of this report, the understory of the property is largely made up of invasive plant species and the property is in a “wild” state. But the roadside portion of the property (the largest portion), once developed, will be a “pocket park” that features natural surface trails, a pavilion reminiscent of the historic Riverside Park Carousel, benches, educational “story-telling” signage, entryway arches, pollinator patches, mowed lawn, and mature trees. This management plan will speak to the maintenance needs post park development.

## **Conservation Values:**

### Natural:

- Restoration and preservation of urban forest canopy
- Restoration of Riparian Habitat along French Broad River (outside of park development) -  
Wildlife habitat improvement
- Flood and stormwater runoff mitigation
- Supports Climate resilience (all of the above included in this)

### Cultural:

- Reimagination of historic Riverside Park
- “Story-telling” signage that will educate users

### Community:

- Early after completion and before greenway improvements: will be a respite for current cyclists that utilize Riverside Dr. and paddlers who utilize the City of Asheville owned river access point directly across Pearson Bridge Rd.
- After Greenway and Multi-use Path Improvements: usage will significantly increase, and this park will serve as the only publicly accessible greenspace from the River Arts District to Silverline Park.

### **Management Goals and Objectives:**

**Overall Goal:** To establish and maintain a park that boasts native pollinator habitat, mature forest, elegant signage, and other amenities, and is ultimately a pleasant resting point for current and future greenways users and paddlers.

**Work Plan:** Address the maintenance needs of the park post construction. *\$50,000 allocated for ongoing stewardship.*

- YEAR 1: **\$15,000**
  - Contract out invasive plant management, mowing, tree work, etc.
  - Purchase of supplies for staff and volunteers to maintain the park.
  - Reach out to City of Asheville regarding potential trash receptacles and pick-up
  - Staff time to oversee contractors, coordinate and lead volunteer groups, and oversee park management.
  - Every two-weeks property walk through to remove litter, graffiti, etc.
  
- YEAR 2: **\$9,000**
  - Contract out invasive plant management (particularly for Japanese knotweed), mowing, tree work, etc. as needed.
  - Begin shifting to primarily stewarding the park with volunteers and staff ○ Purchase of supplies for staff and volunteers to maintain the park.
  - Staff time to oversee contractors, coordinate and lead volunteer groups, and oversee park management.
  - Every two-weeks property walk through to remove litter, graffiti, etc.
  
- YEAR 3: **\$6,000**
  - Contract out invasive plant management (particularly for Japanese knotweed), mowing, tree work, etc. as needed
  - Ongoing management with volunteers and staff
  - Purchase of supplies for staff and volunteers to maintain the park.
  - Staff time to oversee contractors, coordinate and lead volunteer groups, and oversee park management.
  - Every two-weeks property walk through to remove litter, graffiti, etc.
  
- YEAR 4 AND BEYOND: **\$5,000 annually**
  - Shift to ongoing maintenance schedule utilizing remaining stewardship fund - \$20,000 remaining which will last until YEAR 7. After which we will absorb the \$5,000 annual maintenance costs into our organizational operating budget.
  - Contract out invasive plant management, mowing, tree work, etc. as needed ○ Ongoing management with volunteers and staff.
  - Purchase of supplies for staff and volunteers to maintain the park.
  - Staff time to oversee contractors, coordinate and lead volunteer groups, and oversee park management.

- Every two-weeks property walk through to remove litter, graffiti, etc.

**Uses and Restrictions:**

- Publicly accessible park on roadside half of property
- Riverside portion of property across Norfolk Southern railroad closed to the public

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
DISTRICT DIRECTOR  
C - 1130  
ATLANTA, GA 30301

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **SEP 29 1993**

RIVERLINK INC  
PO BOX 15488  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28813

*file*

Employer Identification Number:  
58-1867958  
Case Number:  
583260008  
Contact Person:  
ROBERTA VAN METER  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(404) 331-0185  
Our Letter Dated:  
February 2, 1990  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

This modifies our letter of the above date in which we stated that you would be treated as an organization that is not a private foundation until the expiration of your advance ruling period.

Your exempt status under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) is still in effect. Based on the information you submitted, we have determined that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are an organization of the type described in section 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

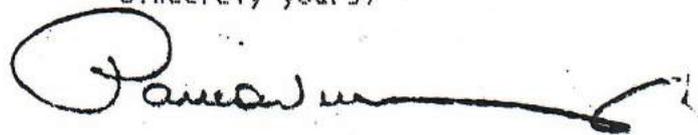
Grantors and contributors may rely on this determination unless the Internal Revenue Service publishes notice to the contrary. However, if you lose your section 509(a)(1) status, a grantor or contributor may not rely on this determination if he or she was in part responsible for, or was aware of, the act or failure to act, or the substantial or material change on the part of the organization that resulted in your loss of such status, or if he or she acquired knowledge that the Internal Revenue Service had given notice that you would no longer be classified as a section 509(a)(1) organization.

If we have indicated in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the addendum enclosed is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your private foundation status, please keep it in your permanent records.

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown above.

Sincerely yours,



Paul Williams  
District Director

## Martha Goss

124 Montford Avenue, Apt 2 • Asheville, NC 28801  
704-640-4808 • martha@riverlink.org

### Experience

RiverLink, Inc. Jul 2023-present

Finance and Operations Manager

*Oversees financial and organizational operations, establishes and maintains sound financial policies, produces accurate and timely financial information to ensure RiverLink's fiscal sustainability, transparency, and integrity, and provides support to the Board of Directors in carrying out its duties*

Carolina Malt House, Inc. Nov 2016-Jul 2023

Office Manager

*Drafted and negotiated contracts with vendors and customers, prepared financial reports, maintained bookkeeping system and financial records, ran payroll, maintained personnel records and human resources documents, managed shipping and receiving, scheduled and coordinated customer and community tours, and represented the company at community and industry events*

inVentiv Health Clinical Aug 2015-Nov 2016

Legal Contracts Associate II, Apr 2016-Nov 2016

Site Contracts Associate II, Aug 2015-Apr 2016

*Negotiated clinical trial agreement language and budgets, managed other negotiators and the contracting portion of site start-up globally across multiple studies, and liaised with internal teams and external clients*

INC Research, LLC Apr 2014-Aug 2015

Site Contracts Analyst, Jun 2015-Aug 2015

Site Contracts Specialist, Apr 2014-Jun 2015

*Managed the site contract and budget negotiation process across multiple studies, developed contract and budget templates suitable to each study's needs, and coordinated with internal teams and external customers to ensure timely completion of quality work product*

Northup McConnell & Sizemore, PLLC Nov 2013-Feb 2014

LLPF Fellow

*Conducted legal research on civil law issues and procedure, assisted with trial preparation, met with clients and witnesses in preparation for trial, drafted memos, motions, and other documents during the litigation process*

Wake Forest School of Law Community Law & Business Clinic May 2012-Aug 2012

Summer Associate

*Researched clients' legal questions, drafted business contracts, advised clients on the development of their business ventures, and counseled clients facing foreclosure about their options*

Wallace & Graham, PA  
Summer Associate

May 2011-Jul 2011

*Drafted discovery request letters, summarized depositions, researched and drafted memos, and organized information collected during the discovery phase in preparation for trial*

Pharmaceutical Product Development (PPD)

Sep 2007-Aug 2010

Clinical Submission Specialist, Jan 2009-Aug 2010

Site Start-up Associate, Apr 2008-Jan 2009

Site Start-up Assistant, Jan 2008-Apr 2008

Project Assistant, Sep 2007-Jan 2008

*Developed collaborative relationships with investigative sites and client company personnel during start-up of clinical trials while working within FDA Good Clinical Practices, ICH Guidelines, and Global Standard Operating Procedures*

### **Bar Admission**

North Carolina State Bar, admitted Aug 2013

### **Education**

Wake Forest School of Law, Winston Salem, NC

Juris Doctor, May 2013

Study abroad: Vienna, Austria, Summer 2011

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

Bachelor of Arts, Chemistry, May 2007

Bachelor of Arts, Spanish, May 2007

Study abroad: University of Seville, Spring 2007

# HANNAH M. COATS

[hannah@riverlink.org](mailto:hannah@riverlink.org) | (828) 803-1062

38 Tylers Cookie Ln, Asheville, NC 28806

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## Education

Western Carolina University

B.S. in Environmental Science

Minor in Natural Resource Management

GPA: 3.555

Graduation: May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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## Experience

### ***RiverLink's Land Resources Manager: April 2023 - Present***

- RiverLink is an environmental nonprofit and land trust based out of Asheville, NC whose mission is to promote the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River and its watershed for all.
- Play an integral part in creating the plans, priorities and processes to build a strong Land Resources Program, including writing grants to secure funding for the program and projects.
- Work to steward RiverLink's existing fee-simple and conserved properties with the ultimate goal of protecting land as a means of improving water quality, protection of riparian habitat, and public access throughout the French Broad River watershed.
- Work in collaboration with the Watershed Resources Manager on watershed improvement projects and programs that include riparian corridor protection.
- Supervise the AmeriCorps Project Conserve Stewardship Coordinator

### ***AmeriCorps Project Conserve – RiverLink's Stewardship Coordinator: September 2021 to April 2023***

- Assisted the Land Resources Manager on land protection, restoration, and public access projects in the French Broad River watershed.
- Managed the Volunteer Program. This includes responding to requests, organizing, and supervising volunteer work days with private and public groups to facilitate stewardship of our protected properties, as well as outreach for these events in the form of social media posts and creating website content.
  - Led over 800 individual volunteers who contributed over 1800 hours since September 2021.
- Outreach and Education.
- Grant Writing

### ***Certifications and Trainings Through AmeriCorps***

- Stream Repair Certification from NC State Cooperative Extension
- Wilderness First Aid Certification

- Trainings in Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Justice

***Independent Contract with RiverLink – August 2022***

- During the gap month between AmeriCorps terms, was hired on by RiverLink to assist the Land Resources Manager with a public access project funded by the CFHC grant in Hendersonville for Mud Creek.
  - Worked to clear woody blockages along Mud Creek to allow passage for recreational users

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**Knowledge and Skills**

- *Land Conservation and Management – including holding and monitoring conservation easements*
- *GIS, Microsoft, Google, and Avenza*
- *Problem Solving*
- *Multitasking*
- *Organization*
- *Communication*
- *Leadership and Supervision*
- *Grant Writing*

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**References**

**Jack Henderson**

Paddle Trail Manager  
MountainTrue  
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610  
Asheville, NC 28801  
jack@mountaintrue.org

**Lisa Raleigh**

Executive Director  
RiverLink  
170 Lyman St.  
Asheville, NC 28801  
lisa@riverlink.org



 LISA RALEIGH, PHD

970-274-2012

[lisaraleigh@gmail.com](mailto:lisaraleigh@gmail.com)[linkedin.com/in/lisaraleighphd](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lisaraleighphd)

## Profile

I am a life-long learner with a passion for the environment, education and social justice. My work is strategic, creative and goal oriented. I enjoy strong written and oral communication skills with significant experience in nonprofit leadership, fundraising, public relations, communications and public speaking.

## Experience

Executive Director, RiverLink, Asheville, NC (2021 – present)

Overseeing all aspects of this 35-year old conservation organization and land trust committed to the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River watershed and the communities that live alongside her. Organizational partnerships include municipalities and counties (staff and elected officials), donors and grantors, and broad community support.

Independent Development Consultant, Lisa Raleigh Unlimited, Redstone, CO (2019 - 2021)

Igniting ideas, generating results and exceeding expectations by partnering with like-minded organizations elevating and delivering fundraising, strategic planning initiatives and results.

Director of Advancement, Colorado Rocky Mountain School, Carbondale, CO (2010 - 2019) and  
Director of Communication (2008 - 2010)

Directed the school's robust development and marketing operation overseeing all aspects of annual, capital, endowment and planned giving including a successful \$11M capital campaign and annually raising \$1M+ with a dynamic and collaborative team.

Associate Publisher, Big Stone Publications, Carbondale, CO (2003 – 2007)

Led the advertising and marketing effort for this agile and authentic group of outdoor titles including *Rock & Ice* and *Trail Runner*, in addition to partnering and delivering creative revenue streams beyond traditional print advertising.

Founding Partner, Backbone Media, Carbondale, CO (1997 - 2003)

Backbone Media was born out of a passion and love for the outdoors with the goal to provide dedicated, authentic and impactful public relations and media buying expertise for outdoor specialty brands. What began as a humble entrepreneurship partnership has grown and expanded into a dominating force of influence in the outdoor industry today.

## Education

PhD, Environmental Science, University of Oklahoma

MS, Environmental Science, University of Oklahoma

BS, Geology, University of Oklahoma

## Volunteer Service

For the Good: Board Member (2019 to present)

Educating girls is one of the most effective ways to combat poverty and climate change, yet 52 million girls who live in Sub-Saharan Africa are not enrolled in school. For the Good works to change that through focusing on three key pillars proven to increase girls' access to education: enrolling out-of-school children; opening secondary schools and activating local leadership.

## CASA of the Ninth

I am trained as a Court Appointed Special Advocate and supported and represented children in the foster care system in Garfield County, CO.

## Traits

I am a quick study, self-starter, high achiever with a tremendous amount of energy and ideas. I enjoy utilizing my skills in new applications, fast paced environments and am incredibly success oriented. I am a passionate outdoor person and international traveler, with a strong commitment to the environment and DEI, who enjoys trail running, road biking, hiking, and climbing.

## References

Mike Johnston colleagues who can speak directly to my work and character:

Clark Anderson  
Executive Director of Community Builders  
Glenwood Springs, CO  
970.390.7191 || [clark@communitybuilders.org](mailto:clark@communitybuilders.org)

A.O. Forbes  
Retired Colorado Rocky Mountain School Faculty  
Carbondale, CO  
970.618.6566 || [aoforbes@crms.org](mailto:aoforbes@crms.org).

Kayo Ogilby  
Colorado Rocky Mountain School Faculty  
Carbondale, CO  
970.366.0555 || [kogilby@crms.org](mailto:kogilby@crms.org)

# Sarah Newton

## Landscape Architect (RLA)

Sarah is a landscape architect with experience in urban design, residential design, parks, and greenways at both site and master planning scales. With a degree in biology, her background in plant ecology combined with design gives her a systems-based approach to projects. She brings ecological and sustainable design experience to the team and seeks to understand the qualities of place to create a well-rounded and rooted product.

Project experience at Equinox includes site, stormwater, and signage design as well as master planning for various parks and greenways throughout the western North Carolina region, such as Riverside Park, the Ecusta Trail, and Jackson Co. Splash Pad. Before moving to Asheville, Sarah worked in Nashville, TN where projects included public space intended to attract visitors to gather, recreate, and interact. One of these projects is Noble Park, a pocket park that offers gathering space, respite, and green space in the heart of Nashville. Outside the office, she enjoys hiking and exploring natural areas and public space, which helps guide the way she designs for people and ecosystems.

### EDUCATION:

Master of Landscape Architecture – University of Tennessee  
Bachelor of Science in Biology – Elon University

### PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS:

Registered Landscape Architect: Tennessee 1269

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2022-present: *Landscape Architect*, Equinox  
2021-2022: *Landscape Architect*, Hawkins Partners  
2017-2021: *Landscape Designer*, Firma



### EXPERIENCE

Riverside Park  
Woodfin, NC

Chestnut Mountain  
Frontcountry  
Canton, NC

Jackson County Splash Pad  
Sylva, NC

Ecusta Trail Phase 1  
Henderson County, NC

Swannanoa Greenway  
Asheville, NC

Noble Park  
Nashville, TN

Audrey  
Nashville, TN

Southall Retreat  
Franklin, TN

# Megan Foy

## Landscape Architect (PLA) & LEED AP

Megan is a skilled landscape architect with a focus on integrating natural and cultural assets into Equinox's planning and design projects. Her LEED AP credentials provide her insight in sustainable design applications which she regularly applies to Equinox's designs. Megan has a keen eye for the technical aspects of the profession which aids in her success in developing high quality designs for local communities. She is also skilled at working on large scale planning projects and is adept at working with steering committees and stakeholders to guide a project to meet the vision and goals established as part of the planning and design process. She is known for her ability to listen and working closely with her clients to achieve successful outcomes. Megan works on a variety of projects ranging from site design to planning projects that include parks and greenways, outdoor recreation, landscape architecture and design, ecological restoration, stormwater design, and low impact development.

Megan has served as the project manager or played a key role in projects with focus on community, sustainability, education, and outdoor learning. She served as the project manager for the Willow Pond Outdoor Learning Project, an American Society of Landscape Architecture award winning project, at the NC Arboretum. She has served as the project manager for master plans, site plans, public open spaces including parks and greenways. She has a broad and diverse resume of project experience in which she has sensitively integrated human use and recreation with the management of natural resources in the landscape. This includes her work on corridor projects that focus on placemaking, interpretive education, maintenance, and management projects.

### EDUCATION:

Master of Landscape Architecture- University of Georgia

Bachelor of Arts in Biology; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS:

Registered Landscape Architect: North Carolina 1939

Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Accredited Professional, U.S. Green Building Council

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2015-Present: *Landscape Architect, Equinox*

2014-2015: *Landscape Architect in Training, Altamont Environmental*

2010-2014: *Stream Restoration Designer, Wolf Creek Engineering*



### EXPERIENCE

Ecusta Trail  
*Henderson County, NC*

Walk Cashiers Parks and Paths Plan -  
*Jackson County, NC*

Chestnut Mountain Park - *Canton, NC*

Fonta Flora Feasibility Study – *McDowell & Burke County, NC*

Richland Creek Greenway Feasibility Study - *Waynesville, NC*

Enka Heritage Trail Greenway Study  
*Buncombe County, NC*

Jonas Ridge & Cranberry Bog Park-  
*Jonas Ridge, NC*

HWY 251/French Broad River Greenway  
*Town of Woodfin, NC*

Bearwallow Mountain Trailhead Improvements – *Henderson County, NC*

James White Parkway- Gateway Project- *Knoxville TN*

Mendota Trail Master Plan–*Bristol, VA*

Ramble Greenway Trail – *Cashiers, NC*

Lonesome Valley Community Greenspace Management Plan-  
*Sapphire, NC*

Givens Highland Farms Trail Master Plan – *Black Mountain, NC*

Oklawaha Greenway Feasibility Studies-  
*Henderson County, NC*

Blue Ridge Pastures Trailhead-  
*Buncombe County, NC*

Bell Park Trailhead-  
*Henderson County, NC*

# Gateway/Pearson Bridge Park

Cost estimates are preliminary and subject to change and based of a conceptual design

Costs

<b>Mobilization</b>		
Mobilization (includes mobilization for all work)		\$20,000
		<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Site Preparation</b>		
Environmental Site Assessment		\$2,500
Clearing and grubbing		\$18,000
Rough and Fine grading		\$58,500
Invasive removal		\$24,287
Storm drainage/SCMs		\$25,000
Erosion control		\$15,000
		<b>\$143,287</b>
<b>Hard Surface and Trails</b>		
Natural surface trail		\$7,200
Crushed granite path		\$18,048
		<b>\$25,248</b>
<b>Structures</b>		
Carousel-style Pavilion		\$110,000
		<b>\$110,000</b>
<b>Planting</b>		
Trees		\$2,400
Shrubs		\$3,600
Plugs		\$12,000
Seed		\$500
		<b>\$18,500</b>
<b>General Site Amenities</b>		
Wayfinding signage (on site, off site not included)		\$7,000
Interpretive signage		\$10,000
Gateway arches		\$14,000
OM sign		\$10,000
Benches		\$9,600
		<b>\$50,600</b>
<b>Units:</b>	<b>Sub-Total Cost</b>	<b>\$367,635</b>
EA= each	20% Project Contingency	\$73,527
LS= lump sum	Brownfield Related Mitigation	\$10,000
LF= linear foot	Design	\$73,875
TN= ton	Permitting	\$15,000
SY= square yard	RiverLink Project Management, Oversight & Admin.	\$25,000
MI= Mile	Public Park Stewardship, Management, & Maintenance	\$50,000
	<b>Total Projected Cost</b>	<b>\$615,037</b>

***RiverLink Board Resolution to Develop Gateway Parcel into a Public Park and Conservation Amenity***

WHEREAS RiverLink has a legacy of and commitment to developing riverparks and public access;

WHEREAS RiverLink owns the Gateway parcel located at 706 Riverside Drive, Asheville, NC 28801 in fee simple;

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of RiverLink voted in the October 26, 2023 meeting for RiverLink to pursue funding for the development of the Gateway parcel into a park;

RESOLVED, that RiverLink will pursue development of the Gateway parcel into a public park and conservation amenity.

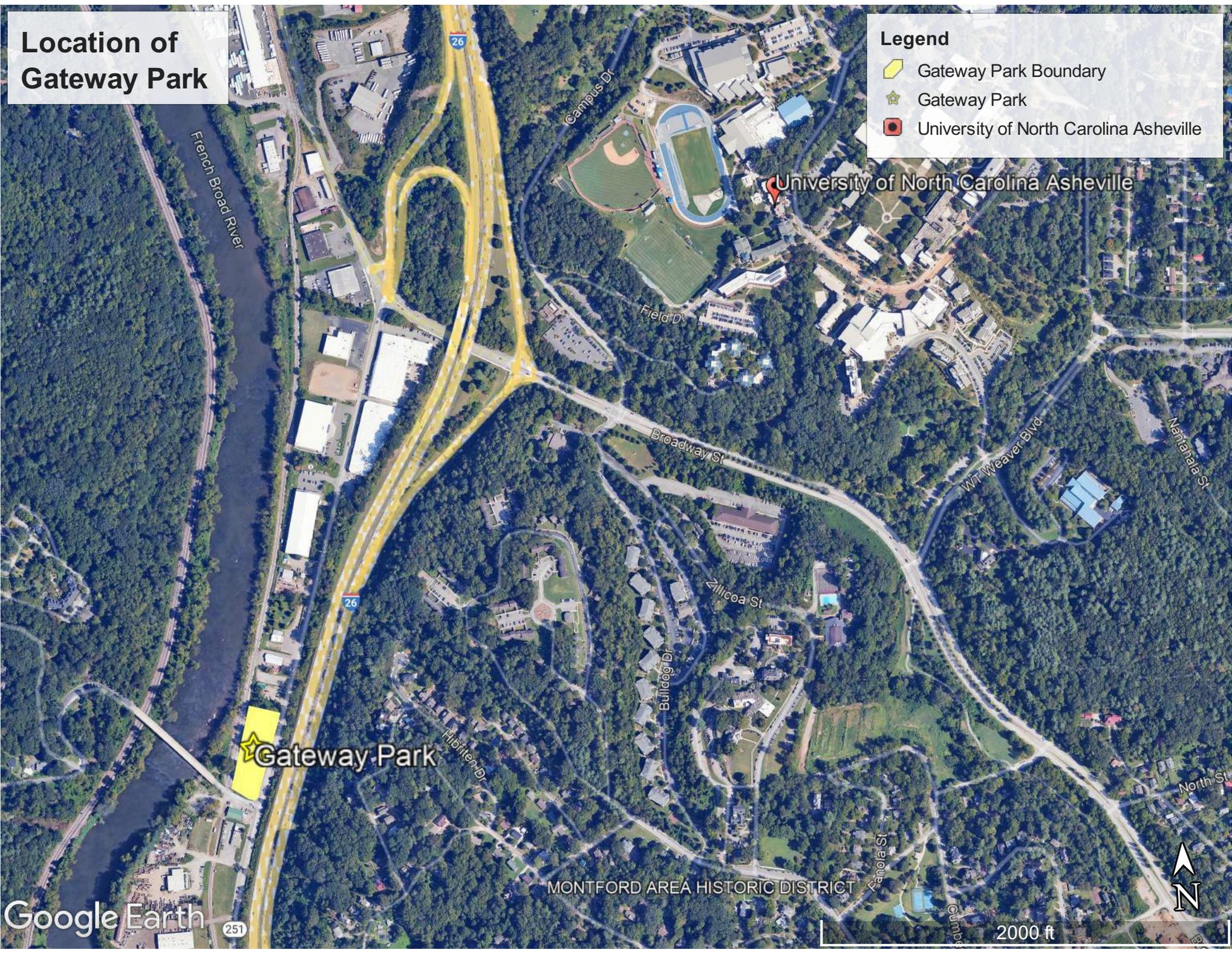
3-28-24  
Date Adopted

  
Ken Brame, Chairman of Board

# Location of Gateway Park

**Legend**

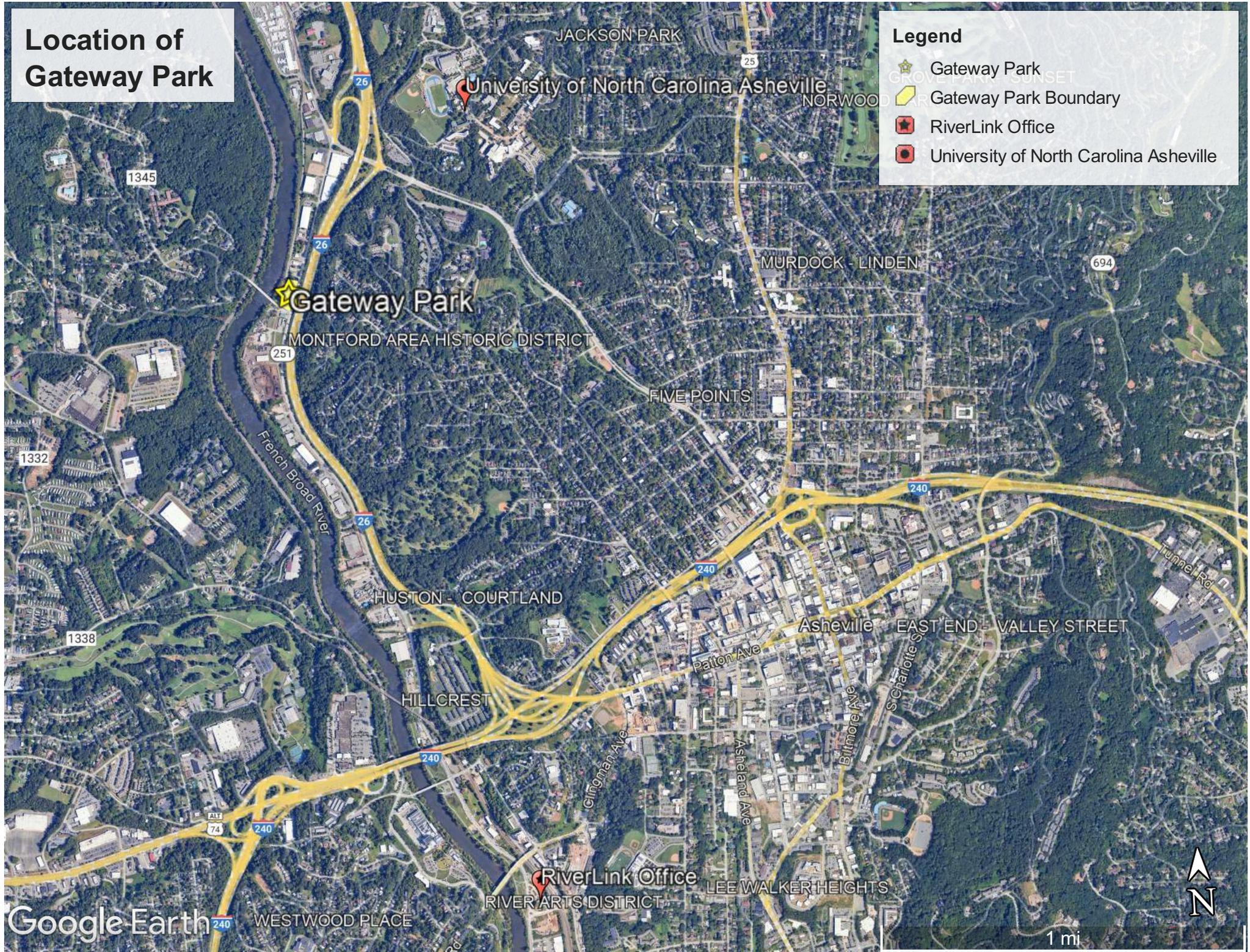
- Gateway Park Boundary
- Gateway Park
- University of North Carolina Asheville



# Location of Gateway Park

## Legend

-  Gateway Park
-  Gateway Park Boundary
-  RiverLink Office
-  University of North Carolina Asheville

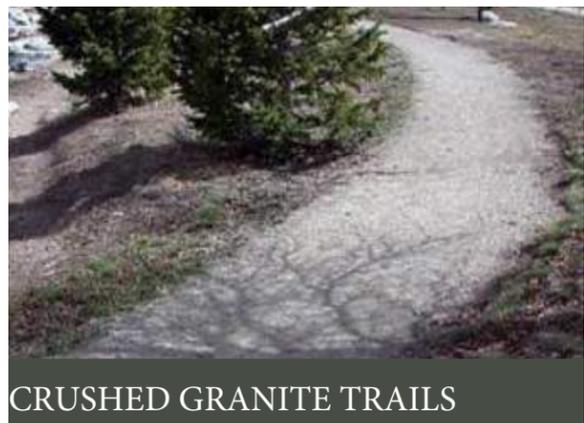
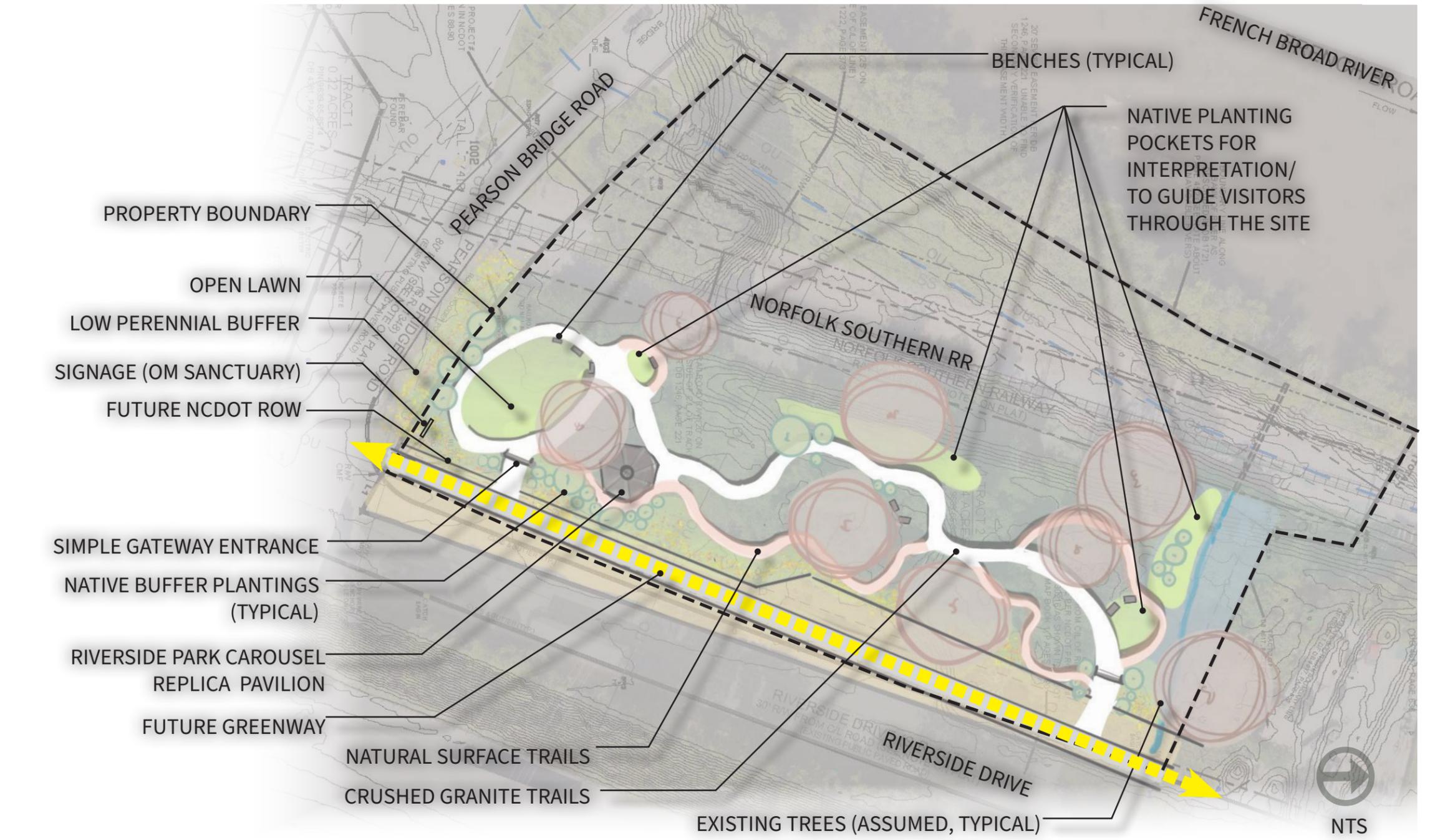




SIMPLE GATEWAY ENTRANCE



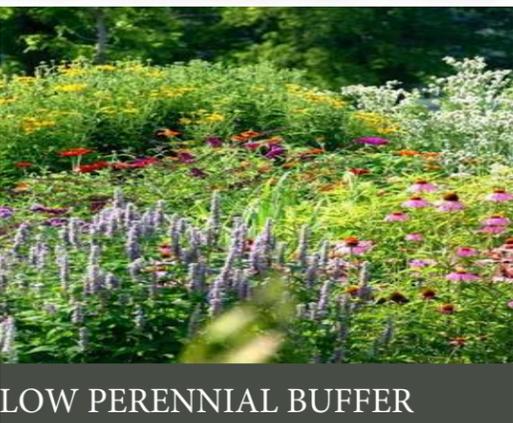
RIVERSIDE PARK CAROUSEL REPLICA PAVILION



CRUSHED GRANITE TRAILS



NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS



LOW PERENNIAL BUFFER

THIS IS A POCKET PARK ALONG THE PROPOSED GREENWAY. IT INCLUDES A WANDERING TRAIL SYSTEM (CRUSHED GRANITE AND NATURAL SURFACES) THROUGH A RESTORED WOODLAND. THE UNDERSTORY OF THE SITE SHOULD BE CLEARED OF INVASIVES TO ALLOW FOR GOOD SIGHT LINES INTO THE SPACE FROM THE ROAD AND GREENWAY. SMALL POCKETS OF NATIVE PLANTINGS REPRESENTING DIFFERENT ECOSYSTEMS PROVIDE AREAS OF INTEREST AS ONE MEANDERS THROUGH THE SPACE. CONSTRUCTED GATEWAY STRUCTURES AT THE ENTRANCES TO THE PARK ARE MINIMAL AND FIT INTO THE NATURAL FEEL OF THE LANDSCAPE. A SINGLE PAVILION PAYS HOMAGE TO THE CAROUSEL OF THE ORIGINAL RIVERSIDE PARK.









**City of Asheville**  
**Parks & Recreation**  
P.O. Box 7148  
Asheville, NC 28802  
Phone: (828) 259-5800  
[www.ashevilenc.gov](http://www.ashevilenc.gov)

March 19, 2024

Re: Support for RiverLink Gateway Park

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Asheville Parks and Recreation is pleased to support the public park project proposed and owned by RiverLink along Riverside Drive at Pearson Bridge. We encourage prospective funders to give this project serious consideration.

As stewards of outdoor public spaces, Asheville Parks & Recreation is excited to support RiverLink's Gateway Park project. With many parks and recreational facilities currently in our domain, we are grateful for the non-profit organizations who help support and expand the city's access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

We believe that Gateway Park will add to and support the incoming amenities in this area including our own North River Arts District Wilma Dykeman Greenway extension, the North Carolina Department of Transportation Riverside Drive multimodal improvements, and the completion of the Woodfin Greenway Blueway project to the north. Collectively all these projects greatly increase the bike and pedestrian traffic between the River Arts District and Woodfin.

RiverLink's proposal to create a small public park at Pearson Bridge would provide a welcome respite to all users of this corridor with amenities including native plantings, benches, and a pavilion that recalls the carousel that historically occupied this site, a former riverside park.

We would be happy to address any questions you may have about Asheville Parks & Recreation's opportunities and our goals in advancing this important group of shovel-ready projects.

Sincerely,

D. Tyrell McGirt,  
Parks and Recreation Director



Town of Woodfin ◇ 90 Elk Mountain Rd., Woodfin, NC 28804 ◇ 828-253-4887

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March 1, 2024

To the Buncombe County Passive Recreation Committee,

The Town of Woodfin is excited to support RiverLink's application to the Buncombe County Passive Recreation Fund to create a bike/pedestrian public park on their property adjacent to Pearson Bridge and Riverside Drive.

As we continue to invest in and complete our Woodfin Greenway Blueway amenities (for which we are also requesting BC Passive Recreation funding), we are excited for additional public park infrastructure to support locals, and guests, who will be traveling in increasing numbers from the River Arts District up to Woodfin.

While the Riverside Drive corridor is currently industrial and commercial in nature, Gateway Park will provide a natural and inviting amenity. And given the pending arrival of several new bike/pedestrian infrastructure projects including Woodfin's five miles of new greenways, the Riverside Drive improvements and the City of Asheville's north-bound extension of the River Arts District Greenway, the number of people traversing between the RAD and Woodfin will increase exponentially creating a significant need and appreciation for a passive recreation, public amenity like Gateway Park will offer.

The Town of Woodfin has a history of partnership with RiverLink, including our most recent collaborations on WGB, and believe they will be a responsible steward of the new park from both an environmental conservation and public use perspective.

Thank you for your consideration of funding their efforts.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon Tuch".

Shannon Tuch  
Woodfin Town Manager













# Haw Creek Park Greenway

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Haw Creek Community Association***

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Mr. Chris Pelly  
P.O. Box 9193  
Asheville, NC 28815

Info@hawcreekavl.com  
O: 8282313704

## ***Ms Shelley McKechnie***

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6 Silverstone Drive  
Asheville, NC 28805

Shelleymkech@gmail.com  
O: 2035207508  
M: 2035207508

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](http://buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](http://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

**Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

**Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County’s County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

**Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

***Project Overview***

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**Project Name\***

Haw Creek Park Greenway

**Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Haw Creek Community Association

**Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

None

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Combination

## Scope of Work

HCPG Scope of Work 3.pdf

## Project Schedule

HCPG Project Timeline.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

Part of 40 Avon St (Haw Creek Park, City of Asheville) and part of 54 Arco St (Tarleton private residence), in Asheville NC

### Parcel Number

9658-88-2224 and 9658-78-8254

### Acreage

1

### Zoning Designation

CBI, RS4

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$102,182.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$118,127.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$15,945.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

Community Fundraiser undertaken by Haw Creek Community Association, \$10,945, Funds secured and in hand

Connect Buncombe Mini-Grant, \$5,000, Awarded. Firm commitment for distribution once the project is fully funded.

## *Project Summary*

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### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

The group that brought the community Haw Creek Park and Masters Park asks for your support to bring a nature path to the Haw Creek valley. It will run through a bucolic stretch alongside our namesake Haw Creek allowing, for the first time, public access to the creek.

The greenway will link treasured community attractions — the East Asheville Public Library, Haw Creek Park, our charming commercial area – with the surrounding residential area and schools.

Anticipated outcomes include restoring an invasive-choked area to its natural habitat, offering residents a place to enjoy a pleasant walk in nature to get to community destinations. Residents and visitors could also just stop by for a calm respite amidst the most densely populated area of our valley.

Most of the funding will be used to improve the land, including building a path, constructing a footbridge and split rail fencing, removing rampant invasives, and replanting with native plants to control erosion and re-establish habitat. Some funds will be used for drafting, recording, and other fees for obtaining an easement on donated land.

Typical users will include parents pushing strollers or chasing after toddlers, dog walkers, older folks stretching their legs, professionals re-centering themselves in nature between hectic meetings, kids biking to the nearby library or burger place, youth/school groups and individuals eager to learn more about creek ecology, and families enjoying time together outdoors.

## *Eligibility*

### **Eligibility Summary\***

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

Nearly all of the funding for the Haw Creek Park Greenway will be for improvements, including a footbridge, trail construction, signage, invasive removal/native planting, and fencing to separate the trail from private property.

The remainder of the funds will be used for the process of obtaining an easement. There are no costs to purchase land – part is on City of Asheville land and the rest is on private land for which an easement will be granted with no payment to the property owners.

The project will be located entirely in Buncombe County.

The project is expected to be completed and soft-opened to the public in late 2024, pending contractor availability, with a grand opening when the weather gets nice in spring 2025.

Long-term management and maintenance of the Haw Creek Park Greenway will be handled by the Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) and its experienced Clean and Green Committee. The City of Asheville will handle mowing.

None of the bond funding will be used for fees to design the greenway. We have already acquired a design/feasibility study which was completed in July 2023.

HCCA is a nonprofit, recognized 501(c)(3), EIN 56-1458367.

## *Acquisition Narrative*

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### **Acquisition Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for the acquisition of land for future passive recreation development. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

There are no land purchase costs. The City of Asheville owns some of the land and has provided written endorsement of this greenway. Private landowners Bebe and Jack Tarleton own the rest of the land and have agreed, in writing, to provide an easement specifically for this greenway.

Some of the bond funding will be used for the administrative and legal fees required to obtain/register an easement.

## *Improvements Narrative*

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### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Bond funds will be used to build a greenway about 585 feet long along Haw Creek between Beverly and Arco roads. Although the route is surrounded by woods, creek, and a burgeoning wildflower field, the Arco Road entrance opens into the most densely populated area of the Haw Creek neighborhood.

We will be improving a rough, invasive-choked footpath so it will be newly usable year-round to all, including those with varying mobility skills.

The path will be a 12' wide natural surface – 6ft trail with 3ft buffer on either side. Most of the greenway is flat. To improve accessibility, we will grade and fill near the Arco entrance.

One section about 120' long and interrupted by the footbridge will require some gravel and filter fabric to increase the bearing capacity of the subgrade to ensure it's pedestrian-friendly and erosion resistant.

About 230 feet from the Arco Road entrance, a ~20' x 8' timber footbridge will be constructed over a tributary of Haw Creek. Split rail fencing and signage will separate the greenway from the adjoining private yard.

An extensive amount of invasives will be removed. We'll add native plantings to restore the area, improve habitat, and protect from erosion. Invasive removal will be performed by professionals expert in protecting

the ecosystem by avoiding the use of chemicals. This method will also help when we eventually work to achieve Certified Pollinator Habitat status.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The project will include habitat restoration on both sides of the path – the creek side and the other side. This will include the removal of invasive plant species and the replanting of the area with native plants. It will reestablish the native ecosystem with a diverse habitat.

We hope to see an increase in/return of native species including caddisfly, salamander, tadpoles, dragonfly, crayfish, mayfly and others. The improved health of this lower level of the food chain we expect, along with re-establishing areas amenable to native nesting, will encourage native organisms at higher levels of the food chain – birds, amphibians, etc – to return/grow in numbers too.

An overgrowth of invasives currently at the site include multiflora rose, tree of heaven, autumn olives, and Japanese knotweed. These invasives block access to the creek. They have overrun the natural habitat and disturb the dependency between native flora and fauna.

The native plantings we will install will help with stormwater runoff and erosion protection. Plantings near a small low section near the Beverly entrance and near the Arco storm drain dump-out will re-establish a native bog garden. With these plantings, including native sedges and reeds, we hope to increase amphibian and insect biodiversity and protect Haw Creek from sediment infiltration.

Students will be able to study conservation best practices here.

Please see Budget detail for a narrative on invasive plant management on this site.

## Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This project adds public open space for recreation and natural resource restoration, via an easement from a private landowner. Note that the total area of this greenway is expected to be less than an acre (an earlier question on area allowed only whole-number answers).

This private land is adjacent to existing public open space – the City of Asheville’s Haw Creek Park. The path will traverse a currently unused part of this park contiguous with the new easement area. The project will leverage existing parking and bathroom facilities in Haw Creek Park to make it convenient for people with varying needs to access and use the new greenway.

This project represents the chance to convert to open space use, at no land purchase cost, a well-located, creekside prime piece of property and transform it into a public good.

Please see maps of the area including GIS maps plus design drawings (two separate files).

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The proposed greenway will provide the first public access to our community’s namesake Haw Creek. This project will provide an opportunity for local individuals and groups to participate in and learn about creekside restoration and native pollinator plant communities.

Haw Creek Elementary School and Evergreen Community Charter School are a mile or less from this greenway. Preschool/daycare East Asheville Academy is across the street from the Beverly Road entrance. Administrators from those institutions endorse this project. Please see Letters of Support file.

Removal of rampant invasives – many are prickly and present physical obstacles – will provide students access to the creek, offering an opportunity for local youth/school groups to study creekside ecology.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

The quality of the water can be measured by the diversity of native organisms that live there. For example, amphibians take in water through their skin so their numbers will indicate ecosystem health. Given our discussions with local school administrators (see their letters of support), we expect access to the creek will encourage students to study these and other organisms. Perhaps they will collect and analyze data to enhance their science curricula.

Clean and Green committee members will monitor the health of the perennials, native grasses, live stakes, and other native plantings. They will monitor for the return of invasives, as the incidence of recurrence is indicative of the health of the ecosystem.

There are endless possibilities for who may be inspired by these surroundings to study environmental success. We envision that bird enthusiasts may have an interest in tracking species there, perhaps doing

longitudinal studies on migration patterns. Others may be interested in the butterflies attracted to the newly re-established pollinators.

Although we don't have plans to count the number of visitors, we will be able to casually see how popular the trail is.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

The Board of Directors of the Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) will oversee this project. This organization has an excellent track record, helping to create Haw Creek Park, and more recently, Masters Park. Last year HCCA successfully managed a project to build a new public parking area and kiosk at Masters Park too.

Building on these past successes, HCCA proposed this greenway project to our members in the fall of 2023. Within 45 days, over \$10K was raised from within the Haw Creek community in contributions from 79 families and individuals. These donors – our neighbors – will be eager to see us complete this greenway. We expect them to hold us accountable, as they should.

Additionally, the local business owners and school administrators who provided letters of support will be keeping an eye on our progress too, as they're eager to see it completed.

The HCCA Board intends to hire and manage contractors to help us complete this project, and the HCCA Clean and Green committee will also organize volunteer efforts to lead projects to plant native plants and help with ongoing maintenance.

We pledge to adhere to your preferred reporting schedule.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

Risks include delay in contractor scheduling challenges, weather delays, permit delays, and unforeseen characteristics of the land that add to the time and cost.

This last risk is mitigated somewhat because the greenway is relatively short, and the existing rudimentary footpath allows access to view its entirety.

There is also a risk of delay with the administrative process of obtaining an easement for the land on private property. We welcome the offered assistance of the County on helping us shepherd that through. One of our neighbors is an attorney specializing in this type of work and the advice he has already provided gives us a good idea of what to expect.

## Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

Status: We have a design/feasibility study in hand (attached in "Other Documentation"). We have written pledges for the land (see Letters of Support). We have a plan for invasive removal and native replanting (see Budget detail). We have the support of the community (See Letters of Support plus note how quickly we raised funds). We have talked with contractors who are capable of doing the work. We have become informed, along with the landowners involved, of the easement process. We have a management and maintenance plan (See Management and Maintenance file).

Once funding is in place, we will: 1. Move into the formal easement acquisition process 2. Present a short list of contractor candidates to our board for final selection, timeline fine-tuning, vetting for insurance/licensing requirements, and contract negotiation and signing 3. Formalize an MOU with the City of Asheville for ongoing mowing per our earlier discussions 4. Fine-tune native planting plan, including planning for community-bonding volunteer workdays

Barring unforeseen circumstances (and depending on contractor availability), we anticipate a soft public grand opening of the greenway in late 2024, with a grand opening in spring 2025 when the weather is nicer and spring plantings have occurred.

Please see included Timeline document for further details.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

The partners include:

Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA, a 501(c)-3 non-profit) and its volunteer board of directors, who will manage the project, keep membership informed, and reach out to members to ask for additional input and assistance as needed. The HCCA board will also be responsible for managing ongoing repairs to the trail.

Bebe and Jack Tarleton who will grant an easement on their land.

HCCA's Clean and Green committee who will manage the native planting process and ongoing maintenance of the plantings. This committee includes neighbor Master Gardener Dan Niccum, who has begun plant selection. This committee plans to eventually apply to obtain a designation of Certified Pollinator Habitat.

The City of Asheville who will allow use of city land and who has provided the attached letter of endorsement, offered support, and given a verbal agreement for mowing. We expect we will together sign a Memorandum of Understanding once the project has obtained full funding.

Advisors (not partner) include nonprofit Connect Buncombe, local greenway experts, who have endorsed this project and provided a mini-grant.

Another advisor (not partner) is Jack Igleman, from Friends of Hominy Creek, who is part of a team who undertook a successful neighborhood greenway project several years ago elsewhere in Asheville and has already provided guidance to us.

### Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The homeowners who will grant an easement had heard their land had long ago been used for cattle farming. Currently their portion of the greenway is mostly a meadow with invasives running along the creek.

The section owned by the City of Asheville is woodsy and covered in invasives. It is pretty much unused except seasonally, when the overgrowth dies back, foot traffic has created a rough footpath there. As is, it is not easily (if at all) navigable by people with mobility challenges. This section is located on the edge of the City's Haw Creek Park.

### Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

There is already an overgrown, narrow footpath where the trail will be, giving us access to look it over, which we expect will help minimize surprises. The feasibility study/design was done using Lidar data and revealed topographical aspects – grading needs, soft areas – that we are told can be dealt with using standard methods for the costs as estimated in the attached files.

The new 20-foot long, 8-foot wide footbridge will be built near a water line. The area is accessible and the trail designer saw no major hurdles to its construction. The footbridge is planned to be an acceptable distance away from the water line, per the trail designer.

There is also an existing sewer line which will continue its run underground under a section of the greenway in the easement section. This is marked on the plan. The designer noted this should not be an issue.

The homeowners have been living at the site for decades and report that the greenway site does not flood. It is on the "high" side of the creek. This is borne out in the design documents' topographic detail.

Landowner Bebe Tarleton has sent soil samples to the NC Department of Agriculture to see what, if any, soil amendment may be needed to ensure successful planting of native plants. Those results will not be available until after this application is due. Bebe predicts soil amendment will be minimal and not cause project delay.

Please see design file, including topographic detail, under "Other Documentation."

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail

- Waterways
- Public Transportation

**Bus:** The East end of the proposed greenway is about 215 feet from an Asheville Regional Transit bus stop for Bus Route #170 Asheville-Swannanoa-Black Mountain at the intersection of Beverly Road and New Haw Creek Road. There is a second bus stop on that same route at the corner of Beverly and Avon about 480 feet from the proposed greenway.

**Car:** The greenway is located at the creekside border of Haw Creek Park, where public parking and bathrooms are available.

**Bike:** People could bike along existing roads and/or sidewalks to get directly to either end of the greenway. The greenway itself will be accessible to bikes, as the grades on either end are gentle enough for bikes. The new footbridge on the greenway will be bikeable too.

**Walking:** People could walk along existing roads and/or sidewalks to get directly to either end of the greenway. Residents of the 250-unit Haw Creek Mews apartments directly across the street could easily walk to the entrance before their morning coffee cools.

## How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

Because the greenway is located in a currently unused and not-maintained area within Haw Creek Park, it will leverage the existing parking, bathrooms, and picnic facilities there.

Hours will be consistent with the hours for Haw Creek Park. Other than that, there are no anticipated limitations to public access.

The property will not be available to rent/lease for private use.

We anticipate providing a small sitting area along the path. This is not budgeted because a community member has offered to donate a picnic table or similar.

## If the project is in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

Yes. The project is in the heart of the most densely populated area of Haw Creek valley. The East entry is directly across the street from Haw Creek Mews – 250 townhomes/apartments – and the small commercial center of our community. Those neighbors are eager to be able to walk across the street to get to the greenway. See Letters of Support file, which also includes letters from other community establishments.

Many other neighbors can also easily access the greenway. The east entrance is on popular Beverly Road, near the commercial area, so lots of people will pass by and see it in their usual course of going to the grocery store, work, activities, etc. and could pop in for a relaxing walk in nature.

The west entrance is on Arco Road, a neighborhood affectionately known as Arco Gardens. Neighbors could easily walk to that entrance.

The project is also in walking distance to the East Asheville Public Library and Haw Creek Elementary School.

Please see attached map file.

## **Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.**

The majority of the greenway is flat and friendly to those with mobility challenges. The slope at the eastern terminus (Beverly Road) is 7.6% for about 60 feet, which complies with the U.S. Forest Service accessible trail design (maximum of 8.3% for up to 200 feet). The footbridge will be built with the ability for the City of Asheville mowers to traverse it, ensuring a functionally smooth transition on and off. The sloped grade at the west (entrance near Arco Road) is steeper – 11.36% over a span of about 120 feet. Therefore the Arco road entrance is noncompliant with U.S. Forest Service accessible trail design specifications. We don't know how ADA compliance compares to U.S. Forest Service specifications for accessible trails.

Should the County require the trail to be designated as ADA compliant, we would welcome that, and welcome County guidance to achieve it. However, the budget would increase and there may be an impact on the timeline to account for what it may take to achieve this designation.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)***

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### **How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?**

This greenway will be open to all. Given the gentle slope and relatively flat nature of most of the greenway, it will be far easier to traverse for those with mobility issues than a typical hiking trail in our mountain town (including the wonderful, but sloped, trail in nearby Masters Park). It will be far more pleasant than walking along sidewalks next to busy roads. This, along with the close proximity to bus stops and parking, will enable more people to enjoy nature.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

The project is across the street from Haw Creek Mews, which is not designated as affordable but is 100% renters.

The project is further from, but still reasonably close to, these housing complexes designated as affordable: Laurel Bridge Apartments (10 units), Spruce Hill Apartments (174 units).

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

Unknown, beyond the answer above.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The greenway will be adjacent to Haw Creek Park, which we expect will get more use once people have creek access via the greenway. The park has 12 HCCA-produced historical markers based on oral history interviews from the 1990s. These may be enjoyed by more people with the greenway's popularity.

Haw Creek valley has a true sense of community. Yet without this greenway, there is no public access to our namesake Haw Creek itself. Furthermore, the Black Haw trees that give the creek and valley its name are now rare in this area, so as part of this project we plan to remove invasives and replant native haw bushes (among other plantings). This will help give the valley more of a sense of place and help reconnect people to the land that is part of our heritage.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

HCCA community surveys have long indicated residents want more access to outdoor activities. So when HCCA asked for help for the greenway at our Nov '23 meeting, the residents' overwhelmingly positive response was not a surprise. We set a target of raising \$10,000. We hit that in about 45 days. Seventy-nine people have contributed.

Some offered unsolicited comments that include: "I have longed for a greenway in Haw Creek since I moved here 29 years ago. Thank you HCCA for bringing this dream to fruition". See Letters of Support for more comments.

This success is due in large part to HCCA's excellent communications tools. We've used our robust email and mailing lists to inform people of the project, as well as a webpage at <https://hawcreekavl.com/page-18084>. We've involved community members throughout the planning process.

As the project progresses, these outreach tools will be used to inform neighbors of the status, request input and assistance, and generate excitement around the grand opening.

The landowners who will grant the easement were involved extensively in the planning process and are pleased with the design. Please see their commitment in Letter of Support.

Membership in HCCA's very active Clean and Green committee is open to all. We expect that the committee will host planting and beautification volunteer workdays. We will leverage the vast experience of the committee members, as well as their joy in sharing native plants.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

We pledge to ensure the selected contractors take precautions to protect the creek during construction.

Invasive removal will be done without chemicals. To protect the creek and creekside ecosystem, we will not spray to remove invasives. See details in the Budget file.

Our experience with Masters Park suggests minimal negative effects are expected.

Of course, anything can happen anywhere, so should there be any negative effects, having new oversight of the area by HCCA will allow us to respond accordingly.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)***

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### **What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?**

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

We have a verbal agreement with the City of Asheville for regular mowing. We have agreed to build the footbridge to accommodate their mowers. We expect to execute a Memorandum of Understanding to this effect once funding is secured and the project is underway.

HCCA has an active Clean & Green Committee that focuses on the beautification of our neighborhood. This group of about 16 residents conducts regular litter clean up efforts throughout the year and would manage trash removal from the greenway.

HCCA's Clean & Green Committee also undertakes coordinated efforts to remove invasive species, and will monitor and handle any recurrence on this greenway too, after the initial professional invasive removal process. Experts at Raven Invasive Plant Management have offered to train volunteers.

Examples of Clean & Green Committee work include: Earth Day in 2023, the committee organized volunteers to remove ivy that was strangling many trees in Haw Creek Park and the previous fall they tackled the kudzu with good success.

### **Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?**

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

We expect the City of Asheville's Parks and Rec department will provide regular mowing. Please the City of Asheville's Letter of Support. The volunteer HCCA Clean and Green Committee, with Board oversight, will monitor and keep up with the health of the plantings, and will handle ongoing invasive plant management as well (after initial professional invasive removal). We have several experienced volunteers from the Carolina Mountain Club who currently manage the trails in Masters Park and would maintain the new greenway.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

Board members of HCCA will be dedicated to financial management of the project. There are 12 board members. The Board members that will be most involved include:

Board President Chris Pelly, former City Council member and manager of multiple successful community land improvement projects

Christina Maggi, professional experience in outreach and development

Storms Reback, Chairperson HCCA Clean & Green Committee

Shelley McKechnie, MBA/finance & marketing, professional experience managing multi-million-dollar projects and budgets

Please see uploaded resumes.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

Given HCCA's experience with Masters Park, the nature of this project, and the City's verbal agreement to mow the area, we expect long-term financial impact of maintenance to be minimal. We expect HCCA membership would volunteer to help with, say, post-heavy-rain repair, or resetting any fence posts that may get damaged. When there are costs for materials, HCCA membership funds could cover minor expenses, as we do now with other projects in the neighborhood. Examples include Masters Park trail maintenance, Masters Park kiosk, Crockett Road entry area, Spruce Apartments Little Free Library, etc.

Should an extraordinary expense arise, we would consider another round of fundraising. Given our history of success in this area, and the desire for this greenway, we are confident in our ability to financially manage this project for the long term.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

HCCA will leverage the strength of its membership and outreach capabilities for management and maintenance projects, such as repair after rains, removal of recurrence of invasive plants, and beautification.

HCCA has a long history of utilizing volunteers for such community-enhancing efforts. In the past 6 months, for example, volunteers have erected an informational kiosk at Masters Park, a new "welcome" sign at the entrance to our valley, and a Little Free Library at the Spruce Hill Apartment complex. In each of these cases, HCCA paid for the materials and volunteers donated their time. In addition to improving the community, such volunteer efforts tend to build community spirit too.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

HCPG Mgmt and Maintenance Plan.pdf

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

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#### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

Bond funds will be used for improvements to the land and funding the process to acquire an easement (land for the easement will be donated).

Trail design and material and labor cost estimates were created in July 2023 by professional local trail designer Jake McLean, with extensive input from community members. Jake holds a masters degree in civil engineering and has 20+ years of experience in the field. He is currently the Senior Water Resources Engineer at Wildlands Engineering. He generously designed the trail separate from his job, donating his expertise. In early 2024, Jake confirmed the construction cost estimates he had provided are still valid.

Expenses for the process of obtaining an easement were added based on guidance from research done by Jill Carter, Open Space Bond Project Manager. These costs align with estimates by attorney and neighbor John Noor.

Expenses for invasive removal were obtained by professional local invasive removal expert Raven Sterling, owner of Raven Invasive Plant Management.

Expenses for replanting natives were obtained by experts on HCCA's Clean and Green committee, including member and Master Gardener Dan Niccum and Committee Chair Storms Reback

#### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

We have successfully raised more than \$10,000 from individual residents specifically for this effort.

We have applied for and have been awarded a \$5,000 mini-grant from Connect Buncombe, a local greenway advocacy group. Connect Buncombe endorsed this project at their November 2023 meeting. See their endorsement in Letters of Support file.

HCCA's Clean and Green Committee has agreed to donate their labor to create a planting map and plant the native plants.

#### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

Options to reduce cost (in order of most-to-least able to maintain project goals):

-- Explore having the County or City provide debris removal containers and handle the hauling away of invasive plant material. To avoid spreading invasives, debris must not be brought to a mulch yard. We have not broached this with either municipality. Potential savings: \$2,450

-- Remove invasives only on one side of the footbridge. We do not expect we could get volunteers to do the remainder -- it's a job for professionals. Estimated savings depends on which side.

-- Limit the path to just the section on City land. A shortened path wouldn't connect neighborhoods with the library, commercial district, etc. Plus this would lose the best access to the creek for educational purposes. And it would miss a rare opportunity to acquire donated, strategically located creekside land for public use. Savings unclear.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

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### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

The Haw Creek Park Greenway will offer a tremendous opportunity for people to enjoy passive recreation at no cost to them. Given its proximity to the most densely populated area of the neighborhood as well as the commercial district, the library, and schools, we expect lots of people will be able to easily step outside and enjoy the creek and sounds of nature as part of their day. It could also help local businesses to attract more customers, boosting economic development. It will fulfill the stated wishes of many neighbors. This greenway is small but mighty. For evidence of community support, please see Letters of Support file.

### Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

The Haw Creek Park Greenway fulfills multiple goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan, specifically: Goals 5, 6, 9, and 11, 20, 21, and 23, 31. It would also address pedestrian challenges as noted in Physical Strategies section specifically concerning East Asheville: « Adequate pedestrian infrastructure in neighborhoods near bus routes is a further challenge. »

This project also aligns with the County Comprehensive Plan, adhering to each of the ideal aspirations of Equity, Sustainability, Livability/Affordability, Conservation, and Community Involvement.

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Jill Carter, Open Space Bond Project Manager, explained the application process and provided helpful information on types of easements and potential process costs for obtaining one.

Jill.Carter@buncombecounty.org

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)*

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### How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?

A key tenet of HCCA's mission is promoting safety throughout Haw Creek. We have a committee that is charged with improving pedestrian safety and those volunteers work to identify and resolve any potential safety issues. In addition, HCCA is a known neighborhood go-to, responsive organization, and we expect people will contact us should they notice any issues. Neighbors are generally not shy about alerting HCCA to things that need to be changed, and typically the depth of expertise among our membership, along with a willingness to volunteer, helps the board ascertain and achieve optimal solutions.

### How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?

The greenway will be open to the public and offer a way to enjoy nature. Installing locks, lights, motion detectors, etc. would run counter to the goals and vision of this project, so we do not plan to do any of that. Our experience in nearby public Masters Park, where we have no significant issues, gives us confidence.

Deterioration will be handled by volunteers among HCAA membership, similar to how it is currently handled successfully at Masters Park.

### How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

We expect the 6ft wide path, plus the 3ft cleared area on either side, plus the 8ft wide footbridge, would provide adequate passage space for concurrent use by different user groups.

### Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.

We plan to put up two signs indicating the boundary between public and private space along the new split rail fence. We have also budgeted for a sign at each of the entrances to indicate that the greenway is at this location. These would include a QR code that would link to an HCCA web page describing aspects of the

greenway: restoration process, plants and animals to identify, etc. The HCCA website offers a similar page accessed via a QR code at the kiosk HCCA recently built at Masters Park. Given the layout of the greenway, we do not anticipate a need for navigation tools.

## *Applicant Experience*

### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

The Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN:56-1458367) that serves the residents of Haw Creek valley in Asheville, NC, by providing community connections, communications, and coordinated representation on all matters that improve the neighborhood's quality of life and safety. We were established in 1984 and received 501(c)(3) status in 1997. HCCA is led by an elected 12-member Board of Directors that includes people with professional financial experience. Board members also have many connections in the community to call upon for expertise if needed. HCCA is funded primarily by membership dues and we maintain a position of financial health. A designated Treasurer provides regular reports of actual and projected revenue and expenses.

### **Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) has a strong track record of success in community-driven projects, including Haw Creek Park and Masters Park:

1. Masters Park (round 1): 9-acre tract acquired for public use, 2009. HCCA initiated a plan to equally split the \$750K purchase price between HCCA, Asheville City Council, and Buncombe County Commission. HCCA raised our portion via neighborhood donations (182 families contributed), fundraisers, and a N.C. State Trails grant. The property was named to honor longtime community members Rory and Hazel Masters. Today, Masters Park is home to a favorite local public hiking trail linking the Haw Creek valley with the Mountains-to-Sea Trail and the Haw Creek Overlook.

2. Masters Park (round 2): In 2023 HCCA raised \$87K and completed construction of an off-road parking lot, informational kiosk, and other improvements for public use.

3. Haw Creek Park: 6-acre tract acquired for public use, 1997. Concerned about the traffic impact of a proposed development across from Haw Creek Mews apartments, HCCA convinced the developer to withdraw. Subsequently, HCCA discussions helped the City of Asheville decide to buy the property and turn it into a public park. HCCA members raised \$40K to fund facilities in the new park. Fundraisers included volunteers selling 7000 first-aid kits door-to-door.

Part of the proposed Haw Creek Park Greenway is on the edge of this same park, Haw Creek Park.

## Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

N/A. The HCCA Board will need to approve contractors after funding is obtained.

## Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

HCCA IRS 501(c)-3 non-profit letter.pdf

## Resumes of Key Staff

HCPG resumes.pdf

## *Budget*

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### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

The budget is comprised of several major categories:

Construction costs account for \$78K of the budget. The biggest construction items include a footbridge, split rail fencing and gates, and fill, grading, and surfacing. Another \$2K is budgeted for streetside signage.

Removal of invasive plants adds just under \$24K. The extensive amount of invasives, plus the need to remove mechanically to protect the creekside ecosystem, are cost drivers.

The invasive removal firm is not equipped to handle removal of invasive trees, and there are other trees that need to be assessed for pedestrian safety and possibly removed or cut back, adding \$2.5K

As this is low-lying creekside property, there's a risk of erosion. This is exacerbated once the invasive plants are removed. Plus native plants are needed to restore the natural ecosystem. Therefore, \$5K is budgeted for the purchase of native plants and supplies. The labor to create the planting plan and actually plant the plants will be provided by volunteers.

Legal drafting and filing easement documents as well as other associated costs for easement acquisition adds \$6K. This is in addition to \$4K for an easement survey that's in the construction budget

## Project Budget

HCPG Overall Budget w detail 3-compressed\_1.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

HCCA Board Support Letter.pdf

### **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

HCPG Maps incl GIS.pdf

### **Project Photos and Illustrations**

HCPG Photos of Site-compressed.pdf

### **Letters of Support**

HCPG Letters of Support.pdf

### **Other Documentation**

HCPG Construction Plans.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- HCPG Scope of Work 3.pdf
- HCPG Project Timeline.pdf
- HCPG Mgmt and Maintenance Plan.pdf
- HCCA IRS 501(c)-3 non-profit letter.pdf
- HCPG resumes.pdf
- HCPG Overall Budget w detail 3-compressed\_1.pdf
- HCCA Board Support Letter.pdf
- HCPG Maps incl GIS.pdf
- HCPG Photos of Site-compressed.pdf
- HCPG Letters of Support.pdf
- HCPG Construction Plans.pdf

## **Haw Creek Park Greenway Scope of Work**

*With the help of robust community involvement, this project will transform a hard-to-navigate poster child for invasive plants to a model native ecosystem. It will create a fully public greenway that is safe, navigable, and accessible year-round*

### **Volunteer Community Management Team is Experienced**

Funds are being requested and the project will be managed by the board of directors of the Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA), a recognized 501(c)3 with a robust track record of managing community enhancement projects.

### **Site is Accessible and Centrally Located in a Neighborhood**

The Haw Creek Park Greenway (HCPG) will be a 585-foot long natural-surface trail that meanders through woods and a meadow alongside Haw Creek, offering the first public access to the valley's namesake creek.

The HCPG is small but mighty: it will connect the most densely populated residential and commercial areas of Haw Creek Valley with nearby community public assets – library, schools, and park. The trailhead is walking distance from two city bus stops.

There is already a rough footpath along the planned mostly-flat route, attesting to the area's popularity with those able to slog their way through prickly invasives that have overrun the area. Those invasive plants block views of and access to the creek, crowd out native flora and fauna, and seasonally become overgrown enough to make the path unusable.

### **Land is Available at No Cost to Purchase**

Part of the greenway is on land owned by the City of Asheville. The City has endorsed this project. The rest of the land is privately owned. The landowners have endorsed this project and are eager to grant, at no cost for the land, an easement on their property. A small portion of the grant funding would cover the administrative and legal costs of acquiring an easement.

### **Improvements Restore Natural Creekside Habitat, Improve Walkability for All**

Improvement work includes trail construction to create a natural-surface path 6 feet wide with a 3-foot buffer on either side. A section with soft soil conditions requires gravel and filter fabric or similar to increase the bearing capacity of the subgrade, making that section pedestrian-friendly.

Most of the path is already flat and does not require regrading. The western end – near Arco Road – is the only somewhat steep part and will need regrading with fill added to improve accessibility.



A homemade footbridge in the area that's on private land now traverses a creek tributary. The planned path crosses this tributary. As this footbridge was not designed for public use, we'll build a new, ~20-foot-long, 8-foot-wide footbridge over that creek tributary. The bridge will have smooth transitions to better accommodate bikes, strollers, the City of Asheville's mowers, and mobility assistive devices.

There will be new split rail fencing separating the public trail from private property. It will have 3 gates and appropriate signage. Additional signs will be erected on either end of the trail to entice visitors and provide a QR code leading to information about the restoration as well as educational materials about native flora and fauna a visitor may like to spot on the property.

The project includes removing an extensive amount of invasive plants. Because the invasive plants are creekside, removal methods will avoid chemicals. This way, the ecosystem here and downstream is protected. We expect by removing invasive root systems mechanically, native regrowth will be more effectively curtailed, adding to the project's sustainability..

We will also remove invasive trees – particularly Tree of Heaven specimens – and just those trees/tree limbs that an arborist deems to be a fall-threat to greenway users. We do not anticipate removing any healthy noninvasive trees. The planned path is unobstructed by trees and we are committed to preserving existing ecologically beneficial elements.

Planting native plants will be done by community volunteers – active members of HCCA's long-standing neighborhood "Clean and Green" committee. Committee members will also create the planting plan and source the plants. We will pay special attention to selecting and siting plants that help control erosion to protect the creek from harmful sedimentation, as well as plants that encourage a healthy native ecosystem.

*The land is available, the community is organized and eager to help, and an experienced all-volunteer team is at the ready to manage a well-planned project.*

# Haw Creek Park Greenway (HCPG)

## Projected Project Timeline

### Summer 2023 (done)

Feasibility study/design completed  
Discussions begin with City of Asheville, including site visit  
Begin discussions with potential contractors

### November 2023 (done)

Connect Buncombe endorsement received  
Launch neighborhood 90-day fundraising effort

### December 2023 (done)

Apply for Connect Buncombe mini-grant  
Acquire community letters of support

### January 2024 (done)

City of Asheville endorsement received  
Neighborhood fundraising goal achieved  
Acquire community letters of support

### February 2024 (done)

Awarded \$5K grant from Connect Buncombe organization  
Attend Buncombe County bond grant information session  
Begin research into types of easements  
Identify attorney to shepherd easement process  
Acquire community letters of support  
Send soil samples to NC Department of Agriculture to see if soil amendment might be needed for future plantings (results take months)  
Identify invasive removal experts and create a plan

### March 2024 (done)

Submit application for Buncombe County Passive Recreation Bond fund  
Initiate discussions with land-use attorney regarding easement process  
Master gardener, member of HCCA Clean & Green committee, compiles list of native plants appropriate for area  
Meet with HCCA Clean & Green Committee

### March - July 2024

If requested, answer questions from Buncombe County Passive Recreation Bond fund committee

Step up conversations and site visits with potential contractors

Continue discussions with the City of Asheville

Homeowners finalize selection of type of easement and determine contractual requirements

### July 2024

Find out decision about County bond funding

IF BOND GRANT FUNDING AWARDED:

### August 2024

Present draft MOU to City of Asheville regarding maintenance responsibilities, in accordance with earlier discussions. Iterate as needed.

Engage with attorney to draft permanent easement documents and temporary construction easement

Short list of contractors and their proposals circulated among HCCA Board members

HCCA's Clean & Green Committee begins to fine-tune planting plans

### September/October 2024

HCCA board formally reviews contractor finalists and selects. Contracts signed.

HCCA board approves MOU with City of Asheville

Contractor timelines finalized. Schedule work

Construction contractor begins permitting process under HCCA management

Easement finalized

### November/December 2024

(Timing contingent on contractor schedules and assumes easement is finalized)

Construction of trail and footbridge, installation of signage and fencing, removal of invasives, some planting of native plants, as seasonally appropriate

### December 2024

Continued planting of native plants, as seasonally appropriate

Soft Opening (dependent on contractor schedule)

### January - April 2025

Continued replanting of native plants, as seasonally appropriate

### April/May 2025

Grand Opening

# Haw Creek Park Greenway

## Long Term Management and Maintenance Plan

### Mowing

We have a verbal agreement with the City of Asheville that the City will mow the Haw Creek Park Greenway on an ongoing basis. The greenway is adjacent to Haw Creek Park, and the mowers could mow on the days they are out there to mow the park. Once we have funding, we plan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the City to this effect. It will be modeled on the MOU the City has with Hominy Creek. Please see Letter of Support from The City of Asheville. Per the City's request, the footbridge will be constructed to accommodate the City's riding mowers.

### Planting with Native Plants/Trash Pickup

Planting management, invasive plant control and trash pickup will be under the purview of the Clean & Green Committee of the Haw Creek Community Association. This committee focuses on the beautification of our neighborhood.

This group has experience managing plantings – their most recent project involves planning (current stage in March), planting, and managing a section near the neighborhood entrance.

This group of about 16 residents has experience with trash removal – the group conducts regular litter clean up efforts of the neighborhood throughout the year.

This group also has experience undertaking coordinated efforts to remove invasive species in neighborhood public areas. On Earth Day in 2023, the committee organized volunteers to remove ivy that was strangling many trees in Haw Creek Park and the previous fall they tackled the kudzu with good success.

### Repairs

When repairs are needed, HCCA membership includes several experienced volunteers from the Carolina Mountain Club who currently manage the trails in Masters Park and would maintain the new greenway.

### Management

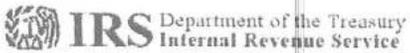
The board of the Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) will manage the greenway. HCCA has a history of success utilizing volunteers for community-enhancing efforts. In the past half-year, for example, volunteers have erected an informational kiosk at Masters Park, a new



“welcome” sign at the entrance to our valley, and a Little Free Library at the Spruce Hill Apartment complex. In each of these cases, HCCA paid for the materials and volunteers donated their time. In addition to improving the community, such volunteer efforts tend to strengthen community spirit too.



*Long Term Management and Maintenance Plan*



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Cincinnati Service Center  
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0038

In reply refer to: 0752161033  
Jan. 15, 2013 LTR 4168C 0  
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HAW CREEK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC  
% CHRIS PELLY  
PO BOX 9193  
ASHEVILLE NC 28815-0193

*Original  
Rec'd  
1/21/13*

306794

Employer Identification Number: 56-1458367  
Person to Contact: Mr. Perkins  
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Jan. 04, 2013, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in May 1997.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Please refer to our website [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo) for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

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Jan. 15, 2013 LTR 4168C 0  
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00018234

HAW CREEK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC  
% CHRIS PELLY  
PO BOX 9193  
ASHEVILLE NC 28815-0193

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number  
shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Stephen E. Paxton  
Operations Manager, AM Operations 3

**CHRISTINA MAGGI**  
**900 NEW HAW CREEK ROAD, ASHEVILLE, NC 28805**  
**718-593-9819 CMAGGI51@GMAIL.COM**

- **An experienced and effective fundraising professional** personally dedicated to the principles of integrity, justice, and charity
- **A proactive and productive leader** with exceptional managerial, organizational, analytical, and writing abilities
- **A creative and collaborative team player** who brings energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to accomplishing organizational goals

**Director of Development**

**United Hospital Fund, New York, NY ([www.uhfnyc.org](http://www.uhfnyc.org))**

**2010 – 2018**

*UHF works to build a more effective health care system for every New Yorker. Established in 1879, UHF analyzes public policy to inform decision-makers, finds common ground among diverse stakeholders, and develops and supports innovative programs that improve the quality, accessibility, affordability, and experience of patient care. Annual operating budget of \$10.9M.*

Expanded the successful fundraising model used to raise \$2.5M from contributions and special events. Grew the development program by adding a planned giving component that raised over \$1M for UHF's endowment in the first two years. Directed fundraising efforts, including signature fundraising events and direct mail and email campaigns. Managed the major gifts program, focusing on individual and institutional prospective donor identification, research, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship. Undertook research for new foundations and the process for securing new foundation/corporate partners. Supported board members and the executive team in their fundraising efforts. Staffed the Development Committee. Supervised 3 staff.

**Director of Development**

**WaterAid America, New York, NY ([www.wateraidamerica.org](http://www.wateraidamerica.org))**

**2008 – 2010**

*WaterAid is an international organization that began in the UK in 1981 and is currently working in 26 countries to provide the world's poorest people with access to safe water and sanitation. WaterAid America, established in 2003, raises awareness about the international humanitarian crisis in safe drinking water and sanitation, and mobilizes financial resources to advance the work of WaterAid globally. Annual operating budget of \$4.2M.*

Responsible for the design, implementation and growth of a comprehensive development program that included foundation, corporate, government and individual targets. Managed a direct marketing program that encompassed both online and offline efforts. Worked with WaterAid UK to ensure coordination of funding for program needs and priorities. Wrote or edited all fundraising materials. Developed strategic and operational fundraising plans to support WaterAid's global strategy. Worked with board and independent volunteers. Supervised 2 staff.

**Director of Development**

**New York Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY ([www.nyclu.org](http://www.nyclu.org))**

**2004 – 2007**

*The NYCLU is one of the nation's foremost defenders of civil liberties and civil rights. Founded in 1951 as the New York affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, the NYCLU protects and promotes freedom of speech and religion, and the right to privacy, equality and due process of law. Annual operating budget of \$4M.*

Directed all Union (501c4) and NYCLU Foundation (501c3) fundraising programs and oversaw the work of the department on foundations, major gifts, direct marketing, and special events. Coordinated activities with national ACLU; worked cooperatively to raise major and planned gifts in NY. Developed fundraising strategies, work plans, and income and expense budgets. Developed donor communication and stewardship strategies. Provided technical support to six state-wide chapters in their fundraising efforts. Worked with the board. Supervised 3 staff.

**Vice President, Development and Communications**

**Population Media Center, New York, NY ([www.populationmedia.org](http://www.populationmedia.org))**

**1998 – 2003**

*PMC is an international non-profit organization that uses entertainment-education to improve the status of women and girls, foster reproductive and sexual health, and promote sustainable development. Working with local partners in developing countries, PMC produces carefully researched and culturally sensitive radio and television serial dramas that use role models to motivate behavior change. Annual operating budget of \$5M.*

Managed activities related to the planning, execution and evaluation of all fundraising and communication programs. Directed and oversaw the work of the department on foundations, major gifts, planned giving, direct marketing, donor events, publications and public relations. Developed fundraising and communication strategies, created detailed plans with measurable objectives, and established, monitored, and reported on income and expense budgets. Developed and directed implementation of overall donor communication and stewardship strategies and materials including proposals, appeal letters, annual reports, newsletters, press releases, and web site. Worked with and staffed the board development committee. Supervised 5 staff.

**Director of Direct Response**

**Amnesty International USA, New York, NY ([www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org))**

**1995 – 1997**

*AI is a worldwide human rights movement working independently of all governments and political ideologies to secure the release of prisoners of conscience, ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners, and end all use of torture, “disappearance,” political killing, and the death penalty. Annual operating budget of \$24M.*

Administered fundraising campaigns related to 660,000 \$1-\$4,999 donors with a total annual budget of \$17M. Managed the direct mail, inbound and outbound telemarketing, list rental, affinity credit card, and web site. Managed multiple vendor relationships including consulting, production, cashiering, database management and telemarketing firms. Developed income and expense projections for all direct response activities. Developed and implemented donor communication strategies. Directed the administration of systems support and member servicing. Provided assistance regarding development of direct mail campaigns to other Amnesty International sections worldwide. Updated the board on direct response activities. Supervised 8 staff.

**Director of Direct Response Fundraising**

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., New York, NY ([www.ppfa.org](http://www.ppfa.org))**

**1988 - 1995**

*PPFA is the only family planning organization that combines the provision of reproductive health care services (through the work of 169 community-based affiliates) with political advocacy (through its national office) to guarantee the reproductive rights of all people and ensure access to comprehensive reproductive health services. Annual operating budget of \$42M.*

Administered direct mail and telemarketing fundraising campaigns for PPFA, PPAF (501c4) and FPIA (international) with total annual budget of \$20M. Managed all aspects of the program as it related to 980,000 \$1-\$4,999 donors. Coordinated development of budget income and expense projections for all direct response activities. Evaluated and monitored consultant's performance. Provided leadership to systems support for the donor file. Developed and implemented high-dollar donor cultivation/briefing programs. Provided technical services regarding development of direct mail campaigns to 169 affiliates nationwide. Supervised 7 staff.

*Former Member: Association of Fundraising Professionals, Women in Development, New York*

*Past President: Direct Marketing Fundraisers Association (DMFA)*

*Consultant: Center for the Advancement of Women, New York Civil Liberties Union*

*Presenter: AFP Conferences, DMFA, DMA Non-Profit Day, Baruch College*

*Education: Stark Technical College, The Fund Raising School, Institute for Charitable Giving*

*Volunteer: President, Bradlee Tenants Corporation (72-unit co-op with \$810K budget) 2008-2017*

*Volunteer: Board Member, Haw Creek Community Association 2022-present*

Chris Pelly  
Community Organizing Resume

2020 to now – President, Haw Creek Community Association [hawcreekavl.com](http://hawcreekavl.com)  
Responsible for initiating, coordinating, and directing board of directors and related community development activities. Successes include improvements to Masters Park.

2011 to 2015 – Member, Asheville City Council

2007 to 2011 – President, Haw Creek Community Association. Successes during that tenure include creation of Masters Park and expansion of sidewalks along Tunnel Rd, Avon Rd and New Haw Creek Rd.

2004 to 2007 – President, Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods. Initiated Congress of Asheville Neighborhoods event

1995 to 2003 – President, Haw Creek Community Association. Successes during this tenure include creation of Haw Creek Park, Haw Creek Historic Markers and sidewalks on Trinity Chapel Rd.

# Shelley McKechnie

Asheville, NC

203-520-7508

shelleymckech@gmail.com

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## EXPERIENCE

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### INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

2019 - current

Conduct independent projects as I recovered from significant injuries sustained in a car accident. To celebrate recovery, bicycled nearly 300 miles across North Carolina in 4 days. Twice.

- Complete extensive landscaping, pond, and interior renovation projects, mostly myself
- Assist elderly parents with health issues
- Participant, Climate City Expo at Asheville's Collider
- Mentor West African teen entrepreneurs remotely
- Train election canvassers and callers

### BLUEC STUDIO, Southport, CT

2016 - 2019

#### *Executive Producer*

Led teams of 15 to 80 to pitch, develop, and implement training for professionals in the health sciences sector. Training projects included launches of cutting-edge oncology treatment options.

- Led and tracked projects from pitch to delivery as primary point of contact with client
- Built and managed timelines and project workflows, directing efforts of medical writers, curriculum designers, graphic artists, and production specialists, as well as oncologists, medical animators, room designers, a/v specialists, video and virtual reality experts, scriptwriters, and technical directors
- Negotiated contracts. Led team responses to RFPs.
- Initiated custom secure cloud-based deliverable tracking system to improve team efficiency
- Shepherded deliverables through legal, medical, and regulatory review process
- Designed and conducted train-the-trainer sessions. Led all aspects of multi-day training events with hundreds of participants

### CHARITYLOGIC CORP., Fairfax CA (worked remotely from CT)

2011-2015

#### *Software Product Manager – iCarol Software Suite (2014-2015)*

Charted direction for entire iCarol software suite, managing new feature implementation from idea to launch. Web-based subscription software product, iCarol, is used by nonprofits to manage custom data collection, analysis, dissemination, and reporting for crisis lines, information/211 community services, and help lines. Product served more than 50K counselors who, during my tenure, averaged more than 5 million call reports logged annually. Curated and prioritized feature development to respond to client and market needs.

- Led software development projects, coordinating teams of engineers, internal and external testers, and marketing specialists. Created and managed budgets and timelines.
- Projects included a public-facing collaborative messaging product, a client communications tool, an enhancement that cut associated support requests by more than 50% the first month, custom telephony integration, and custom systems for 211s across most of Canada
- Led client focus groups to refine feature requirements. Designed solutions to leverage existing architecture.
- Led product roadmap webinars for existing and prospective clients, created training videos, launched online campaigns to promote and explain features
- Crafted contracts and led and wrote successful team responses to RFPs

### ***Senior Sales Associate / SMS & IM Product Manager (2011-2014)***

Managed text messaging and instant messaging aspects of iCarol software, adding features to improve product and meet market needs. In sales capacity, along with one other salesperson nearly doubled annual subscription revenue. Worked with client senior management to define and deliver onboarding process.

**SPARTINA STUDIOS/SCP LLC, Fairfield, CT**

**2004- 2013**

*Provided B2B online marketing and photographic and video production service*

### ***Owner/Manager***

Built a profitable B2B visual communications business and extended scope by building subcontractor network. Clients included magazines, book publishers, newspapers, and national and regional companies. Leveraged online distribution of videos to expand clients' marketing reach.

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## **EDUCATION**

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- **MBA**, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Finance and Marketing  
Awarded full-tuition second-year fellowship as a TA for university writing class
- **BA**, Cornell University, English  
Associate Managing Editor, *The Cornell Daily Sun*
- **Certificate of Completion, Climate Change: The Science** course, University of British Columbia (online)
- **Coursework** at the Sorbonne, Paris and the International Center of Photography, NYC
- **Conversational French**
- **Product Management Certification**, Pragmatic Marketing

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## **AWARDS & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

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- **Board Member, Haw Creek Community Association 2023 – Current**
- **Presidential Leadership Scholar, 2015 – Current**  
One of 60 selected from 900+ nationwide applicants for the inaugural class of a leadership development program for proven community change-makers. Presidents Bush '43 and Clinton along with former cabinet officers, business school professors, and military leaders deliver nonpartisan training designed to develop skills to tackle the toughest challenges of the 21st century.
- **President, Humanity Now, 2014 – 2019.** Elevated in 2014 after 4 years as Founding VP Volunteer 501c3 based in Fairfield, CT. Managed and acquired funding for service projects in The Gambia, Senegal, and Ecuador. Since 2010, conceived, launched, acquired funding for, and personally implemented onsite our West African teen girls' entrepreneurship training program, partnering with Gambian community organizers. Businesses are thriving, graduates now run the program, and high school graduation rate is double the national average. Fostered sister school relationships with U.S teens. Led 5-city, 2-continent roadshow to increase support.
- **Chair, Fairfield CT Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassadors, 2015-2018**
- **Eunice Postol Community Service Award Winner, 2012, Fairfield CT**  
Recognized for improving community, including helping improve indoor air quality in local school, then helping get a law passed to help safeguard indoor air quality for all public schools in the state

# STORMS O'BRIEN REBACK

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31 Bethesda Rd. Asheville, NC 28805 • (512) 466-8147 • stormsreback@gmail.com

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**BOARD MEMBER;** Haw Creek Community Association, Asheville, NC **March '23-present**

- Served as chairman of the Clean & Green Committee and led its monthly meetings.
- Acted as a liaison between the HCCA and entities such as GreenWorks and City of Asheville Parks & Recreation.
- Organized park and road cleanups.

**EDITOR & SCRIBE;** Scribe Media, Austin, TX **Feb. '19-Aug. '21**

- Evaluated first drafts of nonfiction manuscripts and provided authors with recommended changes.
- Helped authors see the information their manuscripts lacked and interviewed them to gather material to fill those holes.
- Provided structural and line editing for nonfiction manuscripts.

**WRITING COACH;** GoRead, Austin, TX **March '18-Sept. '18**

- Helped first-time authors hone their book ideas and interviewed them to gather more material for their nonfiction manuscripts.
- Provided feedback on and recommended changes to the authors' manuscripts.
- Created action plans for the authors and coached them via weekly meetings to ensure they were completing their goals and were able to complete their manuscripts on time.
- Performed manuscript evaluations and structural editing for nonfiction books.

**FEATURES WRITER;** FloSports, Austin, TX **Feb. '17 -Dec. '17**

- Served as the sole staff writer in charge of producing longform feature articles for online publication.
- Collaborated with senior editors in charge of specific verticals to generate story ideas.
- Performed investigative research.
- Interviewed high school phenoms, NCAA champions, Olympic medalists, coaches, and industry insiders.

**MANAGER;** Cougar Irrigation, Austin, TX **Marcg. '14 -Jan. '17**

- Responded to sales inquiries from potential clients for residential irrigation systems.
- Managed the installation crew throughout the project to ensure customer satisfaction.
- Created landscape plans for clients and sourced plants and trees for our crew to install.
- Attended workshops to educate myself about native plants and water conservation.

## PUBLISHED BOOKS

Ghost writer: *Brain Talk: How Mind Mapping Can Change Your Life and Everyone in It* by Dr. David Schnarch, CreateSpace Independent Publishing, January 13, 2018

Coauthor: *In Full Color: Finding My Place in a Black and White World*, BenBella Books, March 28, 2017

Coauthor: *The Contractor: How I Landed in a Pakistani Prison and Ignited a Diplomatic Crisis*, BenBella Books, March 14, 2017

Coauthor: *Ship It Holla Ballas!: How a Bunch of 19-Year-Old College Dropouts Used the Internet to Become Poker's Loudest, Craziest, and Richest Crew*, St. Martin's Press, April 15, 2014

Coauthor: *Farha on Omaha: Expert Strategy for Beating Cash Games and Tournaments*, Triumph Books, October 1, 2007

Coauthor: *All In: The (Almost) Entirely True Story of the World Series of Poker*, St. Martin's Press, October 1, 2005

## SKILL SUMMARY

- Professional Writing/Editing
- Effective Group Communication
- Some Spanish and French

- **Computer:** MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, WordPress, QuickBooks

## EDUCATION

- Duke University, B.A. 1992, 3.3 GPA
- Graduate of Dharma Yoga 200-Hour Teacher Training, 2019

- Attended 2002 Jackson Hole Writers Conference, 2003 Willamette Writers Conference, 2007 Maui Writers Conference, and 2018 NYC Literary Writers Conference

HCPG Overall Budget

<b>Budget</b>		
<b>Haw Creek Park Greenway</b>		
<i>March 2024</i>		
<i>Haw Creek Community Association</i>		
Item	Cost	Source
Construction: Trail, bridge, signage, etc	\$78,377	Professional trail designer Jake McLean. See financial detail provided in a later page of this file. Also in a separate file uploaded in "Other Documentation" please see detailed construction design.
Trail signs on Arco Rd & Beverly Rd	\$2,000	HCCA Estimate
Soil amendment	\$500	Bebe Tarleton (landowner) estimate
Tree trim/dead tree removal/large Tree of Heaven removal	\$2,500	HCCA Estimate
Invasive Removal/debris removal + supply seeds for trail edge	\$23,750	Raven Stirling, Owner Raven Invasive Plant Management. See financial detail and narrative of methods in later pages of this file.
Native Plants, supplies	\$5,000	HCCA Clean & Green committee
Easement Acquisition excl survey (survey budget incl in construction budget)	\$6,000	Jill Carter, Buncombe County Bond Manager
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$118,127</b>	
Less Funds raised already:		
Connect Buncombe mini-grant	\$5,000	
Neighborhood fundraiser	\$10,945	
<b>Total Funds Raised</b>	<b>\$15,945</b>	
<b>Total bond funds requested (Total Budget less Funds Raised)</b>	<b>\$102,182</b>	

## Haw Creek Community Connector

Preliminary Cost Estimates - Conceptual Design - 7/14/23

Prepared: Jake McLean, PE

Construction					
Item	Qty	Units	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Notes
Mobilization	1	EA	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	
<b>Trail Work</b>					
Split Rail Fence	450	LF	\$ 18.00	\$ 8,100.00	
Private Property Signage and Post	2	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 400.00	
10' Tubular Steel Gate (for mower/maintenance access)	2	EA	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,500.00	Access to remainder of parcel across easement
4-6' Tubular Steel Gate (for landowner pedestrian access)	1	EA	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	Access to remainder of parcel across easement
Planting Allowance	1	LS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	Construction entrance, silt fence as needed
Vegetation Management, Sta. 0+00 - 5+85	1	LS	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	Mow and groom trail and edges, one season (volunteer or City thereafter)
Fill Import, Sta. 0+00 - 1+30	80	CY	\$ 35.00	\$ 2,800.00	compact to reduce qty volume by 20%
Trail Overexcavation Grading, Sta. 0+00 - 2+34	50	CY	\$ 20.00	\$ 1,000.00	Remove top 6-8" of topsoil for 6' trail and 1' shoulders (to be replaced with trail ABC Gravel)
Filter Fabric or related subgrade enhancement	234	SY	\$ 6.00	\$ 1,404.00	Place 8-9' width fabric to help with soft subgrade, alternate may be additional gravel
Trail Surfacing (ABC Gravel), Sta. 0+00 - 2+34	56	TON	\$ 50.00	\$ 2,800.00	Cost to furnish to site
Fine Grading	35	CY	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,750.00	Cost to place and fine grade gravel
<b>Trail Subtotal less Mobilization</b>				<b>\$ 25,954.00</b>	
<b>Bridge Work</b>					
Bridge with Railing	1	LS	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	Cost may vary considerably depending on width, style, materials
Foundation	1	LS	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	
Geotechnical Field Testing (installation phase)	1	LS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Survey Layout	1	LS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
<b>Bridge Subtotal less Mobilization</b>				<b>\$ 21,500.00</b>	
<b>Project Construction Total</b>				<b>\$ 50,954.00</b>	
<b>Planning and Engineering</b>					
Item	Qty	Units	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Notes
Coordination	1	LS	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00	3-4 meetings, bid coordination gps mapping, laser level verification of bridge site elevations
Mapping	1	LS	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	
Site Plan	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	Complete site planning and drawing
Bridge & Foundation Design	1	LS	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	Not 100% sure if necessary
Easement Survey & Record	1	LS	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	Could ask City for assistance through their surveyor
City Permitting	1	LS	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	Floodplain development permit, verify this is only requirement with permitting staff
Construction Oversight	1	LS	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00	12-16 hr
<b>Project Planning and Engineering Total</b>				<b>\$ 17,200.00</b>	
Project Total				\$ 68,154.00	
Contingency (15%)				\$ 10,223.10	
Fundraising Goal				\$ 78,377.10	

### Assumptions

No impact below ordinary high water to creeks (avoid Corps 404/401 permitting)

No impact inside floodway (avoid minor project letter or modeling if possible)

Bridge cost will vary widely based on size, materials and methods of fabrication



**RAVEN**  
INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT



# **Haw Creek Greenway: Invasives Mitigation Phase 1**

## Project Proposal

Prepared for: Shelley McKechnie, Jack & Bebe Tarleton

Prepared by: Raven Sterling

March 2024

Proposal number: 24-1028

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Proposed Haw Creek Greenway

### Why it matters:

The stretch of land and creek proposed for the Haw Creek Greenway is a sanctuary for wildlife in an area where daily destruction is the norm, due in large part to development. These lands and the creek provide habitat, food and water for many species of birds and other wildlife. The trees and native plants that grow here also serve to heal the soil, mitigate erosion, filter water and provide so many other benefits.

Allowing invasive plants to continue growing and reproducing here will unquestionably lead to the destruction and eventual death of the trees and native plants, along with erosion along the creek. Utilizing chemicals in these sensitive areas will compromise the health of the soil, water and plants. Mindful management will help ensure the scenic beauty and protect and enhance the health of the land and water.

Decisions made before work on the project commences will determine how the creek and land respond to increased foot traffic. Unfortunately, there are many examples of how NOT to design and implement a public greenway along a creek or river. Choices of materials, plants and maintenance of the area will either support a healthy public space or damage land and water resources, with a cascade of effects to nature, wildlife, people and pets.

### Objectives

Begin remediation of invasive plants along the proposed Greenway, using mechanical methods.

Install native plants that support the land, creek, wildlife and community.

Create a situation where mindful management is the norm, subsequently reducing erosion, increasing biodiversity and return on investment.

When I first assessed the area near the creek and toward Beverly Road, I found nearly impenetrable thickets of mature invasive plant species. The main species:

- Japanese Knotweed (allelopathic\*)
- Multiflora Rose
- Chinese Privet
- Chinese Honeysuckle
- English Ivy
- Tree of Heaven (allelopathic)

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## RAVEN INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

- Spirea
- Porcelainberry

Many of these plants are chainsaw size with heavy seed production.

\*Contain chemicals that poison the soil and inhibit reproduction and lifespan of trees and desirable plants

### Goals

Invasive plants like those mentioned above are detrimental to the health and viability of trees and other desirable plants in the landscape. Native plants serve many benefits to the air, soil, water and wildlife, including erosion control. Removing invasives minimizes water usage, increases nutrient content of the soil and supports survivability of native trees and plants, thereby increasing the return on investment in ways we simply cannot measure. Trees and plants will be healthier, happier and more beautiful when these intruders are remediated.

The goal, over time, is to remove all invasive plants from the area, thereby protecting desirable native plants and trees, while also protecting the soil and other ecologically sensitive areas. Minimizing invasives' spread throughout the area is also a focus.

### Solution

Mechanical removal of all non-native invasive plants along the proposed Greenway. Given the sensitive ecology of these areas, chemicals should NOT be used under any circumstances. Raven Invasive Plant Management practices only mechanical removal, meaning we use tools, not poison.

- Remove large invasive plants that will go to seed again this year
- Reduce seed production to minimize future management of the area
- Remove large vines that are girdling and/or overtopping trees and bushes
- Minimize erosion
- Reduce spread of invasive plants to other areas of the properties and beyond
- Protect native plants and trees from the destructive nature of invasive plants
- Protect ecologically sensitive areas, like the creek, from being overtaken by invasive plants
- Introduce native plants along the trail and creekside
- Introduce native sedges along the trail that make mowing unnecessary

---

## RAVEN INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

### Project Outline:

#### Phase 1

Raven Invasive Plant Management completes first round of invasive plants mitigation

Mechanical (non-chemical) removal of non-native invasive plants, by the roots as much as possible

Assess for any streambank repair that may be needed

#### Phase 2

##### Seeding or planting of native plants

Along trail suggested plant:

This is a no-mow, native plant that is available by seed.

Path Rush - *Juncus tenuis*

<https://www.prairiemoon.com/juncus-tenuis-path-rush#panel-planting>

Along creek suggested plants:

Creek Sedge Eastern Narrowleaf Sedge - *Carex amphibola*

Blue Wood Sedge - *Carex flaccosperma*

Pennsylvania Sedge - *Carex pensylvanica*

### Project Outline: Phase 2

Train volunteers and develop proposed outline of volunteer schedule to address next round of mitigation by volunteers.

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## RAVEN INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

Multiple invasive plants of varying sizes, many of them large, exist in the areas and each plant varies in its complexity in terms of mitigation.

After current invasives are mitigated, Raven is happy to educate volunteers who can move forward with a yearly maintenance plan. Subsequent work will be a fraction of the scope of this project.

### CURRENT RATES:

Raven Invasive Plant Management is honoring our rates prior to a rate increase instituted in 2023. We're happy to provide the work at a lower cost due to the nature of the project. We support projects that benefit our communities. Please note, these are only estimates. We prefer to estimate HIGH and possibly come in lower... Debris is a wild card. It's based on how much we pull out. This is a good estimate.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
Manual Labor: Invasive plants removal crew of 5 for 7 days - Arco Rd to city property (Tarleton property)	7	\$ 1,400	\$ 9,800
Manual Labor: Invasive plants removal crew of 5 for 8 days - Asheville city property	8	\$ 1,400	\$ 11,200
Debris hauling - estimated loads of brush transported and dumped	7	\$ 350	\$ 2,450
Train volunteers - Raven crew leader (Raven at n/c)		\$ 100	\$ 100
Native seeds & straw - trail buffers (estimated)		\$ 200	\$ 200
			\$ 23,750

\*Cost of debris removal is estimated at ~ 1 load per 2 days with crew of 5. Debris removal is by large dump trailer load and is removed on as needed basis, as we have a full load. All invasive plant material is dumped in the landfill.

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## WHY RAVEN:

While volunteers are great, experts are better. Untrained volunteers or well-meaning citizens sometimes do more harm than good...



Cuts like this one, that go through the cambium layer of the tree, are detrimental to tree health. They open the tree's vascular system to fungal, bacterial and other "infections" that can sicken or kill the tree.

We are experts who mindfully work sensitive areas without damaging trees and desirable plants. When you work with Raven, you're:

- Supporting conservation efforts
- Healing the soil
- Protecting delicate and rapidly diminishing ecosystems
- Supporting small business paying living wages
- Supporting advocacy efforts to save trees, native plants and healthy soil
- Supporting educational efforts to inform the public about the harmful and destructive nature of invasive plants

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### **Raven Gives:**

Raven donated \$1000 to Asheville GreenWorks for trees

Raven donated labor to remove invasive plants from Reed Creek Greenway in Asheville

Raven donated labor to remove and mitigate invasive plants in the nation's first publicly accessible food park, George Washington Carver Edible Park in Asheville

### **Raven Is Recognized:**

Raven was featured for the past 2 years in Mountain Xpress's Sustainability Series:

<https://mountainx.com/news/nonnative-not-welcome/>

Raven featured in Asheville GreenWorks newsletter:

<https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org/blog/tangling-with-invasive-plants>

### **Raven Advocates:**

Raven is a member of North Carolina Invasive Plant Council, North American Invasive Species Management Association, NC Native Plant Society, SC Native Plant Society.

For the past two years, Raven has been instrumental in Mayor Manheimer's Proclamation of Invasive Species Awareness Week in Asheville, coinciding with National Invasive Species Awareness Week.

Raven writes a monthly column in [Fairview Town Crier](#), a non-profit community newspaper.

### **Raven is Recommended:**

Asheville GreenWorks, Mountain True, The Nature Conservancy, Naturaland Trust, members of Urban Forestry Commission, Landscape Designers, Landscape Architects, Builders and US Forest Service all recommend Raven to landowners seeking mindful remediation of non-native invasive plants.

Raven Invasive Plant Management is passionate about trees and native plants. We look forward to working with you to remove non-native invasives from the land you steward. We've worked with responsible home and land owners throughout Western North Carolina and beyond, and, as our 5 Star rating on Google suggests, they've been thrilled with the results. We look forward to earning your business, too.

**-Raven**



**HAW CREEK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**  
PO Box 9193  
Asheville, NC 28815

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January 31, 2024

To the members of the Buncombe County Open Space Bond Committee,

In existence since 1984, the Haw Creek Community Association has three broad areas of focus: Improving quality of life; Protecting natural beauty; & Promoting Safety.

The proposed Haw Creek Park Greenway, for which we seek your support, will enable us to advance each of these organizational objectives.

As such, on October 29, 2023 the Board of Directors of the Haw Creek Community Association voted unanimously to support the Haw Creek Park Greenway. We unequivocally and officially endorse this project and are eager to actively manage it to completion.

Chris Pelly, President  
Haw Creek Community Association  
hawcreekavl.com

**PENNYCUP & CREEKSIDE**  
TAPHOUSE

New Haw Creek Rd

Haw Creek

Arco Rd

Haw Creek  
Park

Beverly

To Library  
↓



# Proposed Greenway

2023 Haw Creek Community Association based on OpenStreetMap.org



**New Proposal Area**

New Haw Creek Road

Tunnel Road

INTERSTATE  
240

INTERSTATE  
40

Blue Ridge Parkway



**City of Asheville**  
**East Asheville**



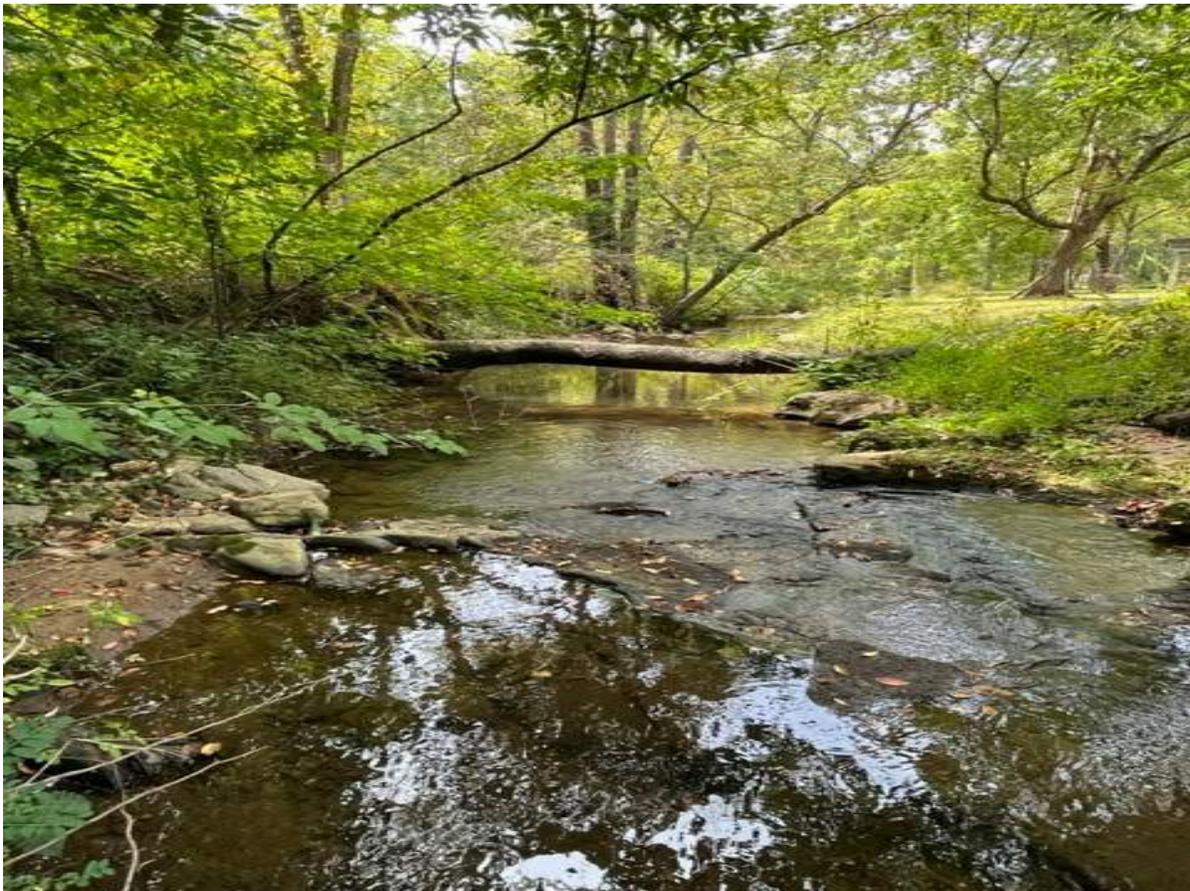


## Haw Creek Park Greenway Photos of Site

Proposed creekside site is overrun with invasive plants. A rudimentary footpath there becomes difficult to navigate seasonally (it gets even more overgrown than shown in these photos) for all but the most adventurous. Even when the invasive plants are less prevalent, the current site is uneven and narrow, making it unwieldy for those with strollers and those who have even moderate mobility challenges. This project will open up year-round access to nature for all.

Because we plan to remove invasive plants and replant with native plants, the area will also provide access to native organisms, too! A restored natural habitat benefits all.

This project will also add new land for public use via an easement on donated land.







Chris Pelly, President  
Haw Creek Community Association  
[hawcreekavl.com](http://hawcreekavl.com)

December 15, 2023

Dear Chris:

It gives us great pleasure to support the Haw Creek Greenway Project and to work with the Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA) to bring this project to fruition. As such, we are ready to provide an easement through our property located at 54 Arco Road in East Asheville for a corridor along Haw Creek to connect Arco Road with the Haw Creek Park located adjacent to our property. It's our belief that the greenway will connect a relatively isolated portion of the Haw Creek community near us more directly with the park.

We have resided in our home on Arco Road for more than 27 years and have seen the HCCA successfully improve our neighborhood during that time by leading several comprehensive, community-wide initiatives. We expect this latest effort to construct the greenway to be as successful as the previous undertakings.

Sincerely,

Jack Tarleton  
Bebe Tarleton

January 8, 2024

Ms. Shelley McKechnie  
Haw Creek Community Association

Dear Ms. McKechnie,

On behalf of the City of Asheville Department of Parks & Recreation, I am writing to express our support in your application for the Buncombe County Grant and our continued commitment to working with Haw Creek Community Association. Our partnership on the Haw Creek Park trail helps us achieve our shared goals of improving park and trail access for our residents. As a partner, the City of Asheville will provide technical assistance and other in-kind services for this project.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Peter Wall  
Assistant Director  
Asheville Parks & Recreation

cc: D. Tyrell McGirt



**Board of Directors**

**President**

Adam Rosen

**Vice President**

Alex smith

**Secretary**

Megan McCreary

**Treasurer**

Scott Dickens

Dustin Baker

Greg Duff

Tina Gaafary Newport

Allison Glackin

Stockton Hill

Bill Miller

Peter Mills

David Nutter

Mary Weber

Bill Werme

**Emeritus Members**

Ann Babcock

Marcia Bromberg

Nancy Waldrop

**January 28, 2024**

HCCA  
P.O. Box 9193  
Asheville, NC 28815

Dear Haw Creek Community Association (HCCA),

On behalf of Connect Buncombe, the advocacy organization for greenways and trails throughout Buncombe County, I offer our wholehearted support for your plan to create a greenway connecting Arco Road to Beverly Road in the Haw Creek neighborhood, the Haw Creek Park Greenway.

The updates that you provided to the Connect Buncombe board in April and November have demonstrated the seriousness with which you have committed yourselves to the successful completion of this project. They also indicate that you have the capacity, funding potential, and support of critical stakeholders—notably, local landowners whose property the greenway will pass through and the City of Asheville—to ensure this project comes to fruition and remains active for years to come.

We are excited for this addition to the Haw Creek Neighborhood's network of non-vehicular trails and hope it is the start of a larger expansion that becomes part of or complements the City of Asheville's Greenways Master Plan (last updated in 2013).

Please contact me at either [adam@connectbuncombe.org](mailto:adam@connectbuncombe.org) or 828-772-8840 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

**Adam Rosen**  
President, Connect Buncombe



**Where Learning is an Adventure!**

March 6th, 2024

To Whom it May Concern-

I am writing today in support of Haw Creek Community Association's proposal to complete a greenway along Haw Creek between Beverly and Arco Rd. Having expanded access to green spaces so near our campus would be excellent for our families, our teachers, our staff, and indeed the whole community.

Expanded access to Haw Creek would benefit our school's Environmental Education program by allowing for meaningful service opportunities for our students within a walkable area. (Once the sidewalk between Beverly Rd and Bell Rd is installed.) We enjoy working with the Haw Creek Community Association on a number of endeavors and are consistently impressed and inspired by their drive to continuously improve the Haw Creek Valley for all its residents and visitors.

In Community,

Jen Watkins  
Executive Director  
Evergreen Community Charter School  
50 Bell Rd. Asheville, NC 28805



**Haw Creek Elementary**  
SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Christen Davidson, Principal

10 Bethesda Road, Asheville, NC 28805  
828.298.4022 | [christen.davidson@bcsemail.org](mailto:christen.davidson@bcsemail.org)  
[hces.buncombeschools.org](http://hces.buncombeschools.org)

3-8-24

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to advocate for the Greenway Project in the Haw Creek Community. At Haw Creek Elementary, we have outdoor learning spaces and a nature trail that our staff and students use on a regular basis. We teach our students the importance of being outside for both mental health and learning opportunities. Installing the Greenway Project would provide additional opportunities for our students and families to access outdoor spaces like the creek.

In addition to the learning opportunities that this Greenway Project could provide, this would also increase the safety of our students. Every day I see families with children walking down the road and trying to stay off to the side to avoid traffic. Installing this Greenway would provide a safe way for our families to access the public library, the Haw Creek Park, our school and the creek. I strongly urge you to consider the safety of our students when making your decision about the Greenway Project.

Christen Davidson

Principal at Haw Creek Elementary School



**East Asheville**  
ACADEMY

828-299-1401

February 2024

To Whom This May Concern:

As a small business neighboring the proposed Haw Creek Park Greenway, I support the proposed greenway and encourage you to do the same. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 828-299-1401.

Thank you,  
Teresa Webb (Director/Owner)

February, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the manager of Pennycup Coffee Company in Haw Creek's community. After hearing about the proposal from the Haw Creek Community Association to create a new greenway structure in the area, I deeply wish to advocate for this potential greenway. By offering a more connected pathway, while also supporting the communities need for accessible pedestrian based transit in East Asheville, I believe that this proposed greenway would benefit both individuals and businesses in the Haw Creek area.

The continual growth of the community that I have seen the last decade living in the East Asheville area is not going to cease, and the need for green spaces and areas for wildlife to coexist with folks in the community is only going to exponentially grow in the future. The opportunity to offer a connected pathway for our community would boost the potential for more customers interested in coffee, food, and drinks that are all offered in our little business square. But not just our business would benefit from this structure being built. More students in the surrounding area would have a better opportunity to be able to walk between their schools and their homes, while lowering the potential for them to have to walk alongside the road, which can cause concerns for safety in students and parents alike.

This suggested greenway offers heightened aesthetic, safety, and commerce opportunities for the neighborhood of Haw Creek and I urge you to consider the positive impact that this greenway could offer.

Best, *Skie Carter*  
Pennycup Coffee Company of Haw Creek

  
**HAW CREEK MEWS**  
**TOWNHOMES**  
A Rental Community

145 Haw Creek Mews Drive ~ Asheville, NC 28805  
Phone: 828-298-0000 ~ Fax 757-440-3189  
www.hawcreekmewsapts.com ~ www.palms.net

February 8, 2024

Haw Creek Community Association

RE: Proposed Greenway Between Beverly Rd and Arco Rd

Chris Pelly, President,

I wanted to provide this letter of support for the proposed greenway along Haw Creek, between Beverly Rd and Arco Rd.

This additional walking space is directly accessible by our residents and will be a welcome benefit for Haw Creek Mews.

With the future sidewalks along New Haw Creek Rd, this will further expand access to the community amenities and provide improved safe walking opportunities for all residents of Haw Creek.

Best Regards,



Susan Gillam

Property Manager



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8 Beverly Road  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-505-1369  
Creeksidetaphouse@gmail.com

February, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

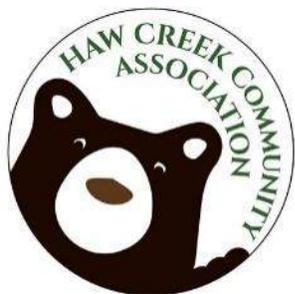
As a small business neighboring the proposed Haw Creek Park Greenway, we support the proposed greenway and encourage you to do the same. Our growing community will benefit from this improvement that will greatly improve safe walking opportunities and expand access to our namesake Haw Creek. We feel that the greenway will provide many beneficial benefits including a trail access to Haw Creek. A greenway will make walking access to my business easier and safer. We are very excited about this opportunity to activate access to the creek, library, schools and our "Downtown Haw Creek" businesses for all residents and visitors alike.

Best,

Kim Murray & Anthony Dorag

Owners

Creekside Taphouse



## HAW CREEK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### Haw Creek Park Greenway Campaign Comments Received with Donations

Amount: \$30.00

Donor: Julie Lehman

email: Poulos.Lehman@gmail.com

comment: So excited about this! Thanks to all who are working hard to make it happen!

Amount: \$100.00

Donor: Joyce Dvoren

email: dvoren@verizon.net

comment: Thank you for all you do for our (new) community. Happy healthy New Year. Joyce

Amount: \$25.00

Donor: Cathy Williams

email: ashevillelandlord@gmail.com

comment: Thank you for this important update.

Amount: \$100.00

Donor: Robert Cicale

email: bob\_cicale@att.net

comment: in honor of Katy Cicale

Amount: \$50.00

Donor: Suzanne Fretwell

email: suefretwell2003@yahoo.com

comment: I'm 80 and not able to walk very far, but this will benefit families and children for years to come! Who knows? Maybe I can even walk it if I try!

Amount: \$50.00

Donor: Krystal Frazer

email: Kfrazer123@gmail.com

comment: If we can make this happen let's make a greenway all the way to Maple that people can use to get to the hiking trail! #Goals!!

Amount: \$165.00

Donor: Cortney Kosiak

email: Cortneykosiak@gmail.com

comment: A greenway would be beautiful!

Amount: \$50.00

Donor: Julie Lehman

email: Poulos.Lehman@gmail.com

comment: So grateful for your efforts and excited about this great plan!!!

Amount: \$500.00

Donor: Amelia Frenkel

email: amelia.i.frenkel@gmail.com

comment: Raised in Haw Creek -- this will be a beautiful addition for the next generation!

Amount: \$500.00

Donor: Marti Terry-Purdy

email: impurdy2@charter.net

comment: I have longed for a greenway in Haw Creek since I moved here 29 years ago. Thank you HCCA for bringing this dream to fruition.

Amount: \$60.00

Donor: Mary Lou Travis

email: maryloutravis58@gmail.com

comment: Thank you Chris Pelly, for leading us through this venture.

Amount: \$200.00

Donor: Scott Singer

email: Scott.singer20@gmail.com

comment: Keep it up!

Amount: \$500.00

Donor: Suzanne Molloy

email: suzanne.molloy@nestrealty.com

comment: Thanks for doing this.

Amount: \$100.00

Donor: Doris Gordon

email: drdsgordon@gmail.com

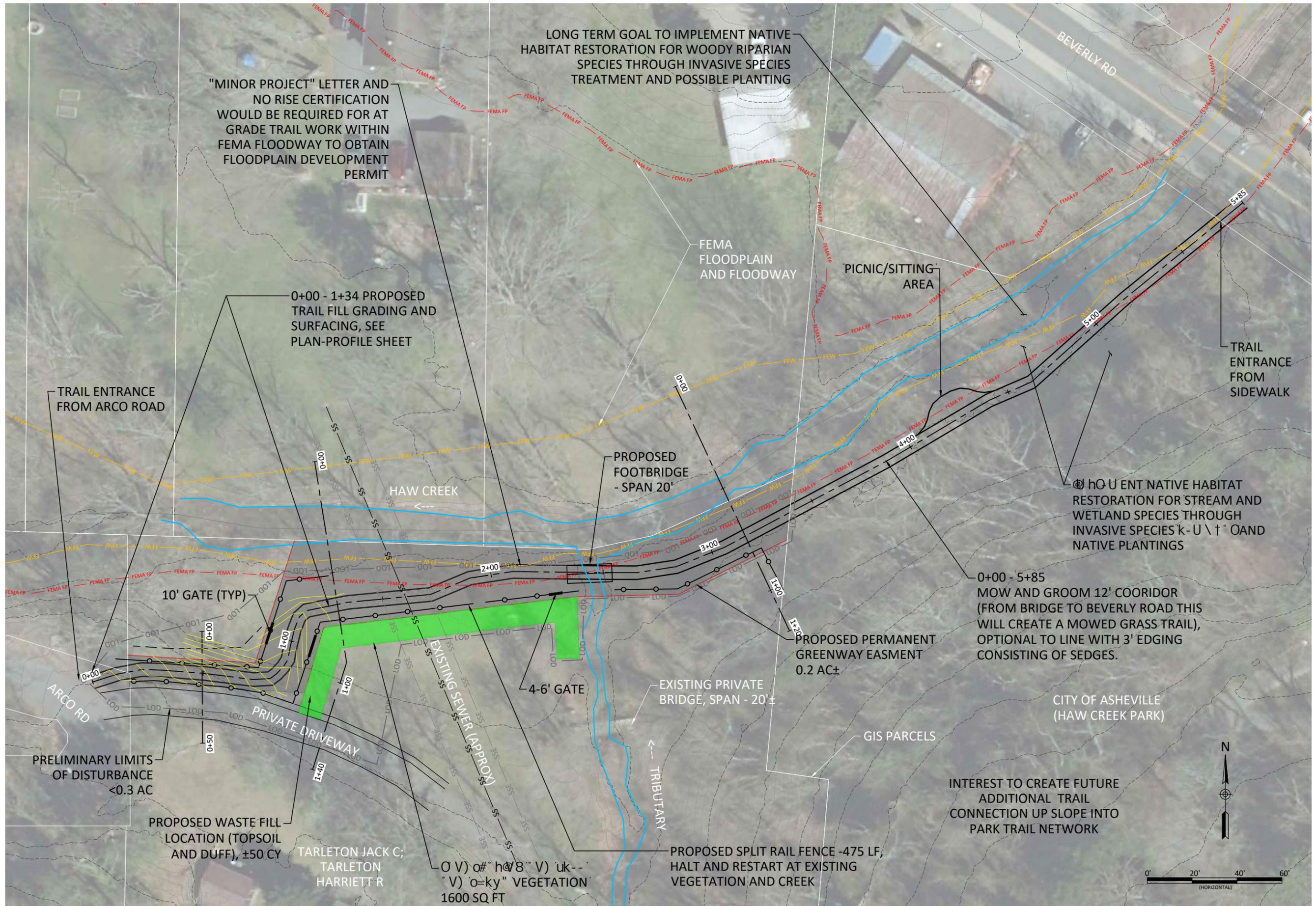
comment: Great meeting last night -thank you!

Amount: \$250.00

Donor: Chris Pelly

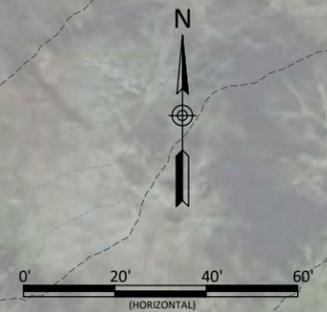
email: chrispelly4asheville@gmail.com

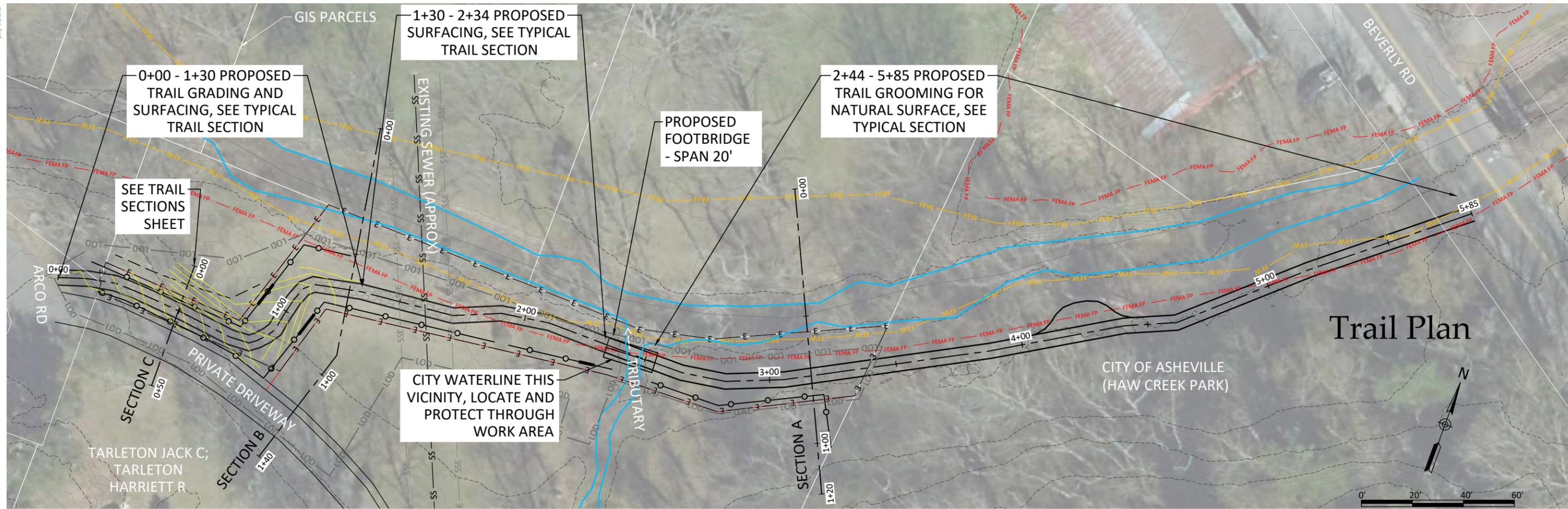
comment: Green for the greenway



PRELIMINARY  
DO NOT  
USE FOR  
CONSTRUCTION

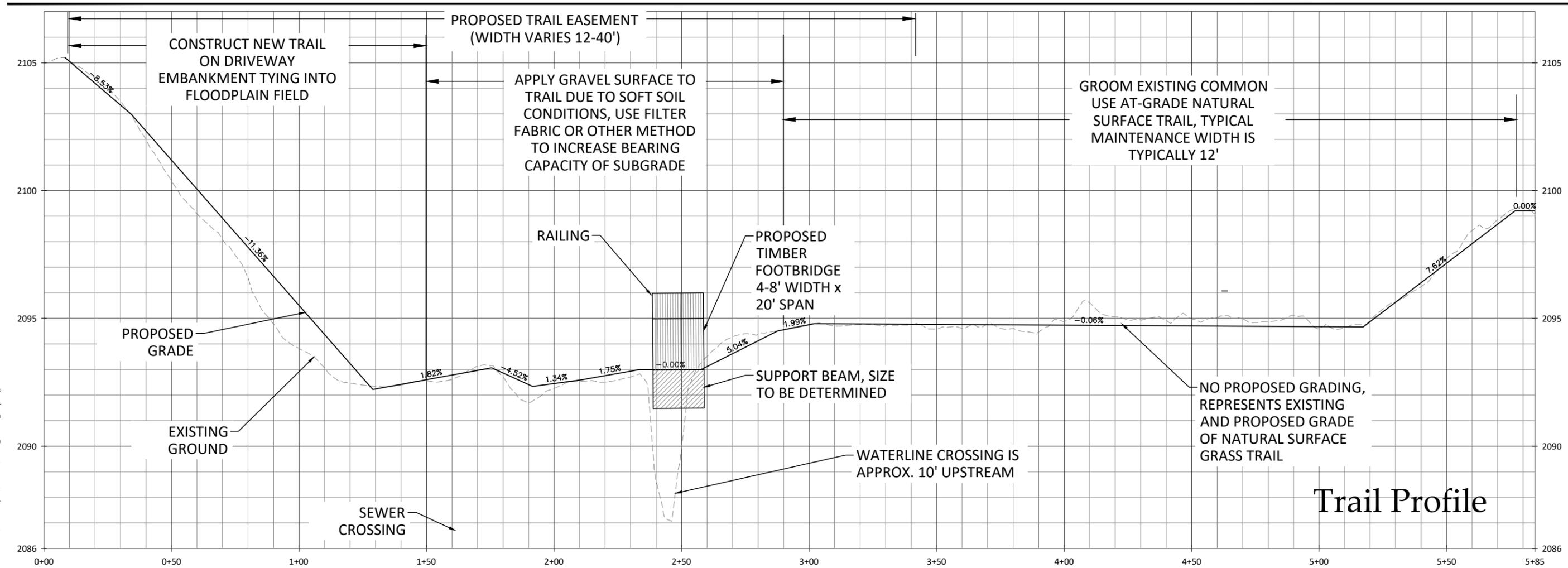
# Conceptual Design - Haw Creek Greenway Connector

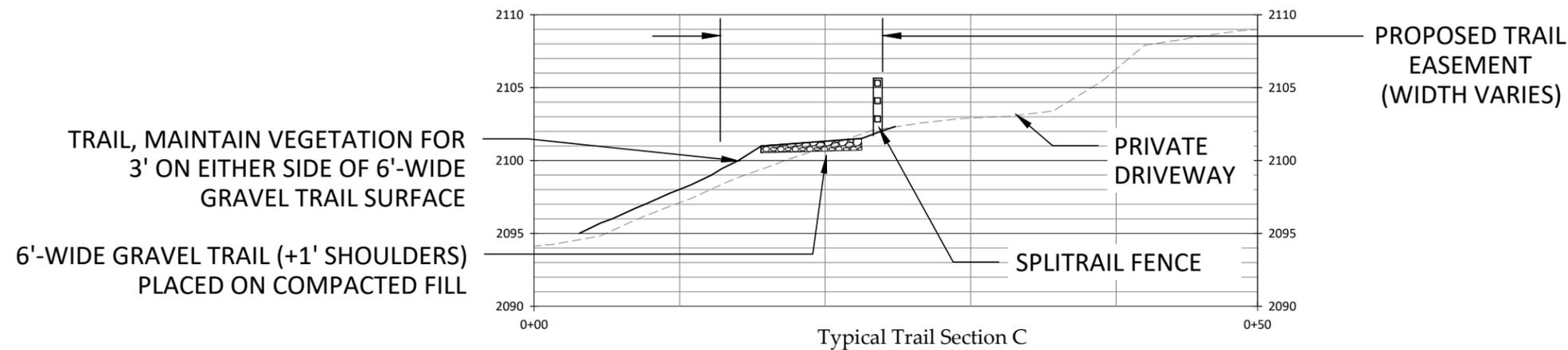
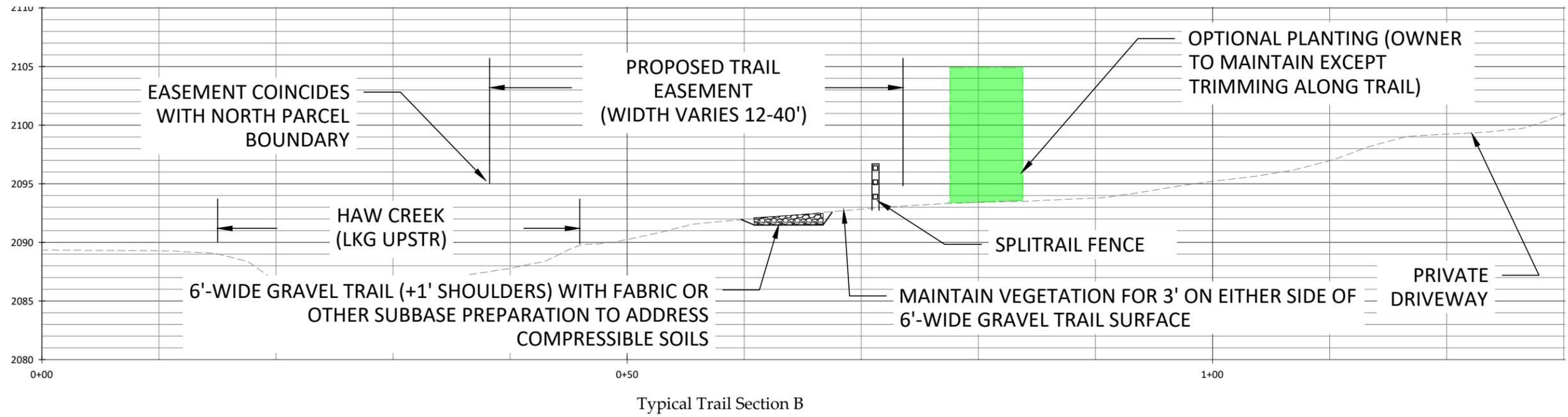
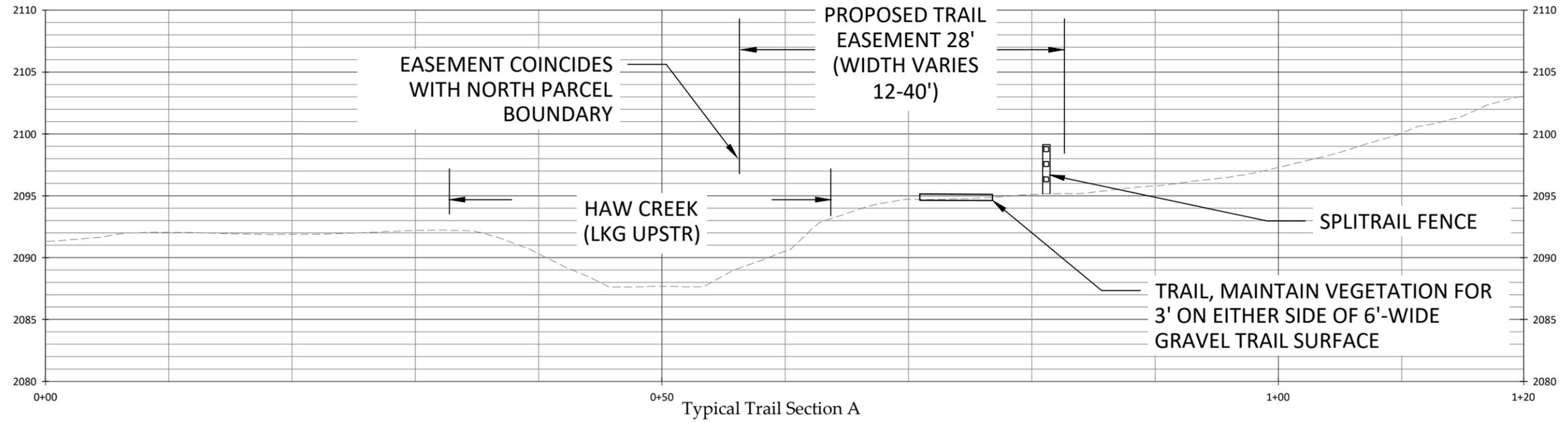




PRELIMINARY  
DO NOT  
USE FOR  
CONSTRUCTION

Conceptual Design - Haw Creek Greenway Connector





# Hominy Creek Greenway Trail Improvement and Ecological Restoration

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Asheville GreenWorks***

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Mr Eric Bradford  
PO Box 22  
Asheville, NC 28801

rachel@ashevillegreenworks.org  
O: 828-254-1776  
M: 828-458-6691  
F: 828-253-5427

## ***Mr Eric Bradford***

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2 Sulphur Springs Rd  
Asheville, NC 28806

eric@ashevillegreenworks.org  
O: 828-254-1776  
M: 828-458-6691

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Hominy Creek Greenway Trail Improvement and Ecological Restoration

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway/Asheville GreenWorks

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway. Asheville GreenWorks serves as the FOHCG's fiscal agent and supports our application.

The application was completed by FOHCG trustee Jack Igelman, jack@igelman.com 828-216-0888

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Improvements

### Scope of Work

FOHCG Scope of Work (2).pdf

### Project Schedule

Project Timeline.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

113 Hominy Creek Road, Asheville

### Parcel Number

962799280400000

### Acreage

12

### Zoning Designation

residential

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$312,834.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$372,764.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$10,000.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
  - 2) Funding Amount
  - 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)
- Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway, \$10,000, secured

## Project Summary

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### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond’s goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

This project has two goals: to complete the restoration of a sustainable natural surface trail and to invest in the ongoing ecological restoration and maintenance of the 12 acre green space known as the Hominy Creek Greenway, a City of Asheville park. This project requests funds to restore 0.4 miles of natural surface trail and to a five-year ecological restoration plan developed in partnership with EcoForesters, an Asheville based non-profit organization.

The objective of the trail project is to redesign, improve, and reroute a 0.4 mile section of trail to create a sustainable pathway that reduces erosion and improves the trail user experience. The plan involves raising the trail in several areas; creating swales, levies, and other elements to capture, store and redirect rainfall and runoff. The project will link two recently completed trail projects (September 2021/March 2024) that improved 40% of the Greenway  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile trail's surface.

The project also seeks to address the infestation of non-native invasive plant species in the riparian buffer zones and surrounding forest along the Hominy Creek Greenway. This project seeks a more aggressive, long-term approach to managing invasive species and replacing them with native grasses, shrubs and trees.

The combination of both projects will expand access to residents that are less likely to access urban green spaces because of traditional limitations.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

This project is located within Buncombe County.

The project's timeline allows for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule.

This project includes a plan for long-term management and maintenance.

The Hominy Creek Greenway is a City of Asheville park and open to the public.

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway is a non profit organization with an active board of trustees and members. Asheville GreenWorks serves as out fiscal agent.

## *Improvements Narrative*

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### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The combination of trail and forest restoration, we believe, will create a model for other urban open spaces in Buncombe County. Urban parkland can improve ecological health; provide a place to play and gather; and help residents connect with nature, making the city more livable. This popular section of greenway is used by visitors to Asheville, as well as city and county residents. It is located in an urban section of West Asheville and adjacent to a new housing development under construction on Bear Creek Road.

While the region has an extensive trail system on public lands that surround the city, they are not accessible to the city's most economically vulnerable. A potential outcome of the trail improvement project is to improve and expand safe access to all residents of Asheville, Buncombe County and visitors to the region. The project seeks to expand access to residents that are less likely to access urban green spaces because of traditional limitations. Trails and greenspace have the potential to deliver powerful benefits to communities—providing people of every age, ability and socioeconomic background safe and inexpensive spaces for outdoor physical activity, commuting and recreation. Trails can serve as economic catalysts—opening up opportunities for outdoor tourism and small business development, and they can also provide critical “social infrastructure”—public spaces where people can meet, interact and build relationships.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Treating non-native invasive vegetation species (NNIS) and restoring native vegetation, and trail restoration all contribute overlapping and interrelated benefits to the ecological integrity and function of the greenway property and to Hominy Creek. NNIS have aggressive growth rates, reproduce prolifically, and do not have natural predators in this area to keep them in check; therefore, they out-compete native plant species for resources, form dense monocultures, and even have the potential to topple mature native trees. As native

plants are replaced with NNIS, the native wildlife species that prefer or depend upon the native vegetation for critical elements such as food, prey base, and shelter, are similarly displaced.

By this same logic, the threatened and endangered species occurring within and below this portion of the French Broad River (FBR) watershed will benefit from the restoration of native habitat. Federally endangered Appalachian elktoe mussels occur downstream of Hominy Creek Greenway in the FBR. By replanting native riparian vegetation, through activities such as live-staking, streambank stability improves and erosion and sedimentation is reduced.

### **Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).**

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This project will improve an existing parcel of green-open space. In the future, the parcel will connect via future greenway to the Hominy Creek Park and French Broad Greenway. The property is surrounded by private land, however, there are plans and opportunities to connect the Greenway to other public open spaces along the French Broad River and into nearby neighborhoods.

### **How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?**

This project on the whole, from NNIS removal and native replanting to streambank stabilization and trail restoration, provides a fantastic opportunity to involve and educate community trail users and the public on the interconnected nature of these efforts, and on the ecological importance of native vegetation, riparian buffers, and streambank/soil stabilization.

### **How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?**

Measuring the success of a trail conservation project involves assessing various factors related to its objectives and impacts. Among the key metrics will be regular assessments of the trail's condition, including erosion levels, vegetation health, and overall stability; Tracking changes in the diversity and abundance of plant and animal species along the trail can indicate the project's impact on local ecosystems; Gathering feedback from trail users about their experience, satisfaction, and perceptions of trail conditions can help gauge the effectiveness of conservation measures in enhancing recreational opportunities; assessing the level of involvement and satisfaction among stakeholders, including local communities, environmental organizations, government agencies, and trail users, can provide valuable feedback on the project's effectiveness and relevance.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway will need to secure funding for the trail project design. Since a portion of the trail is in the floodplain, it will require a more detailed study, design and permitting process. Currently the FOHCG has \$10,000 to begin the design process. We will pursue two additional grant opportunities to secure the remaining funds. The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway has had success raising funds from grants and private donations. In addition, the Friends have established a relationship with the Dogwood Foundation's Leverage Fund. The Leverage Fund provides resources, such as professional grant writing, to help small non-profit organizations secure funding. We anticipate that we will require 8-12 months to secure design funding.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

The Greenway crosses a section of private property. The section of trail is roughly 100 yards. The City of Asheville has negotiated with the property owner to acquire an easement to the property. The City and property owners have been unable to come to an agreement. On March 29, 2024, the Asheville City Council voted in favor of condemning the property. The vote allows the City attorney to begin the process of condemnation and create public access for the entire length of the Greenway. The trail construction estimate that separates the cost of trail restoration on the condemned private property. If condemnation is not completed by the time of trail construction, the project will be completed in two phases. The second phase would begin when the easement is acquired by the City of Asheville. If condemnation is complete, we will address the trail restoration as a single construction project.

### **Please describe the readiness of the project.**

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

The ecological restoration portion of the project is shovel ready and will begin as soon as funding is available. The concept and five-year timeline is prepared and our partner, EcoForesters, is prepared to begin. The ecological restoration work will have a minimal impact on public use or access.

The trail restoration project is in the concept phase. We will need to secure additional funding to complete the design and permitting process of the project. We anticipate that funding will be secured by the end of 2024. Design and construction will begin in 2025. We anticipate that project construction will occur over a 4-5 week period of time. During that time a 0.4 mile portion of the Hominy Creek Greenway will be closed to the public, however, the public will be able to access the Greenway from both trailheads to use recreational assets on either end of the Greenway.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

Asheville Greenworks serves as the fiscal agent of the Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway EcoForesters has developed a five-year ecological restoration plan and will manage and implement restoration activities.

The City of Asheville is the property owner and partners with the Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway to steward the Greenway and maintain elements of the parkland.

Wildlands Engineers will oversee the design, permitting and construction of the trail project.

The Malvern Hills Community and Rhododendron Creek Community will assist in public engagement to inform and seek input from residents.

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The Hominy Creek Greenway is located within the ancestral homelands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. By the time European settlers began arriving in this region in the late 18th century, this land was officially recognized as Cherokee territory. After the Revolutionary War, the Cherokee Nation ceded much of the land that included this portion of the Hominy Creek Greenway. These land cessions were made through coercion and encroachment and rarely represented the wishes of the Cherokee people as a whole. In 1889 Edwin Carrier brought electricity to West Asheville by construction of a dam and powerhouse on Hominy Creek that is located within the boundary of the park. This dam powered a commercial street car, which ran through this property from Asheville to his Sulphur Springs Hotel. During the following century, the property became an ad-hoc dumping ground for building materials, tires, and other debris. Much of the garbage has degraded or has been removed. The Metropolitan Sewerage District, or MSD, maintains a sewer line that runs parallel to the creek. Prior to the creation of the Hominy Creek Greenway, the MSD maintained access to maintain the sewer line. Portions of the Hominy Creek Greenway utilize the rail grade and the sewer line. Currently, the Hominy Creek Greenway is a City of Asheville owned parkland. The FOHCG partners with the City of Asheville government, allied organizations, and residents to improve and manage the property.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The trail design, construction and ecological restoration activities will consider the following factors: The type, density, and distribution of vegetation can affect construction activities. Thick vegetation may require clearing while protecting native plant species; Soil composition and stability influence trail renovations and may require design stabilization techniques; Understanding water flow patterns, drainage, and potential flooding risks is also important and will be considered in the design phase of this project; The presence of native plants and animals may require mitigation measures to minimize disturbance during construction; The natural features of the land, such as slopes, hills, or valleys, affect site access, grading, and overall construction logistics. Steep slopes may require additional earthwork and stabilization measures; Weather patterns and climate conditions influence construction design, scheduling and material selection.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)***

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**Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.**

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

This project is located between two road access points—Shelburne Rd. and Sand Hill Rd. The previous trail reconstruction projects (September 2021/March 2024) have leveled and smoothed the trail surface to allow access from each road entrance to the trail, picnic areas, and open green space. This project would connect these two road ends of the Greenway with a smoother and more even trail surface, allowing complete access from end to end for people of all abilities to travel by foot, bike, stroller, or wheelchair. Over the last several years, heavy rainfall, gravity and increased traffic on the greenway has accelerated erosion and impacted access. As a result, frequent wet and muddy trail conditions have blocked access. Runoff from higher elevations bordering the park tends to settle on sections of the trail. An increase in the volume of users over time causes the wet trail surface to pack and settle. The impact forms ruts on the trail that catch and hold water during rains. Rather than flowing across the trail, water rushes down the pathway. Over time, water channeling down the trail gains velocity and energy, washing away more soil and cutting deeper into the trail. The combination of forces compounds the rate of erosion. As the trail conditions degrade, water is held on the path longer. The results are impassable sections of trail following heavy rainfall or periods of sustained precipitation.

### **How does the project address public access and use?**

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

By connecting the two previously restored sections of trail with a more sustainable level surface, the public will have stable and reliable access to the entire Hominy Creek Greenway, no longer adversely affected by mud and washout from heavy rains. Multiple areas along the trail are outfitted with benches and picnic tables, offering places to rest and contemplate nature or gather and socialize. The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway, along with other partners in the community, host public events throughout the year including cycling, running, art/performance, and educational events. The restoration of the trail would allow access for a more diverse population of the community, removing the barrier of rough unstable terrain.

The removal of invasive aggressive growing plants, will open the space visually allowing for a more welcoming and safe-feeling space for all visitors to access and benefit from the physical exercise, emotional well-being, and a sense of belong that this natural space can provide.

The natural surface of this trail may inherently limit access for some, requiring fair balance and fitness levels. Wheelchairs (motorized or human-powered) and mobility scooters may be used, but the surface is not as reliably firm and slip-resistant as a paved walking trail would be.

## If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The Hominy Creek Greenway is located in West Asheville, a community of 17k households, 55% of which are family households (point2homes.com) located between Malvern Hills and Morningside Park neighborhoods. Residents access the Greenway by car, foot, or cycle from Sand Hill or Shelburne Road entrances/parking areas. In addition to being a corridor for commuters, the Hominy Creek Greenway is an unusual remnant of forest in the city. Educators can take advantage of its proximity to schools to teach students about local history, plants and animals, and river ecology.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

This project will meet ADA compliance by providing a trail surface that is firm and stable; the trail width will be a minimum of 36" wide; the running slope and grade of the trail will be within ADA specifications. The partnership with the City of Asheville helps ensure that the trail remains clear of debris and fallen trees are removed safely and promptly, limiting obstacles for trail users.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

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### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

FOHCG hosts monthly volunteer workday opportunities for anyone in the community to join us to learn about and remove invasive plants and help plant native trees and other vegetation that benefits the native ecology. This project will require many volunteers to help restore the native habit. This type of opportunity helps create connections and sense of belonging.

The FOHCG is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming space that can be accessed by all who live in Asheville.

Engaging community members in the planning, design, and management of green spaces empowers them to shape their environments according to their needs and preferences. Participatory approaches to green space development facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and decision-making processes that reflect the diversity of community voices and perspectives.

The FOHCG is actively seeking authentic relationships with communities that have lacked access to nature. Green spaces can play a crucial role in addressing environmental justice issues by ensuring that all communities have access to clean and healthy environments. Historically marginalized and underserved communities often face disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards and lack access to quality green spaces. Investing in green infrastructure and equitable distribution of green spaces helps address these disparities and ensures that everyone has access to nature's benefits.

## Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?

The project seeks to expand access to residents that are less likely to access urban green spaces. Offering people of every age, ability and socioeconomic background a safe and free space for outdoor physical activity, commuting, recreation, and community connection.

Disadvantaged communities often have limited access to green spaces and natural areas, especially in urban environments where green spaces may be scarce. Providing green spaces within or near these communities allows residents to access nature, which can have positive effects on physical and mental health, stress reduction, and overall well-being.

## Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?

If yes, which projects?

This Greenway is adjacent to the new 600 unit housing development under construction on South Bear Creek Road.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The Hominy Creek Greenway is located within the ancestral homelands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. In 1889, Edwin Carrier brought electricity to West Asheville by construction of a dam and powerhouse on Hominy Creek. This dam powered a commercial street car, which ran through this property from Asheville to his Sulphur Springs Hotel. This was the first hydroelectric plant and first electric rail in Western North Carolina. This railway was the first hydroelectric-powered trolley in the world; it ran along what is now the path for the greenway. In 1892 a new stone dam and powerhouse was built downstream from the original dam. The remains are still visible.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

This project includes a plan for long-term management and maintenance through the FOHCG trustees, community volunteers, partners, and the City of Asheville. FOHCG hosts volunteer workdays on the second Sunday of each month. This event is publicized with posters at the trailheads, social media, and on the fohcg.org website. Through this community outreach, relationships have been nurtured with community members who are native plant experts/growers, invasive/exotic plant removal professionals, FOHCG board members, neighbors and community sponsors. All of whom provide valuable input on the maintenance and mission of the Greenway. Through these and other events, many discussions have evolved into projects on the greenway which are often led by community members who have a passion for stewarding and expanding the Greenway.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

FOHCG holds an open annual meeting where members and the community are invited to hear about plans and progress from the year and are encouraged to share thoughts and ideas for the coming year(s). In 2023, the FOHCG board went through a strategic planning process and established a 4-year plan to improve equitable access to the Hominy Creek Greenway; achieve a sustainable and ecologically resilient parkland; and to increase the strength and capacity of the organization. This document is available for the public on the [Fohcg.org](http://Fohcg.org) website.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway host monthly “workdays” focused on the restoration and maintenance of the greenway. Invasive plants are removed, native plants are planted, trash and debris are removed, and trailwork is performed when applicable. In addition to these workdays, the board of trustees has contracted with EcoForesters, a “non-profit professional forestry organization dedicated to conserving and restoring the Appalachian forests through education and stewardship.” Through past grants, the friends have been able to treat 25% of the Hominy Creek parkland for invasives. The project area will be maintained during the monthly workdays, and if necessary, EcoForesters will be contracted if further invasive treatment is needed.

In terms of trash and litter, the Friends maintain a trash and recycling bin at the midway point of the greenway, and the city maintains trash and recycling bins on either end. Additionally, trash, litter and historical debris from past “dumping” is collected and during monthly workdays.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway will not have any dedicated paid staff contributing to maintenance and management. However, the board hosts monthly workdays where the board and community members volunteer their time for maintenance and management. Additionally, the board has contracted with EcoForesters, a “non-profit professional forestry organization dedicated to conserving and restoring the Appalachian forests through education and stewardship” for maintenance and removal of invasive species.

In addition to the workdays and contractors hired by the Friends, the City of Asheville has a professional park maintenance team that has used heavy equipment to remove invasive species and move downed trees.

The Friends of demonstrated through two major trail restoration projects that we have the capacity to raise funds, manage, and successfully execute major projects.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway use Asheville GreenWorks for a fiducial agent. Asheville GreenWorks has an accounting firm that manages the funds for Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

This project will fund a five-year ecological restoration. However, beyond five years, our strong community organization will continue to provide leadership and stewardship.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Yes. The community is highly involved in the maintenance and management of Hominy Creek Greenway. As previously mentioned, the board hosts monthly workdays, as well as a yearly celebration/fundraiser for the greenway in the fall. Previously community members have donated time, native plants, and money for the management, maintenance and restoration of the greenway. The board plans to continue monthly workdays for further invasive plant removal, native plant introduction, trail maintenance, and streambank restoration.

Attached is a five-year plan proposed by EcoForesters to guide the ecological restoration of the landscape.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

2024 HCG NNIS Control & Revegetation Plan krish DRAFT.docx.pdf

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

This project has two components: the ecological restoration and the trail restoration project. The ecological restoration project costs were estimated by EcoForesters.

The trail restoration project was estimated by Jake McLean of Wildlands Engineering. McLean designed and supervised the two trail projects completed by the Friends in 2021 and 2024.

### **What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?**

The Friends have identified two grant sources to request funding for design. In addition, the Friends have unrestricted funds (\$10,000) to begin the design process as we pursue other funding sources. The Friends have had success securing funding for projects in 2021 and 2024. We are also working with the Dogwood Foundation's Leverage Fund that will provide additional grant writing support.

### **If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?**

What are the costs of these components?

The trail and ecological restoration projects complement each other, however, each can be completed independently.

In 2020, the Friends divided the trail restoration into five phases. Phase 1 and 2 are complete. We are requesting funding to complete phase 3,4 and 5. The 0.4 miles of desired trail restoration we are requesting can be divided into segments 3,4, and 5, and completed over time. Therefore, partial funding will allow us to complete a portion of the trail reconstruction and seek funding to complete remaining portions in the future.

The ecological restoration project could also be scaled to exclude portions of the restoration.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)***

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### **How will this project fulfill community needs?**

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

Hominy Creek Greenway and this project fulfills many of the community needs listed, especially recreation, public health, and transportation. Hominy Creek Greenway is an important piece of the greenway system in Buncombe county. It is used extensively by the community as a place to get away from cars and experience nature while recreating. Asheville's many community bike ride groups use it as a connection on their weekly

rides. Running races pass through the greenway on their routes around the city. Families with children come down to the greenway to run around, play, and experience the river.

While the greenway is obviously a destination for recreation for runners, bikers, walkers and families to get outside and exercise, its importance for mental health should not be overlooked. The study “The importance of greenspace for mental health” concludes with stating that “Green spaces provide vital health services as well as environmental services; they are equigenic, reducing socioeconomic health inequalities, facilitating activity and promoting better mental health and well-being.” As Asheville continues to lose tree canopy and greenspaces to further development, it is more important than ever to invest in our existing pieces of urban nature.

### Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

The Hominy Creek Greenway is part of the “priority corridor” Hominy Creek Greenway Corridor in the Buncombe County Greenway Master Plan, as well as on the Land of Sky Regional Trails Master Plan.

Additionally, Hominy Creek Greenway is an existing arterial greenway on Asheville’s Close the GAP plan. The GAP plan greenway visions is “Asheville’s greenway network connects all areas of the City in order to allow people to move throughout the City on a continuous network, either on foot or by bike.” Hominy Creek Greenway is an important arterial greenway that connects to other planned greenways in the Close the GAP plan.

### Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Lucy Crown, City of Asheville Transportation lcrown@ashevillenc.gov Pete Wall, City of Asheville Parks and Recreation Department pwall@ashevillenc.gov

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)*

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### How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway have experience working with the City of Asheville during construction projects to ensure the safety of greenway users. Areas under construction are closed during the duration of the project. Temporary fencing and signage close off the construction area. City of Asheville and the Friends both post on their respective websites and social media accounts to communicate closures ahead of time.

## How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?

This trail maintenance and improvement project will be engineered by professional geotechnical engineers. It will be designed to be robust to deterioration from foot and bike traffic, as well as severe weather events and flooding. While this project isn't immune to vandalism, the nature of it makes it a very unlikely target for any sort of vandalism.

## How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

The primary user groups of the greenway are walkers, runners and bikers. As the greenway exists now, the trail can be narrow in places as some parts stay muddy after rain. This can make passing difficult. This project will widen the usable part of the trail and make it resilient to rain and flooding. The overall width of the greenway is not expected to increase significantly, but the width that can be used in all weather conditions will be greatly increased.

## Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.

Hominy Creek Greenway currently has clear signage on the trail on both ends. The greenway exists on the City of Asheville and Buncombe county's greenway maps.

## *Applicant Experience*

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### Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

The FOHCG has set the standard for how volunteer groups manage public spaces and has served as a model for numerous organizations throughout the city. The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway was formed as a non-profit membership organization in 2012. The organization is guided by a seven-member volunteer board. Asheville GreenWorks serves as our fiscal agent, providing bookkeeping services. The organization funds projects through grants, private donations, and memberships. The Friends completed a five-year strategic plan in 2022. The qualifications of the Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway to implement a project would include a combination of organizational expertise, partnerships, resources, and community involvement. We have a track record of successfully completing restoration projects that demonstrates our ability to implement restoration techniques and manage resources. We have established partnerships with local government agencies, conservation organizations, and community groups, enabling them to leverage resources, expertise, and support for restoration initiatives. We have strong community connections and support for their conservation goals. Engaging the community in restoration projects can enhance project success, build awareness, and foster stewardship of the local environment. We have knowledge of relevant environmental regulations and permitting processes to ensure compliance with legal requirements throughout the restoration project.

**Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

The completion of two large scale projects demonstrates our organization's ability to raise funds and execute large projects on the Greenway. In March 2024, the Friends completed a project to redesign, elevate, and reroute a 500-foot section of the trail to address issues of erosion, stormwater management, and accessibility. The project will also begin the ecological restoration of 1.5 acres of parkland and restore a heavily eroded 300 foot section of streambank at the confluence of Buttermilk Hominy and Hominy Creek. The Friends completed a major trail project at the Greenway's Shelburne Road trailhead in 2021 that restored a 1,000 foot section of heavily eroded trail.

**Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.**

Founded in 2015, EcoForesters is a not-for-profit professional forestry organization dedicated to conserving and restoring our Appalachian Forests through education and stewardship offering comprehensive consulting forestry services, including forest stewardship planning and invasive species control.

Wildlands Engineering was founded in 2007 in Charlotte, North Carolina as an ecologically focused engineering company specializing in water resources, stream and wetland restoration, and water quality management. Wildlands Engineering provides engineering, mitigation banking, and consulting services to a diverse group of clients, including private and public developers, government agencies, and environmental groups. Wildlands has a team of dedicated, motivated, and highly-trained stream designers, wetland and riparian buffer restoration experts, engineers, hydrologists, ecologists, real estate brokers, and GIS analysts.

Asheville GreenWorks is a nonprofit organization working in the Asheville-Buncombe County area to promote environmental responsibility and conservation. The mission of Asheville GreenWorks is to inspire, equip, and mobilize individuals and communities to take care of the places they love to live. Asheville GreenWorks envisions enhancing the environment and quality of life for all residents of Asheville and Buncombe County.

**Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)**

IRS Determination Letter (1) (2).pdf

**Resumes of Key Staff**

Jack Igelman CV WWC .pdf

## ***Budget***

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### **Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.**

We are requesting \$312,834 to complete two projects: the ecological restoration of the 14 acre parkland and the restoration of a 0.4 miles section of the Hominy Creek Greenway. The ecological restoration estimate is \$104, 785. The trail construction estimate is \$208,049. In addition, we anticipate 59,930 in trail design and permitting costs. Those funds will be secured through other sources. The total cost including design is \$372,764.

### **Project Budget**

Ecological and Trail Restoration Budget Document.docx (1).pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

### **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Hominy Greenway - Preliminary Repair Areas 2.3.21 - MSD request (1) (1).pdf

### **Project Photos and Illustrations**

### **Letters of Support**

### **Other Documentation**

2024 EcoForesters Restoration Plan Description.docx.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- FOHCG Scope of Work (2).pdf
- Project Timeline.pdf
- 2024 HCG NNIS Control & Revegetation Plan krish DRAFT.docx.pdf
- IRS Determination Letter (1) (2).pdf
- Jack Igelman CV WWC .pdf
- Ecological and Trail Restoration Budget Document.docx (1).pdf
- Hominy Greenway - Preliminary Repair Areas 2.3.21 - MSD request (1) (1).pdf
- 2024 EcoForesters Restoration Plan Description.docx.pdf

## **Scope of Work**

### **Hominy Creek Greenway Trail Improvement and Ecological Restoration**

#### **Project Goal:**

This project has two goals: to complete the restoration of a sustainable natural surface trail and to invest in the ongoing ecological restoration and maintenance of the 12 acre green space known as the Hominy Creek Greenway, a City of Asheville park. This project requests funds to restore 0.4 miles of natural surface trail and to a five-year ecological restoration plan developed in partnership with EcoForesters, an Asheville based non-profit organization.

#### **Hominy Creek Greenway:**

The Hominy Creek Greenway is a City of Asheville owned parkland on 14 acres of land along Hominy Creek in West Asheville. The land borders 2/3 mile of the northern side of Hominy Creek and Buttermilk Creek between Sand Hill Road and Shelburne Road. Its southern boundary is the creek and its northern boundary follows the back lot lines of the houses on Shelburne Road. In 2011, a coalition of public and private interests purchased the property for \$139,000 on behalf of the City of Asheville with the intent to establish the Hominy Creek Greenway. The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway, Inc. (FOHCG) was formed in 2012 and partners with City of Asheville government, allied organizations, and residents to improve and manage the property. The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway holds the community vision for the park and in 2014 formed a partnership agreement with the City of Asheville designating the FOHCG Inc. as stewards. All trailwork and the majority of maintenance and improvement of the Greenway and its trail system is funded and conducted by volunteers and in cooperation with other local non-profit organizations, such as Asheville on Bikes, EcoForesters, RiverLink, and our fiscal agent, Asheville GreenWorks.

#### **Our Mission:**

To steward a sustainable greenway by engaging the community, improving equitable access, and conserving the native ecology of our natural, public green space.

#### **Trail Restoration Project:**

The objective of the trail project is to redesign, improve, and reroute a 0.4 mile section of trail to create a sustainable pathway that reduces erosion and improves the trail user experience. The plan involves raising the trail in several areas; creating swales, levies, and other elements to capture, store and redirect rainfall and runoff. The project will link two recently completed trail projects (September 2021/March 2024) that improved 40% of the Greenway 2/3 mile trail's surface. This project will link the two projects from the Shelburne Road trailhead to the Sand Hill Road Trailhead. The completed projects were

valued at roughly \$90,000 and were funded by members of the FOHCG Inc, three Buncombe County Recreation Grants, grants from Connect Buncombe, funding from the Pigeon River Fund, and in-kind donations from Wildlands Engineering and Asheville GreenWorks.

Significant rainfall due to climate change and funding constraints has impacted the ability of residents to safely access and use the 0.75 mile linear trail that connects the Hominy Creek Greenway's two primary access points at Shelburne Road and Sand Hill Road.

Over the last several years, heavy rainfall, gravity and increased traffic on the greenway has accelerated erosion and impacted access. 2020 was Asheville's fourth wettest on record. And in August 2021, the trail was impacted by flooding during Tropical Storm Fred. As a result, frequent wet and muddy trail conditions have blocked access and a network of ad hoc, unsustainable trails has formed. Flooding as a result of more extreme storm events is more likely in the future due to climate change. Runoff from higher elevations bordering the park tends to settle on sections of the trail. An increase in the volume of users over time causes the wet trail surface to pack and settle. The impact forms ruts on the trail that catch and hold water during rains. Rather than flowing across the trail, water rushes down the pathway. Over time, water channeling down the trail gains velocity and energy, washing away more soil and cutting deeper into the trail. The combination of forces compounds the rate of erosion. As the trail conditions degrade, water is held on the path longer. The results are impassable sections of trail following heavy rainfall or periods of sustained precipitation.

The objective of the trail project is to redesign, improve, and reroute a 0.4 foot section of trail to create a sustainable pathway that reduces erosion and improves the trail user experience. The plan involves raising the trail in several areas; creating swales, levies, and other elements to capture, store and redirect rainfall and runoff. The project will link two recently completed section of trail restoration projects on each end of the linear Greenway.

### **Ecological Restoration Project**

In addition to trail erosion, the riparian buffer zones and surrounding forest along the Hominy Creek Greenway is habitat to nonnative invasive plant species (NNIS). NNIS have aggressive growth rates, reproduce prolifically and do not have natural predators in this area to keep them in check, therefore they out compete native plant species for resources, form dense monocultures and even have the potential to topple mature native trees. These invasive species degrade wildlife habitat and property value, reducing the overall aesthetic appeal of a space making it less inviting for recreation.

The Friends have invested resources over the years in combating non native invasive species, planting and maintaining native pollinator gardens, hosting educational events that engage the community and welcome visitors. However, our volunteer efforts are not enough to maintain 14 acres. This project seeks a more aggressive, long-term approach to managing invasive species and replacing them with native grasses, shrubs and trees.

Urban forested and riparian spaces offer many ecological services that create economic and health benefits to human, animal, insect and plant life, but the benefits can only be fully reaped when these spaces are healthy and functioning properly. Native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, especially those that are riparian buffers and wetland plants have the ability to actively trap pollutants and filter water. Protecting tree canopy cover in urban greenspaces is important because a robust canopy can help slow down the speed and rate of rainwater, dispersing it before it hits the ground during large rainfall events, making erosion less severe.

Healthy forests are the most cost effective tools to help protect our changing world from the effects of climate change. Extreme weather fluctuations are becoming more frequent with hotter spikes and colder temperature dips, prolonged droughts and heavy rainfall events. Healthy forests with more native trees will be able to store more carbon and cool and protect communities by providing shade and wind breaks. Functioning healthy streams that have a natural flow and native vegetation growing in the riparian buffers will be able to better trap sedimentation thus improving water quality and protect communities from major flood events by slowing the dispersal of large water flow.

The proposed project will directly contribute to the listed items in numerous ways. Treating non-native invasive vegetation species (NNIS), restoring native vegetation, stabilizing streambanks along Hominy Creek and two of its tributaries (Buttermilk Creek and Rhododendron Creek), and trail restoration all contribute overlapping and interrelated benefits to the ecological integrity and function of the greenway property and to Hominy Creek.

NNIS have aggressive growth rates, reproduce prolifically, and do not have natural predators in this area to keep them in check; therefore, they out-compete native plant species for resources, form dense monocultures, and even have the potential to topple mature native trees. As native plants are replaced with NNIS, the native wildlife species that prefer or depend upon the native vegetation for critical elements such as food, prey base, and shelter, are similarly displaced. This displacement reduces the diversity and abundance of native fauna, thus degrading the habitat quality that previously existed. By conducting a multi-year treatment and removal effort of the NNIS that have

progressively overtaken the HCG property, and by replanting with native vegetation, native wildlife habitat will be restored and the native wildlife will have the opportunity to rebound. Native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants, especially those that are riparian buffer and wetland species, have the ability to actively trap pollutants and filter water. Protecting tree canopy cover in urban greenspaces is important because a robust canopy can help slow down the speed and rate of rainwater, dispersing it before it hits the ground during large rainfall events, making erosion less severe. Healthy forests with more native trees will be able to store more carbon and cool and protect communities by providing shade and wind breaks. Functioning healthy streams that have a natural flow and native vegetation growing in the riparian buffers will be able to better trap sedimentation, thus improving water quality.

By this same logic, the threatened and endangered species occurring within and below this portion of the French Broad River (FBR) watershed will benefit from the restoration of native habitat. Federally endangered Appalachian elktoe mussels occur downstream of Hominy Creek Greenway in the FBR. By replanting native riparian vegetation, through activities such as live-staking, streambank stability improves and erosion and sedimentation is reduced. Similarly, by restoring sections of degraded trail, erosive runoff and sediment loss into the stream will be reduced. Sedimentation is a harmful factor for mussel health; therefore, the improvements to water quality, through stabilizing the trail and the streambanks and through increasing the efficacy of the riparian buffer to reduce and filter stormwater runoff, are expected to benefit Appalachian elktoe and other sensitive aquatic species that occur in receiving waters. Several federal and state listed bat species are known to occur in the Hominy Creek corridor. For example, gray bats and tricolored bats utilize Hominy Creek and the FBR for foraging and commuting, as well as using the adjacent landscape for roosting. Improvements to the vegetative community and to water quality support bats' prey base of aquatic macroinvertebrates and serves to provide the structural habitat components needed for their commuting and roosting behaviors.

This project on the whole, from NNIS removal and native replanting to streambank stabilization and trail restoration, provides a fantastic opportunity to involve and educate community trail users and the public on the interconnected nature of these efforts, and on the ecological importance of native vegetation, riparian buffers, and streambank/soil stabilization.

### **Project Impact**

The combination of trail and forest restoration, we believe, will create a model for other urban open spaces in Buncombe County. Urban parkland can improve ecological health; provide a place to play and gather; and help residents connect with nature,

making the city more livable. This popular section of greenway is used by visitors to Asheville, as well as city and county residents. It is located in an urban section of West Asheville and adjacent to a new housing development under construction on Bear Creek Road.

While the region has an extensive trail system on public lands that surround the city, they are not accessible to the city's most economically vulnerable. A potential outcome of the trail improvement project is to improve and expand safe access to all residents of Asheville, Buncombe County and visitors to the region. The project seeks to expand access to residents that are less likely to access urban green spaces because of traditional limitations. Trails and greenspace have the potential to deliver powerful benefits to communities—providing people of every age, ability and socioeconomic background safe and inexpensive spaces for outdoor physical activity, commuting and recreation. Trails can serve as economic catalysts—opening up opportunities for outdoor tourism and small business development, and they can also provide critical “social infrastructure”—public spaces where people can meet, interact and build relationships. Key to maximizing the impact of trails is ensuring every stakeholder in a community is a part of the development process and will benefit from their use.

## **Project Timeline**

### **Ecological Restoration Schedule**

2024

8 field days of restoration work including different treatment methods, addressing different species at different but optimal times of the year and therefore the treatment days will not always be consecutive.

2025

5 field days of restoration work including two days in June, that two days take place in August and that the fifth day take place in October.

2026

4 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 3; two of those days take place in June, that one day take place in mid to late August and that the fourth day take place in late September or early October.

2027

2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway including one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 4 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

2028

2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 5 one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 5 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

### **Trail Restoration Schedule**

2024 Project design

2024 Matching grant applications to NC Division of Water Quality and Pigeon River Fund for design services

2025 Design and Permitting

2025-2026 Construction and grant closeout



Mail: PO Box 16007, Asheville, NC 28816 ♦ Office: 36 Old Charlotte Highway, Asheville, NC 28803

Phone: (828) 484-6842 ♦ E-mail: [info@ecoforesters.org](mailto:info@ecoforesters.org) ♦ Web Site: [www.ecoforesters.org](http://www.ecoforesters.org)

## **This Nonnative Invasive Species Management and Revegetation Plan has been prepared for The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway in collaboration with The City of Asheville**

The Hominy Creek Greenway serves as a forested haven for native flora and fauna and a recreational hidden gem for West Asheville locals and visitors alike that are looking to hit the trail for a quick stroll along its gentle path, seek to appreciate nature while still inside city limits or dip their toes into the cooling waters of the creek before it flows into the mighty French Broad River. It traverses across approximately 12 acres of parkland, with one entrance meeting Sandhill Road and the other on Shelburne Road between the Malvern Hills and Morningside Park neighborhoods of Asheville.

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway and the City of Asheville have done an incredible job over the years investing in the betterment of this greenspace; making trail corridor improvements, combatting nonnative invasive species, planting and maintaining native pollinator gardens, hosting educational events that engage the community and welcome visitors, improving the parking facilities and organizing regular volunteer events to make it all possible, but it's a big job and a labor of love and there's still more to be done to make this amazing public space even better for Asheville residents!

Unquestionably, urban forested and riparian spaces offer many ecological services that in turn create economic and health benefits to human, animal, insect and plant life, but the benefits can only be fully reaped when these spaces are healthy and functioning properly.

Although work is underway and many improvements have been made, we're just getting started! The section of Hominy Creek that flows along the Greenway as well as the two smaller streams that flow into it on the Northwest end of the park, Buttermilk Creek, and the Southeast end, Rhododendron creek are all in some state of degradation. This is evidenced by the very incised streambanks that can be observed at different sections along all three of the creeks. An incised streambank is one that makes an almost vertical drop down to water level from the solid flat ground above, if this vertical drop is greater than a foot, the streambank is unstable and therefore more prone to continue to lose soil by sloughing away. When the soil sloughs away and into the creek this causes sedimentation, the fine particles of soil that degrade water quality and habitat. These unstable streambanks have formed overtime due to past land use, in some cases this is due to purposely altering the flow of the stream, channelizing it to make it more straight in order to suit human needs for infrastructure. Although creating a straight channelized stream may have seemed like a fine option in decades past, it is now causing ecological problems. Stormwater runoff is also a common pollutant for water resources located in urban spaces. This happens due to the many impervious surfaces that exist in urban spaces. Impervious surfaces like black top do not readily allow for the gradual absorption of water. Instead during rainfall events, rain water hits the surface of the blacktop and flows quickly off, always traveling the path of least resistance, taking any pollutants and trash with it, eventually ending up in our streams and other bodies of water. Native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, especially those that are riparian buffer and wetland plants have the ability to actively trap pollutants and filter water. Protecting tree canopy cover in urban greenspaces is important because a robust canopy can help slow down the speed and rate of rain water, dispersing it before it hits the ground during large rainfall events, making erosion less severe.

In addition to the streambank erosion that is plaguing Hominy, Buttermilk and Rhododenron creeks, the riparian buffer zones and surrounding forest along the Hominy Creek Greenway is unfortunately inundated with nonnative invasive plant species (NNIS). Nonnative invasive species have aggressive growth rates, reproduce prolifically and do not have natural predators in this area to keep them in check, therefore they out compete native plant species for resources, form dense monocultures and even have the potential to topple mature native trees. These invasive species degrade wildlife habitat and property value, reduce the overall aesthetic appeal of a space making it a less inviting for recreation and even if wildlife consume some of the these invasvie plants, they do not provide high nutritional value that native wildlife need. Nonnative invasive plant species also do very little to help in the face of climate change.

Healthy forests and streams are a couple of the most cost effective tools to help protect our changing world from the effects of climate change. Extreme weather fluctuations are becoming more frequent with hotter spikes and colder temperature dips, prolonged droughts and heavy rainfall events. Healthy forests with more native trees will be able to store more carbon and cool and protect communities by providing shade and wind breaks. Functioning healthy streams that have a natural flow and native vegetation growing in the riparian buffers will be able to better trap sedimentation thus improving water quality and protect communities form major flood events by slowing the dispersal of large water flow.

All of this is to stay that the management of Hominy Creek Greenway is headed in the right direction but assisting funds from the Buncombe Couny Open Space Bond would help to further the future stewardship and restoration recommendations of this plan.

EcoForesters is recommending an aggressive 5 year strategy for controlling the nonnative invasive species infestations that are growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway as well as a riparian zone revegetation plan to reestablish a diverse cohort of native plants along the creeks that will protect and promote the health of these water resources.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Inventory at Hominy Creek Greenway**

The nonnative invasive species observed growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway include but are not limited to:

- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
- Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- Porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)
- Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
- Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*)
- Autumn olive & Russian olive (*Eleagnus sp.*)
- Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)
- English ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Winged burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
- Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)
- Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*)
- Leatherleaf mahonia (*Berberis bealei*)
- Winter creeper (*Euonymus fortunei*)
- Garlic mustard (*Allaria petiolata*)
- Japanes stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)

\* Invasive species abbreviation codes contain the first two letters of the genus and the first to letters of the species (i.e. Japanese knotweed abreviate code: FAJA)

## Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy

### Year One

EcoForesters is recommending 8 days of nonnative invasive species control at the Hominy Creek Greenway during year 1. These 8 days will involve different treatment methods, addressing different species at different but optimal times of the year and therefore the treatment days will not always be consecutive.

The first year of NNIS control at the Hominy Creek Greenway will involve heavy cutting, mowing, bush-hogging and herbicidal control efforts. One of the most effective means of controlling invasive plant species is by enlisting the help of specific herbicides. When used safely and responsibly under the right conditions and for the appropriate species at the correct time of year, herbicides can be a very successful and cost effective tool for nonnative invasive species control.

Many of the NNIS growing along the Greenway have been growing there, undisturbed long enough to have formed dense woody or bramble thickets, draping curtains of vines that hang from trees, thick hedges along the creek and carpeting ground covers. The first year will require the most heavy lifting in terms of active management. The use of power tools such as chainsaws and brushcutters with circular woodcut blades as well as hand tools like hatchets, hand saws and pruners will be in the arsenal along with chemical (herbicide) solutions administered via backpack sprayers, hand spray bottles or dobber bottles depending on the species, the age of the plant and the time of the year. EcoForesters deploys what is called a hand crew, a small crew of 5 individuals that are able to sweep through an area, identifying NNIS and implementing control efforts. A hand crew is able to be very meticulous in their control efforts. A benefit to using a hand crew over large heavy machinery or a large scale spray rig is the ability to be nimble and mitigate collateral damage to native plants that are growing in the vicinity of the invasive species. Individual forest restoration technicians sweeping through an area intended for treatment are able to identify plants up close, apply targeted control methods and are less likely to trample native plants or spread invasive seed, which is often a risk with using heavy machinery.

It often makes the most sense to tackle the larger woody species first, those that are of seed producing age, growing in the overstory and midstory and this often includes mature invasive trees, climbing vines and shrubs.

The mature invasive trees growing at the Hominy Creek Greenway, tree of heaven, require a special kind of chemical treatment method, called hack & squirt, due to their unique growth habits. When a tree of heaven individual's main trunk is damaged they will undergo aggressive root suckering, meaning that hundreds of babies will sprout from the mother tree's root system. The root suckers can grow 10-14 feet tall in the first year and can often extend out a distance from the main tree, as far as the tree is tall. Therefore it is unwise to simply cut down a mature tree of heaven with a chainsaw, even if planning to use an herbicide to treat the stump. The tree of heaven will still root sucker. In addition exhibiting this root suckering behavior, mature female trees can produce 300,000 seedlings per year and the wind can disperse these seeds up to 330 feet away from the mother tree. One of the best ways to kill the tree of heaven and prevent severe root suckering (there will still be some) is the use of the hack & squirt method. This involves using a hatchet to make downward 45-degree angle cuts through the bark and into the cambium layer of the tree and then using a handheld spray bottle that has been filled with a concentrated herbicide solution to squirt a milliliter of the solution into the fresh cuts. Cuts around the trunk of the tree can be spaced 1 to 2 inches apart and can be made at a height of 3 feet or lower. Leaving these gaps of live tissue intact is important to kill the tree slowly and lessen the chance for the tree's shock response root suckering. EcoForesters would use an herbicide solution of 50% Triclopyr 3 mixed with water. This hack & squirt method can be conducted throughout the year with exception to spring when the upward sap flow is high (not recommended March – early May). Midsummer and fall are the best time and late winter can yield somewhat less effective results.

Sometimes a follow-up hack & squirt treatment of large trees is needed months later in the same year if the first

treatment did not completely kill the tree. This method is still recommended because the root suckering can cause an even larger problem to deal with later down the line. It's important to know that large trees that are treated with the hack & squirt treatment are left dead and standing. If there is any concern about these large trees eventually coming down onto structures or frequented pathways, then this should be discussed prior to any treatment efforts. Dead standing trees are called snags and are great for wildlife but the potential hazard to humans and property should be considered. If a dead standing tree is too great a hazard for H.C.G. visitors, then it is recommended that the tree of heaven be felled with a chainsaw, the stump treated immediately with a concentrated herbicide solution and then monitored for the following year for the root suckering behavior to begin. Root suckering seedlings will then need to be dealt with by way of foliar spray means with backpack sprayers.

The Cut-Stump or Cut-Stem herbicide treatment method can be used to control many invasive species of climbing vines, shrubs and younger sapling size trees. For large invasive vines and shrubs (greater than 1 inch in diameter at soil level) using a handsaw, hand pruners or chainsaw, cut through the stump of the plant within six inches or lower to soil level and using a pre-mixed handheld spray bottle or dobber bottle, spray the freshly cut stump surface area with an appropriate concentrated herbicide solution. It is important to treat this stump within 2 minutes of cutting before the plant makes attempts to heal itself over and create a barrier that would make it difficult for the herbicide to penetrate. This method can be done year-round including during the dormant season but would best be avoided if the ground has been consistently frozen. In the case of climbing vines specifically it is also highly recommended to cut the vines a second time, at eye level so that it is visually obvious that this work has been completed and so that the potential ladder for any future climbing vines has been severed.

Hack & squirt and cut-stump chemical control of the invasive plant species during year 1 will take place over the course 5 days during the growing season, sometime between mid May through mid July.

After the initial chemical cut-stump and hack & squirt treatments have taken place across the 12 acres H.C.G. area addressing the large and mature woody invasive species, foliar spray herbicide treatments using backpack sprayers can be conducted on low growing sprawling invasive vines, and shrubs or thickets that are 5 feet or shorter in height. Waiting to perform the foliar spraying activities until after the cutting and mowing work has been completed is safer for the technicians performing the work so that they are not required to walk back through recently sprayed areas to cut and treat the woody plants. This is also more efficient since the tool sets are different (hand or power tools and hand sprayers vs. backpack sprayers) and sometimes the herbicides and their mix rates can be different too. Depending on the NNIS the herbicide for foliar spraying will vary as well as the mix rate and sometimes the time of year. When it comes to foliar spraying plants with a backpack sprayer, it is important to aim for 75% coverage of the leaves or greater, the more surface area one is able to target, the better chance at killing the invasive plant. It is also critically important to not foliar spray on days where rain is expected in the forecast or on windy days that exceed 10 miles per hour. A colored indicator dye for visibility and a non-ionic surfactant is often recommended to add to foliar spray solutions in order to increase the effectiveness of the herbicide. The surfactant helps to penetrate the leaf cuticle and break down the plant's cell wall.

Japanese knotweed is another invasive plant that requires a more nuanced treatment method due to its aggressive rooting behavior. This is a perennial, cane-like shrub that can reach heights of 3-12 feet and form dense, clonal thickets from their large rhizomatous root masses. Unfortunately, it already has an aggressive foothold growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway. Japanese knotweed growing along the H.C.G. should be cut down in either late May or June with the use of brush cutters for thick infestations or with handsaws and pruners for individuals that have not yet formed an entire connected thicket. The freshly cut stems of the knotweed should be immediately sprayed with an appropriate, concentrated herbicide solution. As stalks are being cut down other personnel should work to pile, rake back, and pull the cut stalks out of the riparian zone so that in case of a highwater event the stalks do not get carried downstream and deposited elsewhere. Knotweed can

become a new plant from a cutting of a stalk if it is able to re-root itself from any of its multiple nodes that grow along the length of the stalk. If any cutting is done of the knotweed, it should be piled on site and sprayed with an herbicide solution and left to dry out in the sun. Even though the knotweed has been cut and treated some resprouting will occur from the rhizomes after the initial treatment which is why it will be prudent to wait 8 weeks for it to resprout and put on new leaves, reaching a height of approximately 1-2 feet at which time it can be foliar spray treated with a low concentration of an appropriate herbicide solution administered in a backpack sprayer. After the initial cutting phase of the knotweed and the first foliar spray treatment has been conducted, given how aggressive Japanese knotweed is and how much there is growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway it is highly recommend that a final follow up foliar spray treatment using backpack sprayers take place in early October as the plants prepare for dormancy. This is a time when plants are powering down for the year, sucking their nutrients back down to their root systems for storage during dormant season and thus will readily translocate the herbicide to the root system and is very effective at killing the plants while in this weakened state.

Foliar spray chemical control application efforts of the invasive plant species during year 1 will take place over the course of 3 days during the late growing season. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place between early July and late September followed by one final spot treatment day during year 1, in early October. It's possible that some foliar spray applications may take place during the initial 5 days during the woody species treatment if there is time and if it makes sense to do so.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy (continued)**

#### **Year Two**

EcoForesters is recommending 5 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 2. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place in June, that two days take place in August and that the fifth day take place in October.

Now that the bulk of the heavy lifting has been completed, namely the cutting and chemical treatment of mature, seed-bearing, woody plants during year 1, the amount of days needed to conduct follow up control treatments will taper down over the next several years. This work will be primarily foliar spraying, addressing new invasive plants that may have germinated from leftover seed in the soil as well as invasive plants that may have re-sprouted. Although most of the mature invasive plants will have been addressed with cutting and herbicide treatment during year 1, invasive plants are notoriously aggressive and certain species are known to be tenacious enough to continue to resprout due to their very tough root systems and the amount of energy reserves that are stored in those root systems. Additionally mature invasive plants from neighboring properties will continue to blow in on the wind, float downstream from off site and be dropped inadvertently by wildlife. Monitoring for invasive species presence year to year at the Hominy Creek Greenway will need to be prioritized in order to stay on top of these aggressive infestations so that they cannot regain a foothold. Some of these NNIS have seeds that remain viable in the soil for a very long time. One of the longest ones is multiflora rose, which some research suggests can remain viable in the soil for 20 years.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy (continued)**

### **Year Three**

EcoForesters is recommending 4 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 3. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place in June, that one day take place in mid to late August and that the fourth day take place in late September or early October. Treatment efforts during year 3 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

### **Year Four**

EcoForesters is recommending 2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 4. EcoForesters recommends that one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 4 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

### **Year Five**

EcoForesters is recommending 2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 5. EcoForesters recommends that one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 5 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

EcoForesters is hopeful that thanks to the dedication and mobilization efforts of the Friends of the Hominy Creek Greenway there will continue to be ample opportunities for volunteers to monitor the status of NNIS populations at the Greenway. If volunteers or Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway members are able to report back with observations about the NNIS presence, it is highly recommended that volunteer groups take on the stewardship of these areas with dedicated hand-pulling and weeding efforts of appropriate species. Garlic mustard and Japanese stilt grass are shallowly rooted and easy to hand pull, making them great targets for volunteer groups. Hopefully most of the infestations will have been addressed during the intense 5 years of invasive species control but it is important to be realistic and monitoring and maintenance are an important part of any control plan for invasive species.

### **Revegetation Plan for Streambank Stabilization of Hominy, Buttermilk and Rhododendron Creek**

Some of the nonnative invasive species that are targeted for control will have been growing directly in the riparian corridor, next to the creek, sometimes directly out of the streambank. If the invasive plants growing along the creek are to be killed, then that means native vegetation will be needed to take their place in order to provide bank stabilization and fill the void so that new invasive plants do not take up residence in the recently disturbed areas.

That is why EcoForesters is recommending a native planting plan to overlap with some of the nonnative invasive species control efforts. The planting being recommended will include live staking, and plug planting as well as live fascine, also known as live brush bundles or willow wattles, installation along the creek banks.

In an ideal situation, the most sustainable and long-lasting form of stream restoration would involve re-grading the streambanks into a gentler slope down to the water's edge, effectively removing the harsh incised bank edge. This method, however, isn't always feasible and may not be possible for the section of Hominy Creek flowing through the Greenway, simply because of the limited physical space. Re-grading streambanks often requires heavy machinery to move soil and hardened earth and it can be very labor intensive. Some sections of the Hominy Creek Greenway are too narrow to allow for this kind of restoration effort. However, stream bank stabilization can still be achieved without grading by way of heavy planting of native plants that are adapted to grow in saturated soils and establish themselves quickly by putting out new root systems. As the plants grow and establish a more solid root mass they will hold more soil together.

#### **Live Staking & Live Fascine Installation Plan**

## **Year One / Year Two**

In order to begin the process of shoring up bank stabilization along Hominy Creek, post major NNIS control efforts in Year 1, EcoForesters is recommending planting live stakes and installing live fascines during the dormant season of Year 1 (November – December) or the dormant season of Year 2 (January – March) before bud break.

Live stakes are dormant cuttings of native trees and shrubs, the ideal size being 0.5 to 2 inches in diameter and 2-3 feet long. Species selection of live stakes should consider the plants ability to grow in saturated soils near the streambank and during high water events. Common live stake species used in North Carolina stream restoration efforts include silky dogwood, silky willow, black willow, button bush, elderberry, sycamores and ninebark. Live stakes should be planted in rows on a 3 foot by 3 foot spacing along the water's edge but not too high up on the bank because they should still have access to soils that are regularly wet throughout the year. Installing live stakes is a great volunteer activity because it is rewarding and simple. If the soil is moist and not compacted, live stakes can be easily pushed into the bank with steady pressure or a pilot hole can be driven with rebar first to make the process easier. Cutting the end of the live stake to make a 45 degree angle point will also assist in pushing it through the ground. Live stakes should be pushed into the soil 2/3 of their length and special care should be taken to make sure that the buds are pointed upward. Live stakes can be harvested on site if there is an ample supply but one should not take more than 5% of the shrub or tree. Live stakes are also sold at many native plant nurseries and typically come in bundles of 50.

Live fascines are also comprised of dormant cuttings from native trees and shrubs but the cuttings are thinner in diameter and longer in length and bundled together in mass with twine. Willow species and dogwood species make the best live fascines. The selection of willow or dogwood whips can be gathered together with their cut ends facing the same way and should form a final length of 5-10 feet, bundled together, bound with untreated twine to form a diameter of 6 to 10 inches. Twine should be fastened around the fascine bundles every 12 inches or so. To install the fascine bundles along the streambank, shallow but long trenches should be dug to fit the length and diameter of the bundles which will be placed into the trench. The trenches should be dug, horizontally, into the slope at the "toe of the bank" which is located just above the water line of the stream. Trenches should be dug approximately ½ the diameter of the fascine. Once the trench has been dug to the proper depth and length the fascine can be placed into the trench and untreated wooden stakes, 2-3 feet long, can be driven vertically through the bundles every two feet until the top of the wood stake is flush with the top of the bundle. Next live stakes should driven through the bundle and through the soil in between the wooden stakes, also approximately every two feet apart. Once the fascine has been placed into the trench and staked into to place with both live stakes and dead untreated wooden stakes, the excavated soil can be deposited back over the fascine and gently tamped down, working the soil into the empty space between the whips that make up the fascine bundle. No more than 20 % of the fascine bundle should be exposed. Live fascine installation is more labor intensive and slightly more complicated than live staking but could still be a great option for the right volunteers.

## **Supplemental Plug Planting**

### **Year Three**

**After the NNIS have been controlled aggressively for the first couple of years and the bank stabilization efforts of live staking and live fascines installation has occurred it would be a good idea to consider planting herbaceous plugs that are adapted for wet soils. Herbaceous plants have fibrous root systems that are great for holding soil together but they also offer more diversity of plant life which is great for wildlife and insects. Plugs are easy to plant and often come in 2 inch container trays or tubes that are 5 inches in depth. Hopefully some native vegetation will have established naturally in the spacing located between the live stakes,**

The following document contains a schedule of operations, a native plant species list and budget for the recommended NNIS species control implementation and revegetation materials cost. EcoForesters crew time has not been calculated for planting days, for sake of allowing volunteers to participate in this rewarding phase of the project, however a labor cost quote for planting can also be provided upon request.



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
P.O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 0752857843  
July 29, 2014 LTR 4168C 0  
56-1672870 000000 00

00022741  
BODC: TE

ASHEVILLE GREENWORKS  
PO BOX 22  
ASHEVILLE NC 28802



011089

Employer Identification Number: 56-1672870  
Person to Contact: CUSTOMER SERVICE  
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your July 18, 2014, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in May 1990.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

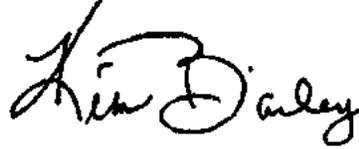
Please refer to our website [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo) for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

0752857843  
July 29, 2014 LTR 4168C 0  
56-1672870 000000 00  
00022742

ASHEVILLE GREENWORKS  
PO BOX 22  
ASHEVILLE NC 28802

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim D. Bailey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Kim D. Bailey  
Operations Manager, AM Operations 3

## JACK IGELMAN

95 Clinton Avenue, Asheville, NC 28806 | 828-216-0888 | jack@igelman.com

## EDUCATION

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

**Graduate Certificate in Technology and Communication 2018**

School of Media and Journalism

Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

**M.S. in Applied Economics 1992**

Professional paper: "Patterns of Political Pressure: Corporate PACs and Profits"

Clemson University

**B.A. in Economics 1991**

Minor: History

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Blue Ridge Community College, Flat Rock, NC

**Full-time Economics Faculty 2008 - Present**

Supervise 2-3 adjunct faculty per semester

Teaching a full semester load on-line, seated, and web-based

Courses taught: principles of economics, survey of economics, international economics, business finance, introduction to business

Blue Ridge Community College

**First-year experience course chair 2019 - Present**

Design, staff, and teach BRCC's first-year experience class enrolling 600-700 students per year

Blue Ridge Community College

**Cuba study abroad coordinator 2018 - 2019**

Developed and facilitate a study abroad trip to Cuba during spring break examining entrepreneurship and developing markets

University of North Carolina, Asheville

**Adjunct Faculty 2018 - 2019**

Courses taught: principles of economics

Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC

**Adjunct Faculty 2016 - 2017**

Courses taught: survey of economics & environmental and ecological economics

Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC

**Adjunct Faculty 2014 - 2015**

Courses taught: principles of economics

Cleveland Community College, Shelby, NC

**Full-time Faculty 2004 - 2008**

Courses taught: principles of economics & principles of management

Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Salisbury, NC

**Adjunct Faculty 1992 - 1993**

Courses taught: principles of economics & business statistics

North Carolina Outward Bound School, NC

**1998-2003**

describe positions.

## **MEDIA EXPERIENCE**

### **Contributing Reporter 2011 - Present**

Carolina Public Press, Asheville, NC

### **Contributing Writer 2008 - Present**

WNC Magazine, Asheville, NC

### **Freelance Writer 2000 - Present**

Write articles for a wide range of magazines and other publications

## **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

### **Founding Partner 2004 - Present**

Second Gear, Inc., Asheville, NC

Second Gear is a retail store in Asheville with \$1m in annual revenue

### **Founding Trustee and Treasurer 2016 - Present**

Asheville Black Bears Baseball Club

Funding trustee and coach of a non-profit travel baseball organization

### **Founding Trustee and President 2011 - 2017; 2021 - Present**

Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway, Inc., Asheville, NC

Founding trustee of a community group managing a 14 acre public nature preserve

### **Founding Member 2017**

Falconhurst Nature Preserve Steering Committee, Asheville, NC

Founding member of a community group managing a 9 acre public nature preserve

## **AWARDS, GRANTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Grantee**

Pulitzer Center Connected Coastline, 2021

5 part series on the impact of climate change on coastal fisheries in NC, published in Carolina Public Press

### **Panelist**

Environmental Journalism in NC, NC Humanities Council 2021

### **Best Practices in Online Course Design Course 2019**

Blue Ridge Community College

### **North Carolina Press Association 2018**

1st place, Best Feature Reporting

2nd place, News Feature Writing

### **BRCC Trip Abroad to Cuba April 2019/2020**

Organized and led student trip abroad to Havana, Cuba

### **Nominated for NCCCS Excellence in Teaching Award 2018**

North Carolina Community College System

### **Dr and Mrs. William D. Killian Outstanding Teacher Award 2018**

Blue Ridge Community College

### **Facilitated 4 Public Forums on National Forest Plan Revision**

Hosted by MountainTrue

### **Attended Property Rights Research Center on the Environment Seminar April 2018**

Hosted by Property Rights Research Center (PERC) Santa Fe, NM

### **Awarded Outstanding Environmental Reporting 2015 & 2016**

Western North Carolina chapter of the Sierra Club

**Nominee: Outstanding Journalist, Roosevelt-Ashe Conservation Award 2014**  
Recognized for reporting on U.S. National Forest plan revision in Western North Carolina

**Founder of Discover Diversity programming at BRCC 2012**  
Developed program of year round events centered on campus inclusivity

**Awarded Planning Grant, North Carolina Humanities Council 2016**  
Awarded a planning grant to develop social media promotion of BRCC Discover Diversity 2017

**Awarded Grant, North Carolina Humanities Council 2015**  
Awarded a grant to fund BRCC Discover Diversity

**Blue Ridge Community College Innovation Award 2013**  
Awarded seed money to launch BRCC Discover Diversity 2013

**NCCCS award to develop international economics on-line 2011**  
Developed International Economics on-line for North Carolina's Virtual Course Library

**World View Curriculum Grant, University of North Carolina 2008**  
Awarded a grant to globalize principles of economics course

**Founder and chair of Blue Ridge C.C. Heritage Week 2013**  
An annual series of events at BRCC promoting inclusivity, diversity, and culture

**Founder of the Blue Ridge C.C. Advising Fair 2014**  
Annual event to engage and retain students

**Diploma in Super Sports Achievement 1993**  
Air Boingo Bungee Jumping

**COMMITTEES/COLLEGE ACTIVITIES**

Study abroad program coordinator	2018 - Present
Quality Enhancement Program Implementation Committee	2017 - Present
Team leader, Achieving the Dream Course Offering Committee	2016 - 2017
Co-chair, Faculty and Staff Foundation Campaign, Blue Ridge Community College	2013 - 2014
Chair, BRCC Discover Diversity Week	2012 - 2017
Chair, global education and diversity committee, Blue Ridge Community College	2009 - 2017
Adviser, Rotaract Club, Blue Ridge Community College	2008 - 2013
Chair, faculty council, Blue Ridge Community College	2011 - 2012
President, faculty senate, Cleveland Community College	2006 - 2008

## Project Budget

Trail Restoration*		
Greenway trail restoration	<b>146,849.79</b>	
Easement trail property	<b><u>61,200.00</u></b>	
Total Trail Restoration		<b>208,049.79</b>
Total Ecological Restoration		<b><u>104,785.00</u></b>
Total Bond Request		<b>312,834.79</b>
Design and Permitting		<b>59,930.00</b>
10% Fiscal Agent Fees**		<b><u>31,283.48</u></b>
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>403,417.48</b>

\* Trail restoration is divided into two budget lines. The “easement” budget line represents the budget for the section of greenway trail that is in the process of being acquired by the City of Asheville (see project narrative)

\*\* Asheville GreenWorks request 10% of all funds distributed to the FOHCG as “fiscal agent fees”

The following pages provide more detailed information on the budget for the ecological restoration and the trail restoration.

Contract Item: Nonnative Invasive Species Control				Practice Lifespan: 5 Years				Status:						
Deployment of field restoration crew to implement NNIS control measures across the 12 acre parcel of the Hominy Creek Greenway. Treatment efforts will involve power tool and hand tool use as well as herbicide solutions to cut, treat and spray NNIS infestations and individuals. Follow up treatments will be required to gain full control of these aggressive nonnative invasive species and a multiyear effort that tapers down the number of treatment days is highly recommended.														
Area: Hominy Creek Greenway, City of Asheville, Buncombe Co, NC														
Contract Item	Planned Stewardship			Planned Acreage Amount	Completion Schedule and Estimated Cost By Year									
					2024		2025		2026		2027		2028	
				\$	Days	\$	Days	\$	Days	\$	Days	\$	Days	
	Mechanical and Chemical NNIS control (cut-stump, hack & squirt, foliar spraying)			12 acres	14,400	8	9,000	5	7,200	4	3,600	2	3600	2
<b>TOTAL COST QUOTE NNIS CONTROL</b>														
\$37,800														

**EcoForesters Stewardship Plan or Schedule of Operation**

\*EcoForesters standard crew size consists of 5 forest restoration technicians working an 8 hour day. Individual crew member hourly rate is \$45/hour/person.

NNIS CONTROL SCHEDULE AND TREATMENT STRATEGY													
	2024 (Year 1)			2025 (Year 2)			2026 (Year 3)			2027 (Year 4)		2028 (Year 5)	
Broken Out Tx Days	5 Days	2 Days	1 Day	2 days	2 days	1 day	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day
Time of year	Mid May- mid July	Early July -Late September	Mid October	June	August	October	June	August	Late September -early October	June or July	September or October	June or July	September or October
Treatment (Tx) Methods	Cut-Stump, Hack & Squirt Foliar Spray (if time allows)	Foliar Spray, C/S & H/S mop up if needed	Foliar Spray, C/S & H/S mop up if needed	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray	Foliar Spray
Species to be addressed (labeled by NNIS abbreviation code)	AIAL, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	ELSP, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, VIMI	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	ELSP, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, VIMI	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	ELSP, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, VIMI	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	ELSP, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, VIMI	AIAL, ALPE, AMBR, BEBE, CEOR, ELsp, EUAL, FAJA, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, ROMU, RUPH	ELSP, EUFO, FAJA, HEHE, LISI, LOJA, MIVI, MISI, VIMI

**Native Species List and Cost Quote for Stream Bank Stabilization Revegetation: Live Stakes**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Form	Cost*	Recommended Total**					
Buttonbush	Cephalanthus occidentalis	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	550					
Silky dogwood	Cornus amomum	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	550					
Ninebark	Physocarpus opulifolius	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	550					
Silky Willow	Salix sericea	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	550					
Elderberry	Sambucus canadensis	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	550					
Black Willow	Salix nigra	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	<b>500</b>					
Sycamore	Platanus occidentalis	Live Stake	\$0.70 each	250					
TOTAL LIVE STAKES			\$2,485***	3550					

\*Live Stake cost is based on Mellow Marsh Farm based out of Siler City, NC but there are many other North Carolina native plant nurseries.

\*\* These live stake budget numbers, estimated to cover the planting area are approximate and based on 3 feet x 3 feet spacing for **two rows** of live stakes along the approximate stream length distances for Hominy Creek, Buttermilk Creek and Rhododendron Creek. A common strategy in wetland and riparian planting efforts is to over plant, knowing that there will inevitably be some mortality.

\*\*\*EcoForesters Crew labor costs have not been included in this number regarding total live stakes for sake of allowing volunteers to participate in this rewarding phase of the project, however a labor cost quote for planting can also be provided upon request.

- Based on Avenza Maps and Google Earth the section of Buttermilk Creek that runs through the Hominy Creek Greenway is approximately 600 linear feet. Multiply this by two for both sides of the stream: 1200 linear feet.
  - 600 linear feet of stream bank / 3 foot spacing = 200 live stakes.
  - 200 live stakes \* two rows = 400 live stakes
  - 400 live stakes \* two sides of the stream = **800 live stakes needed for Buttermilk Creek Section**
- Based on Avenza Maps and Google Earth the section of Hominy Creek that runs through the Hominy Creek Greenway is approximately 3300 linear feet. There is no need to multiply this by two for both sides of the stream because only one side of Hominy Creek is on Asheville City property.
  - 3300 linear feet of stream bank / 3 foot spacing = 1100 live stakes.
  - 1100 live stakes \* two rows = **2200 live stakes needed for Hominy Creek Section**
- Based on Avenza Maps and Google Earth the section of Rhododendron Creek that runs through the Hominy Creek Greenway is approximately 400 linear feet. Multiply this by two for both sides of the stream: 800 linear feet.

- o 400 linear feet of stream bank / 3 foot spacing = 133 live stakes.
- o 133 live stakes \* two rows = 266 live stakes
- o 266 live stakes \* two sides of the stream = **550\* live stakes needed for Rhododendron Creek Section (rounded up to make for easier math)**

**TIME FRAME:** Live Staking activities should occur late in year one, during dormant season (November – December) OR early in year two dormant season (January – March) before bud break.

**Native Species List and Cost Quote for Stream Bank Stabilization Revegetation: Live Fascines**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Form	Cost*	Recommended Total**	Calculating Whip #s needed for Live Fascine Creation based on 1/2 Creek Length and Nursery Whip Length (5 feet)***			
Silky Willow	Salix sericea	Whip (5 ft long)	\$1.70 each for 50+	4000	Buttermilk Creek	Hominy Creek	Rhododendron Creek	All Three Creeks
Silky dogwood	Cornus amomum	Whip (5 ft long)	\$1.70 each for 50+	2600	600 ft / 5 ft = 120	1650 ft / 5 ft = 330	400 ft / 5 ft = 80	2650 linear feet of stream bank / 5 feet = 530
Black Willow	Salix nigra	Whip (5 ft long)	\$1.70 each for 50+	4000	120 * 20 whips per bundle = 2400	330 * 20 whips per bundle = 6600	80 * 20 whips per bundle = 1600	530 * 20 whips per bundle = <b>10,600 total whips</b>
<b>TOTAL WHIPS</b>			<b>\$18,020</b>	<b>10,600</b>				
<b>Labor Costs and other materials costs for Fascine Installation</b>								
The estimated labor costs for live fascine installation borrows from a 2001 Study : “Live and Inert Fascine Streambank Erosion Control” by Sotir and Fischenich. According to the study they reported costs of \$10 -\$30 per foot of fascine for 6 inch to 8 inch bundles. These costs included securing devices for installation, twine for fabrication, harvesting, transportation, handling, fabrication, storage of live materials, excavation, backfill, compaction, and profit margins and contingency factors for contractor bid projects.								
	Cost Range Low End for All Three Creeks****	Cost Range High End for All Three Creeks			Calculating the Labor Cost range based on the three creek lengths with information from the Sotir and Fischenich (2001) study.			
	\$21,500	\$64,500			Buttermilk Creek	Hominy Creek	Rhododendron Creek	
Subtract the cost of live whips for fascine creation above	<b>\$3,480</b> ((\$21500 - \$18020))	<b>\$46,480</b> ((\$64500 - \$18020))			1200 linear ft / 2 sides of creek = 600 linear feet	3300 linear ft (only planting one side of Hominy Creek)	800 linear ft / 2 sides of creek = 400 linear feet	
					600 ft / 2 (assuming only half the streambank will be suitable for fascine installation) = 300 ft	3300/ 2 (assuming only half the streambank will be suitable for fascine installation) = 1650 ft	400 ft / 2 (assuming only half the streambank will be suitable for fascine installation) = 200 ft	

					300 ft * \$10 per 1ft of fascine (low end) = \$3000	1650 ft * \$10 per 1ft of fascine (low end) = \$16,500	200 ft * \$10 per 1ft of fascine (low end) = \$2000	Cost Range Low End for All Three Creeks \$21,500
					300 ft * \$30 per 1ft of fascine (high end) = \$9000	1650 ft * \$30 per 1ft of fascine (high end) = \$49,500	200 ft * \$30 per 1ft of fascine (high end) = \$6000	Cost Range High End for All Three Creeks \$64,500

\*Live whips cost is based on Mellow Marsh Farm out of Siler City, NC but there are many other North Carolina native plant nurseries.

\*\* Whip total is assuming that 20 individual whips will be bundled together to make a single fascine of the appropriate diameter (6-10 inches diameter bundles) and that that whips when bundled together will form an approximate final length of 5 feet and once buried in trenches will be placed end to end in long trench sections. Lastly, costs for only 1 row of fascines have been calculated for the stream banks of all three creeks.

\*\*\*These willow whip budget numbers, needed for the creation of live fascine bundles, are estimated to cover the HALF length of the north bank of Hominy Creek (one side) and HALF the length of both banks of Buttermilk Creek and Rhododendron Creek. The decision to calculate the fascine installation linear feet area by half is because it is assumed that not all the linear feet of embankment for all three creeks will be suitable for fascine installation. For example, some sections of Hominy Creek have recreational beach front for park visitors or old dam structures that would prevent installation of fascines. Some sections of Rhododendron creek may not necessarily require fascines and might be fine with live staking alone. Willow whip lengths sourced from Mellow Marsh Farm Nursery in Siler City NC are 5 feet in length and are \$1.70 each if bought in bulk 50 or more.

\*\*\*\*Given the small size of these creeks and ease of access, EcoForesters estimates that labor costs for live fascine installation would fall somewhere in between the “Low End” and the “High End”, likely even closer to the low end, cost range for labor and other materials.

Buttermilk 1200 linear ft / 2 stream banks = 600 linear feet. 600 feet / 2 = 300 feet. According to Sotir & Fischenich \$10-\$30/feet of fascine for 6-8 inch bundles therefore: \$3000-\$9000

Hominy 3300 linear feet \* 0.5 = 1650 linear feet. According to Sotir & Fischenich \$10-\$30/feet of fascine for 6-8 inch bundles therefore: \$16500 - \$49,500

Rhododendron 800 linear feet / 2 stream banks = 400 linear feet. 400 feet / 2 = 200 feet According to Sotir & Fischenich \$10-\$30/feet of fascine for 6-8 inch bundles therefore: \$2000 - \$6000

**TIME FRAME: Live Fascine installation should coincide with live staking activities, occurring late in year one, during dormant season (November – December) OR early in year two dormant season (January – March) before bud break.**

Estimated Project Cost Totals for 5 years of NNIS control and Revegetation Streambank Stabilization Planting

NNIS Control Costs Over 5 years	Cost For Sourcing 3550 Live Stakes	Cost For Sourcing Live Whips for Fascine Bundle Creation	Low End of Cost Range for Installation of Fascines on All Three Creeks	High End of Cost Range for Installation of Fascines on All Three Creeks				Total Project Cost on the Low End of the Range	Total Project Cost on the High End of the Range
\$37,800	\$2485	\$18,020	\$3480	\$46,480				\$61,785	\$104,785



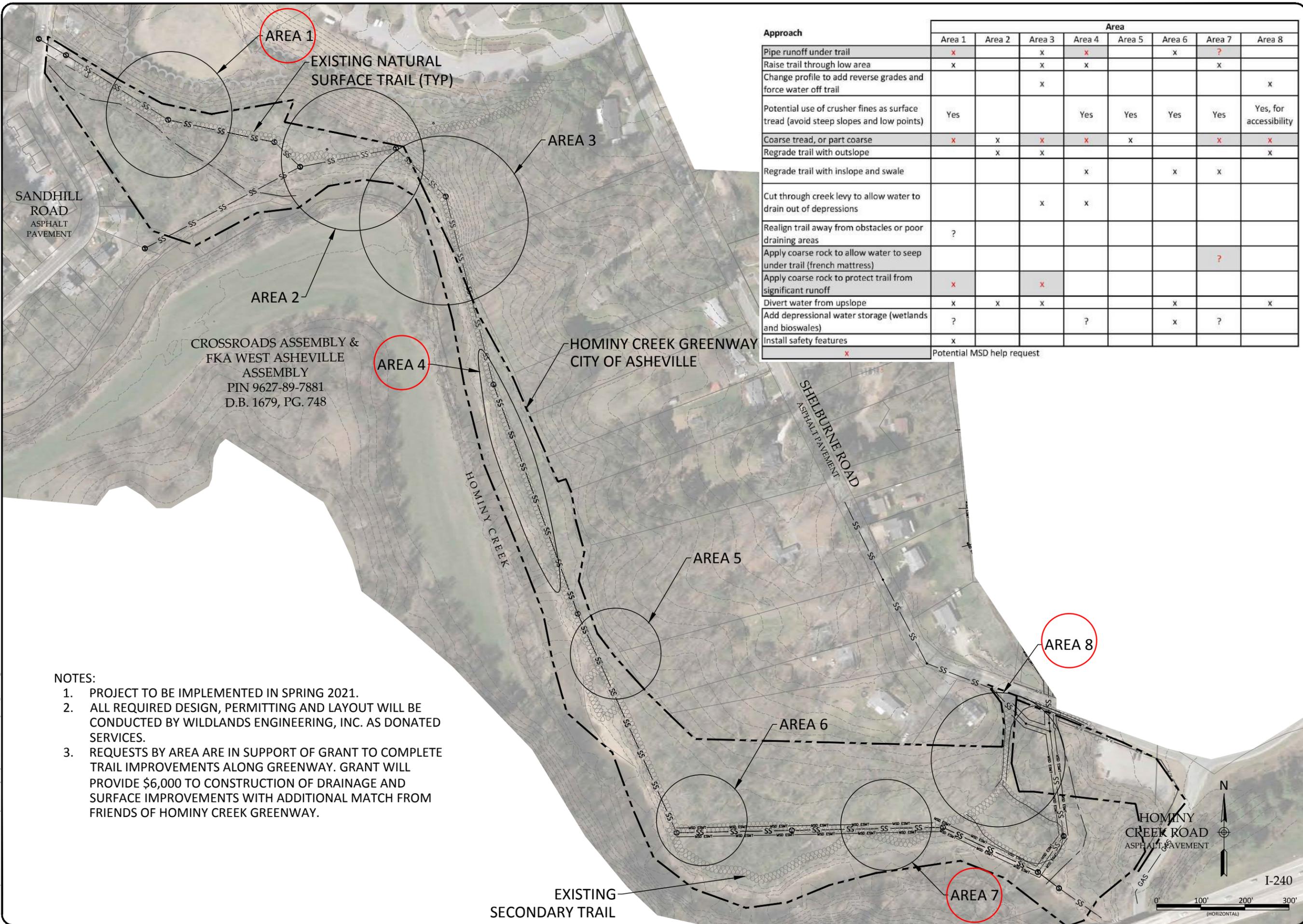
# Trail Restoration Budget

Prepared by Jake McLean, Wildlands Engineering

<b>Item</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>
Mobilization	1	LS	\$18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Clearing & Grubbing	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Survey	1	LS	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,200.00
Crusher fines trail	1600	LF	\$ 30.00	\$ 48,000.00
Cross drainage and swale systems	4	EA	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 4,800.00
Trail grading	889	CY	\$ 18.00	\$ 16,000.00
Revegetation	1.1	AC	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,754.82
ESC/Seeding	1	LS	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00
Split Rail Fencing	500	LF	\$ 18.00	\$ 9,000.00
Construction Management	1	LS	\$10,140.00	\$ 10,140.00
As-built	1	LS	\$ 2,480.00	\$ 2,480.00
Contingency			20%	\$ 24,474.96
				<hr/>
				\$146,849.79

## **Alternate - Pending Permanent or Temporary Easement**

Crusher fines trail	300	LF	\$ 45.00	\$ 13,500.00
Cross drainage and swale systems	1	LS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Trail grading	333	CY	\$ 18.00	\$ 6,000.00
Boulder wall	600	SQ FT FA	\$ 45.00	\$ 27,000.00
ESC/Seeding	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Contingency			20%	\$ 10,200.00
				<hr/>
				\$ 61,200.00
				\$208,049.79



Approach	Area							
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8
Pipe runoff under trail	x		x	x		x	?	
Raise trail through low area	x		x	x			x	
Change profile to add reverse grades and force water off trail			x					x
Potential use of crusher fines as surface tread (avoid steep slopes and low points)	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, for accessibility
Coarse tread, or part coarse	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Regrade trail with outslope		x	x					x
Regrade trail with inslope and swale				x		x	x	
Cut through creek levy to allow water to drain out of depressions			x	x				
Realign trail away from obstacles or poor draining areas	?							
Apply coarse rock to allow water to seep under trail (french mattress)							?	
Apply coarse rock to protect trail from significant runoff	x		x					
Divert water from upslope	x	x	x			x		x
Add depressional water storage (wetlands and bioswales)	?			?		x	?	
Install safety features	x							
	x Potential MSD help request							

**NOTES:**

1. PROJECT TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN SPRING 2021.
2. ALL REQUIRED DESIGN, PERMITTING AND LAYOUT WILL BE CONDUCTED BY WILDLANDS ENGINEERING, INC. AS DONATED SERVICES.
3. REQUESTS BY AREA ARE IN SUPPORT OF GRANT TO COMPLETE TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALONG GREENWAY. GRANT WILL PROVIDE \$6,000 TO CONSTRUCTION OF DRAINAGE AND SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS WITH ADDITIONAL MATCH FROM FRIENDS OF HOMINY CREEK GREENWAY.



DRAFT

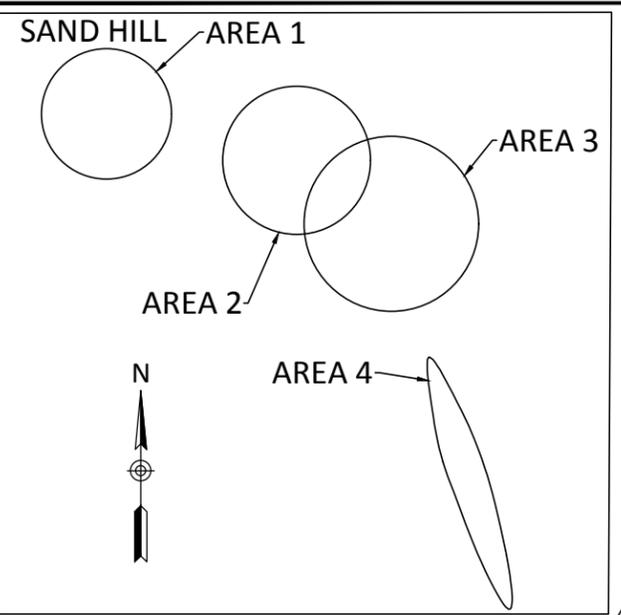
Hominy Creek Greenway

Natural Surface Corridor Accessibility Repairs

Revisions:


Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Job Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Project Engineer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Drawn By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Checked By: \_\_\_\_\_

1.0



**AREA 1: RUNOFF FROM CHURCH CROSSES TRAIL IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS RESULTING IN GULLEYING AND TRAIL WETNESS. THIS IS THE WORST GULLEY ON THE TRAIL. PRIOR STONE PLACEMENT HAS ERODED. THE STREAM IS SEVERELY UNDERCUT AND PRESENTS A DANGER FOR USERS.**

**MATERIALS: 12-18" PIPE (30-40 LF), STONE INCLUDING BOTH TRAIL BASE/SURFACING STONE AND COARSE ROCK IN ANTICIPATED TRAIL OVERTOPPING LOCATIONS. 120' x 12' WIDTH x 8-12" DEPTH. CONSIDER SMALL BRIDGE ON HIGH SIDE OF TRAIL FOR GREATER ACCESSIBILITY.**

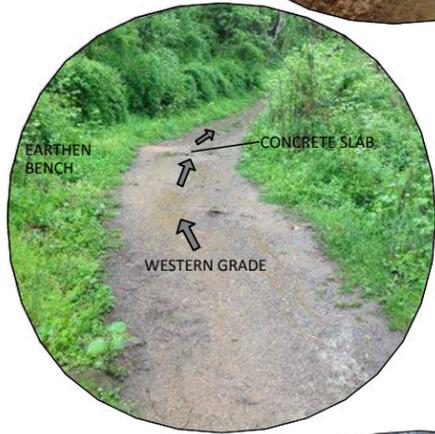
**AREA 2: RUNOFF FROM A SIDE TRAIL TO THE NORTHEAST BRINGS WATER ONTO THE TRAIL AT A CREST. WATER MAY SPILL BOTH DIRECTIONS AND ACROSS THE TRAIL. DUE TO A LACK OF CROSS SLOPE THE GRADE IN EITHER DIRECTION IS EXPOSED TO FLOW DOWN THE CENTER OF THE TRAIL. THE EASTERN GRADE (TO AREA 3) IS STEEP WITH EXPOSED CONCRETE. THE WESTERN GRADE (TO AREA 2) IS NARROW AND GULLEYED IN THE CENTER.**

**MATERIALS: TRAIL BASE AND SURFACING. OUTSLOPE TRAILS AND RESURFACE.**



**AREA 3: CONSISTS OF A STEEP GRADE EAST OF AREA 2 WHICH GOES THROUGH A DIP THAT HAS BEEN HARDENED WITH RIPRAP DUE TO A SECONDARY AREA OF UPSLOPE FLOW. THE AREA IS TOO STEEP FOR YOUNG RIDERS TO CLIMB AND HAS HAZARDS (BUSTED CONCRETE AND EXPOSED ROCK ON THE SLOPING PORTION OF THE TRAIL).**

**MATERIALS: TRAIL SUPPLEMENTAL SURFACING PRIMARILY. PERHAPS SOME BASE. 12-18" OR MULTIPLE SMALLER DIA. PIPES FOR LOW POINT. OUTSLOPING WITH REVERSE GRADE. ALTERNATE TO PIPE IS TO REBUILD HARDENED LOW POINT.**



**AREA 4: A LONG FLAT AREA WITH NO OUTLET FOR WATER DUE TO THE BUILT UP LEVY ON THE CREEK BANK. THE TRAIL HAS GOTTEN WIDER AND WIDER AS USERS MOVE TO THE LEVY FOR PASSAGE DURING WET CONDITIONS WHICH CAN BE SLICK AND MUDDY.**

**12-15" PIPE (20-30 LF) OR SMALL PIPES AT OUTFLOW POINTS, 150' x 12' x 6" OF BASE AND SURFACING. INSLOPING WITH SWALE. POSSIBLY BUILD DIPS BY LOWERING BANK OR ELSE CROSS TRAIL WITH PIPE(S).**



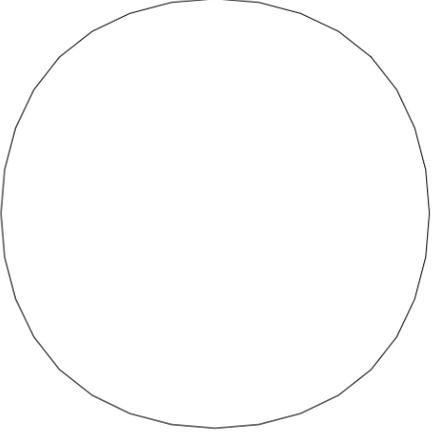
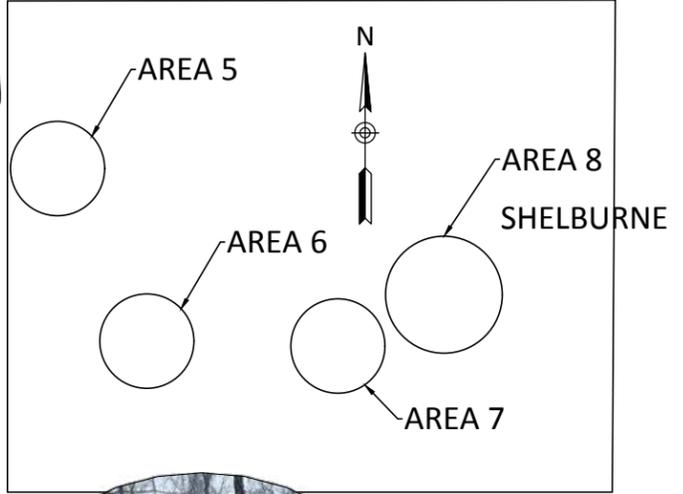
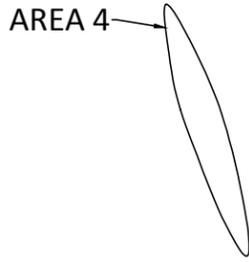
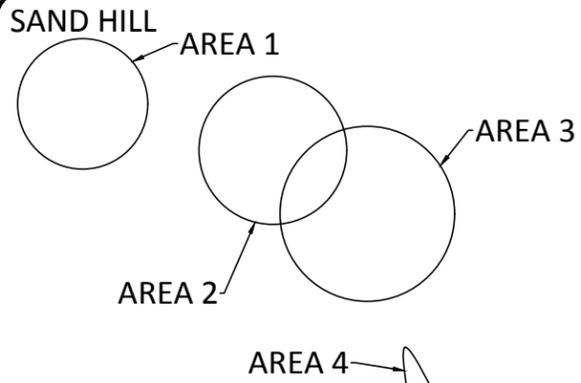
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**Hominy Creek Greenway**  
Natural Surface Corridor Accessibility Repairs

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Date:	
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Checked By:	

C:\Users\jmclean\Documents\ActiveProjects\HominyCreek\Plans\Hominy-Plans\_Cover.dwg January 31, 2021



AREA 5: THIS IS AN AREA WITH ROCKS AND ROOTS THAT IS A CANDIDATE FOR A SECONDARY ROUTE. THE SECONDARY ROUTE WOULD FACILITATE PASSAGE BY A BROADER RANGE OF USERS BY PROVIDING A LESS TECHNICAL OPTION.

PROBABLY TRAIL SURFACING, MAYBE BASE. EXISTING DRAINAGE IS OK.



AREA 6: THIS AREA IS JUST EAST OF THE SOUTHERN DOGLEG IN THE TRAIL. THE AREA DRAINS A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE HILLSLOPE WHICH PONDS ON THE ROAD AND THEN DRAINS EAST TOWARDS OTHER PROBLEM AREAS.

BUILD UP TRAIL, CONSTRUCT SWALE ON LEFT SIDE OF VIEW IN PHOTO. NEED TRAIL BASE AND SURFACE AND PROBABLY FRENCH MATTRESS (BALLAST) STONE AND/OR SMALL DIAMETER PIPES TO PUSH FLOW TO LOW (PONDING) AREA OFF OF TRAIL AND SS EASMENT.



AREA 7: A LONG DEPRESSIONAL AREA WITH NO OUTLET FOR WATER DUE TO THE BUILT UP LEVY ON THE CREEK BANK. DURING WET TIMES, THE TRAIL IS IMPASSIBLE AND A SECONDARY TRAIL HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY COMMON USE. CONDITIONS CAN BE SLICK AND MUDDY.

BUILD UP TRAIL, INSLOPE TO SWALE FUNNELS TO LOWER POINT AND CROSSES TRAIL THROUGH SERIES OF PIPES AND FRENCH (WASHED BALLAST STONE) MATTRESS OR THROUGH A HARDENED DIP CONSTRUCTED WHERE THE CREEK BERM/LEVY IS LOWERED TO PROVIDE DRAINAGE.



AREA 8: THIS GATED MSD GRAVEL AND EARTHEN ACCESS ROAD OFF SHELBURNE RD IS STEEP AND DOES NOT SHED WATER. WATER OFF SHELBURNE COLLECTS FROM A SIGNIFICANT LENGTH OF THE ROAD AND PONDS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE ACCESS ROAD NEAR THE OLD DAM. THIS AREA IS OFTEN WET AND OFTEN BRIDGED BY USERS WITH MAKESHIFT BOARDS OR OTHER METHODS OF PASSAGE.

REUSE EXISTING MATERIAL, BUT LIKELY NEED NEW BASE AND SURFACE GRAVEL FOR LOWER HALF OF HILL (ABOUT 75' x 10-12' WIDTH x 6" DEPTH MIN.)



DRAFT

Hominy Creek Greenway

Natural Surface Corridor Accessibility Repairs

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 Drawn By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Checked By: \_\_\_\_\_

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Sheet



Mail: PO Box 16007, Asheville, NC 28816 ♦ Office: 36 Old Charlotte Highway, Asheville, NC 28803

Phone: (828) 484-6842 ♦ E-mail: [info@ecoforesters.org](mailto:info@ecoforesters.org) ♦ Web Site: [www.ecoforesters.org](http://www.ecoforesters.org)

## **This Nonnative Invasive Species Management and Revegetation Plan has been prepared for The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway in collaboration with The City of Asheville**

The Hominy Creek Greenway serves as a forested haven for native flora and fauna and a recreational hidden gem for West Asheville locals and visitors alike that are looking to hit the trail for a quick stroll along its gentle path, seek to appreciate nature while still inside city limits or dip their toes into the cooling waters of the creek before it flows into the mighty French Broad River. It traverses across approximately 12 acres of parkland, with one entrance meeting Sandhill Road and the other on Shelburne Road between the Malvern Hills and Morningside Park neighborhoods of Asheville.

The Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway and the City of Asheville have done an incredible job over the years investing in the betterment of this greenspace; making trail corridor improvements, combatting nonnative invasive species, planting and maintaining native pollinator gardens, hosting educational events that engage the community and welcome visitors, improving the parking facilities and organizing regular volunteer events to make it all possible, but it's a big job and a labor of love and there's still more to be done to make this amazing public space even better for Asheville residents!

Unquestionably, urban forested and riparian spaces offer many ecological services that in turn create economic and health benefits to human, animal, insect and plant life, but the benefits can only be fully reaped when these spaces are healthy and functioning properly.

Although work is underway and many improvements have been made, we're just getting started! The section of Hominy Creek that flows along the Greenway as well as the two smaller streams that flow into it on the Northwest end of the park, Buttermilk Creek, and the Southeast end, Rhododendron creek are all in some state of degradation. This is evidenced by the very incised streambanks that can be observed at different sections along all three of the creeks. An incised streambank is one that makes an almost vertical drop down to water level from the solid flat ground above, if this vertical drop is greater than a foot, the streambank is unstable and therefore more prone to continue to lose soil by sloughing away. When the soil sloughs away and into the creek this causes sedimentation, the fine particles of soil that degrade water quality and habitat. These unstable streambanks have formed overtime due to past land use, in some cases this is due to purposely altering the flow of the stream, channelizing it to make it more straight in order to suit human needs for infrastructure. Although creating a straight channelized stream may have seemed like a fine option in decades past, it is now causing ecological problems. Stormwater runoff is also a common pollutant for water resources located in urban spaces. This happens due to the many impervious surfaces that exist in urban spaces. Impervious surfaces like black top do not readily allow for the gradual absorption of water. Instead during rainfall events, rain water hits the surface of the blacktop and flows quickly off, always traveling the path of least resistance, taking any pollutants and trash with it, eventually ending up in our streams and other bodies of water. Native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, especially those that are riparian buffer and wetland plants have the ability to actively trap pollutants and filter water. Protecting tree canopy cover in urban greenspaces is important because a robust canopy can help slow down the speed and rate of rain water, dispersing it before it hits the ground during large rainfall events, making erosion less severe.

In addition to the streambank erosion that is plaguing Hominy, Buttermilk and Rhododenron creeks, the riparian buffer zones and surrounding forest along the Hominy Creek Greenway is unfortunately inundated with nonnative invasive plant species (NNIS). Nonnative invasive species have aggressive growth rates, reproduce prolifically and do not have natural predators in this area to keep them in check, therefore they out compete native plant species for resources, form dense monocultures and even have the potential to topple mature native trees. These invasive species degrade wildlife habitat and property value, reduce the overall aesthetic appeal of a space making it a less inviting for recreation and even if wildlife consume some of the these invasvie plants, they do not provide high nutritional value that native wildlife need. Nonnative invasive plant species also do very little to help in the face of climate change.

Healthy forests and streams are a couple of the most cost effective tools to help protect our changing world from the effects of climate change. Extreme weather fluctuations are becoming more frequent with hotter spikes and colder temperature dips, prolonged droughts and heavy rainfall events. Healthy forests with more native trees will be able to store more carbon and cool and protect communities by providing shade and wind breaks. Functioning healthy streams that have a natural flow and native vegetation growing in the riparian buffers will be able to better trap sedimentation thus improving water quality and protect communities form major flood events by slowing the dispersal of large water flow.

All of this is to stay that the management of Hominy Creek Greenway is headed in the right direction but assisting funds from the Buncombe Couny Open Space Bond would help to further the future stewardship and restoration recommendations of this plan.

EcoForesters is recommending an aggressive 5 year strategy for controlling the nonnative invasive species infestations that are growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway as well as a riparian zone revegetation plan to reestablish a diverse cohort of native plants along the creeks that will protect and promote the health of these water resources.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Inventory at Hominy Creek Greenway**

The nonnative invasive species observed growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway include but are not limited to:

- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
- Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- Porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)
- Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
- Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*)
- Autumn olive & Russian olive (*Eleagnus sp.*)
- Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)
- English ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Winged burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
- Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)
- Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*)
- Leatherleaf mahonia (*Berberis bealei*)
- Winter creeper (*Euonymus fortunei*)
- Garlic mustard (*Allaria petiolata*)
- Japanes stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)

\* Invasive species abbreviation codes contain the first two letters of the genus and the first to letters of the species (i.e. Japanese knotweed abreviate code: FAJA)

## Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy

### Year One

EcoForesters is recommending 8 days of nonnative invasive species control at the Hominy Creek Greenway during year 1. These 8 days will involve different treatment methods, addressing different species at different but optimal times of the year and therefore the treatment days will not always be consecutive.

The first year of NNIS control at the Hominy Creek Greenway will involve heavy cutting, mowing, bush-hogging and herbicidal control efforts. One of the most effective means of controlling invasive plant species is by enlisting the help of specific herbicides. When used safely and responsibly under the right conditions and for the appropriate species at the correct time of year, herbicides can be a very successful and cost effective tool for nonnative invasive species control.

Many of the NNIS growing along the Greenway have been growing there, undisturbed long enough to have formed dense woody or bramble thickets, draping curtains of vines that hang from trees, thick hedges along the creek and carpeting ground covers. The first year will require the most heavy lifting in terms of active management. The use of power tools such as chainsaws and brushcutters with circular woodcut blades as well as hand tools like hatchets, hand saws and pruners will be in the arsenal along with chemical (herbicide) solutions administered via backpack sprayers, hand spray bottles or dobber bottles depending on the species, the age of the plant and the time of the year. EcoForesters deploys what is called a hand crew, a small crew of 5 individuals that are able to sweep through an area, identifying NNIS and implementing control efforts. A hand crew is able to be very meticulous in their control efforts. A benefit to using a hand crew over large heavy machinery or a large scale spray rig is the ability to be nimble and mitigate collateral damage to native plants that are growing in the vicinity of the invasive species. Individual forest restoration technicians sweeping through an area intended for treatment are able to identify plants up close, apply targeted control methods and are less likely to trample native plants or spread invasive seed, which is often a risk with using heavy machinery.

It often makes the most sense to tackle the larger woody species first, those that are of seed producing age, growing in the overstory and midstory and this often includes mature invasive trees, climbing vines and shrubs.

The mature invasive trees growing at the Hominy Creek Greenway, tree of heaven, require a special kind of chemical treatment method, called hack & squirt, due to their unique growth habits. When a tree of heaven individual's main trunk is damaged they will undergo aggressive root suckering, meaning that hundreds of babies will sprout from the mother tree's root system. The root suckers can grow 10-14 feet tall in the first year and can often extend out a distance from the main tree, as far as the tree is tall. Therefore it is unwise to simply cut down a mature tree of heaven with a chainsaw, even if planning to use an herbicide to treat the stump. The tree of heaven will still root sucker. In addition exhibiting this root suckering behavior, mature female trees can produce 300,000 seedlings per year and the wind can disperse these seeds up to 330 feet away from the mother tree. One of the best ways to kill the tree of heaven and prevent severe root suckering (there will still be some) is the use of the hack & squirt method. This involves using a hatchet to make downward 45-degree angle cuts through the bark and into the cambium layer of the tree and then using a handheld spray bottle that has been filled with a concentrated herbicide solution to squirt a milliliter of the solution into the fresh cuts. Cuts around the trunk of the tree can be spaced 1 to 2 inches apart and can be made at a height of 3 feet or lower. Leaving these gaps of live tissue intact is important to kill the tree slowly and lessen the chance for the tree's shock response root suckering. EcoForesters would use an herbicide solution of 50% Triclopyr 3 mixed with water. This hack & squirt method can be conducted throughout the year with exception to spring when the upward sap flow is high (not recommended March – early May). Midsummer and fall are the best time and late winter can yield somewhat less effective results.

Sometimes a follow-up hack & squirt treatment of large trees is needed months later in the same year if the first

treatment did not completely kill the tree. This method is still recommended because the root suckering can cause an even larger problem to deal with later down the line. It's important to know that large trees that are treated with the hack & squirt treatment are left dead and standing. If there is any concern about these large trees eventually coming down onto structures or frequented pathways, then this should be discussed prior to any treatment efforts. Dead standing trees are called snags and are great for wildlife but the potential hazard to humans and property should be considered. If a dead standing tree is too great a hazard for H.C.G. visitors, then it is recommended that the tree of heaven be felled with a chainsaw, the stump treated immediately with a concentrated herbicide solution and then monitored for the following year for the root suckering behavior to begin. Root suckering seedlings will then need to be dealt with by way of foliar spray means with backpack sprayers.

The Cut-Stump or Cut-Stem herbicide treatment method can be used to control many invasive species of climbing vines, shrubs and younger sapling size trees. For large invasive vines and shrubs (greater than 1 inch in diameter at soil level) using a handsaw, hand pruners or chainsaw, cut through the stump of the plant within six inches or lower to soil level and using a pre-mixed handheld spray bottle or dobber bottle, spray the freshly cut stump surface area with an appropriate concentrated herbicide solution. It is important to treat this stump with in 2 minutes of cutting before the plant makes attempts to heal itself over and create a barrier that would make it difficult for the herbicide to penetrate. This method can be done year-round including during the dormant season but would best be avoided if the ground has been consistently frozen. In the case of climbing vines specifically it is also highly recommended to cut the vines a second time, at eye level so that it is visually obvious that this work has been completed and so that the potential ladder for any future climbing vines has been severed.

Hack & squirt and cut-stump chemical control of the invasive plant species during year 1 will take place over the course 5 days during the growing season, sometime between mid May through mid July.

After the initial chemical cut-stump and hack & squirt treatments have taken place across the 12 acres H.C.G. area addressing the large and mature woody invasive species, foliar spray herbicide treatments using backpack sprayers can be conducted on low growing sprawling invasive vines, and shrubs or thickets that are 5 feet or shorter in height. Waiting to perform the foliar spraying activities until after the cutting and mowing work has been completed is safer for the technicians performing the work so that they are not required to walk back through recently sprayed areas to cut and treat the woody plants. This is also more efficient since the tool sets are different (hand or power tools and hand sprayers vs. backpack sprayers) and sometimes the herbicides and their mix rates can be different too. Depending on the NNIS the herbicide for foliar spraying will vary as well as the mix rate and sometimes the time of year. When it comes to foliar spraying plants with a backpack sprayer, it is important to aim for 75% coverage of the leaves or greater, the more surface area one is able to target, the better chance at killing the invasive plant. It is also critically important to not foliar spray on days where rain is expected in the forecast or on windy days that exceed 10 miles per hour. A colored indicator dye for visibility and a non-ionic surfactant is often recommended to add to foliar spray solutions in order to increase the effectiveness of the herbicide. The surfactant helps to penetrate the leaf cuticle and break down the plant's cell wall.

Japanese knotweed is another invasive plant that requires a more nuanced treatment method due to its aggressive rooting behavior. This is a perennial, cane-like shrub that can reach heights of 3-12 feet and form dense, clonal thickets from their large rhizomatous root masses. Unfortunately, it already has an aggressive foothold growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway. Japanese knotweed growing along the H.C.G. should be cut down in either late May or June with the use of brush cutters for thick infestations or with handsaws and pruners for individuals that have not yet formed an entire connected thicket. The freshly cut stems of the knotweed should be immediately sprayed with an appropriate, concentrated herbicide solution. As stalks are being cut down other personnel should work to pile, rake back, and pull the cut stalks out of the riparian zone so that in case of a highwater event the stalks do not get carried downstream and deposited elsewhere. Knotweed can

become a new plant from a cutting of a stalk if it is able to re-root itself from any of its multiple nodes that grow along the length of the stalk. If any cutting is done of the knotweed, it should be piled on site and sprayed with an herbicide solution and left to dry out in the sun. Even though the knotweed has been cut and treated some resprouting will occur from the rhizomes after the initial treatment which is why it will be prudent to wait 8 weeks for it to resprout and put on new leaves, reaching a height of approximately 1-2 feet at which time it can be foliar spray treated with a low concentration of an appropriate herbicide solution administered in a backpack sprayer. After the initial cutting phase of the knotweed and the first foliar spray treatment has been conducted, given how aggressive Japanese knotweed is and how much there is growing along the Hominy Creek Greenway it is highly recommend that a final follow up foliar spray treatment using backpack sprayers take place in early October as the plants prepare for dormancy. This is a time when plants are powering down for the year, sucking their nutrients back down to their root systems for storage during dormant season and thus will readily translocate the herbicide to the root system and is very effective at killing the plants while in this weakened state.

Foliar spray chemical control application efforts of the invasive plant species during year 1 will take place over the course of 3 days during the late growing season. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place between early July and late September followed by one final spot treatment day during year 1, in early October. It's possible that some foliar spray applications may take place during the initial 5 days during the woody species treatment if there is time and if it makes sense to do so.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy (continued)**

#### **Year Two**

EcoForesters is recommending 5 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 2. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place in June, that two days take place in August and that the fifth day take place in October.

Now that the bulk of the heavy lifting has been completed, namely the cutting and chemical treatment of mature, seed-bearing, woody plants during year 1, the amount of days needed to conduct follow up control treatments will taper down over the next several years. This work will be primarily foliar spraying, addressing new invasive plants that may have germinated from leftover seed in the soil as well as invasive plants that may have re-sprouted. Although most of the mature invasive plants will have been addressed with cutting and herbicide treatment during year 1, invasive plants are notoriously aggressive and certain species are known to be tenacious enough to continue to resprout due to their very tough root systems and the amount of energy reserves that are stored in those root systems. Additionally mature invasive plants from neighboring properties will continue to blow in on the wind, float downstream from off site and be dropped inadvertently by wildlife. Monitoring for invasive species presence year to year at the Hominy Creek Greenway will need to be prioritized in order to stay on top of these aggressive infestations so that they cannot regain a foothold. Some of these NNIS have seeds that remain viable in the soil for a very long time. One of the longest ones is multiflora rose, which some research suggests can remain viable in the soil for 20 years.

### **Nonnative Invasive Species Control Strategy (continued)**

### **Year Three**

EcoForesters is recommending 4 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 3. EcoForesters recommends that two of those days take place in June, that one day take place in mid to late August and that the fourth day take place in late September or early October. Treatment efforts during year 3 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

### **Year Four**

EcoForesters is recommending 2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 4. EcoForesters recommends that one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 4 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

### **Year Five**

EcoForesters is recommending 2 days of nonnative invasive species control at Hominy Creek Greenway during year 5. EcoForesters recommends that one of those days take place in June or July, and that the other treatment day takes place in September or early to mid-October. Treatment efforts during year 5 will again primarily be foliar spray efforts.

EcoForesters is hopeful that thanks to the dedication and mobilization efforts of the Friends of the Hominy Creek Greenway there will continue to be ample opportunities for volunteers to monitor the status of NNIS populations at the Greenway. If volunteers or Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway members are able to report back with observations about the NNIS presence, it is highly recommended that volunteer groups take on the stewardship of these areas with dedicated hand-pulling and weeding efforts of appropriate species. Garlic mustard and Japanese stilt grass are shallowly rooted and easy to hand pull, making them great targets for volunteer groups. Hopefully most of the infestations will have been addressed during the intense 5 years of invasive species control but it is important to be realistic and monitoring and maintenance are an important part of any control plan for invasive species.

### **Revegetation Plan for Streambank Stabilization of Hominy, Buttermilk and Rhododendron Creek**

Some of the nonnative invasive species that are targeted for control will have been growing directly in the riparian corridor, next to the creek, sometimes directly out of the streambank. If the invasive plants growing along the creek are to be killed, then that means native vegetation will be needed to take their place in order to provide bank stabilization and fill the void so that new invasive plants do not take up residence in the recently disturbed areas.

That is why EcoForesters is recommending a native planting plan to overlap with some of the nonnative invasive species control efforts. The planting being recommended will include live staking, and plug planting as well as live fascine, also known as live brush bundles or willow wattles, installation along the creek banks.

In an ideal situation, the most sustainable and long-lasting form of stream restoration would involve re-grading the streambanks into a gentler slope down to the water's edge, effectively removing the harsh incised bank edge. This method, however, isn't always feasible and may not be possible for the section of Hominy Creek flowing through the Greenway, simply because of the limited physical space. Re-grading streambanks often requires heavy machinery to move soil and hardened earth and it can be very labor intensive. Some sections of the Hominy Creek Greenway are too narrow to allow for this kind of restoration effort. However, stream bank stabilization can still be achieved without grading by way of heavy planting of native plants that are adapted to grow in saturated soils and establish themselves quickly by putting out new root systems. As the plants grow and establish a more solid root mass they will hold more soil together.

#### **Live Staking & Live Fascine Installation Plan**

## **Year One / Year Two**

In order to begin the process of shoring up bank stabilization along Hominy Creek, post major NNIS control efforts in Year 1, EcoForesters is recommending planting live stakes and installing live fascines during the dormant season of Year 1 (November – December) or the dormant season of Year 2 (January – March) before bud break.

Live stakes are dormant cuttings of native trees and shrubs, the ideal size being 0.5 to 2 inches in diameter and 2-3 feet long. Species selection of live stakes should consider the plants ability to grow in saturated soils near the streambank and during high water events. Common live stake species used in North Carolina stream restoration efforts include silky dogwood, silky willow, black willow, button bush, elderberry, sycamores and ninebark. Live stakes should be planted in rows on a 3 foot by 3 foot spacing along the water's edge but not too high up on the bank because they should still have access to soils that are regularly wet throughout the year. Installing live stakes is a great volunteer activity because it is rewarding and simple. If the soil is moist and not compacted, live stakes can be easily pushed into the bank with steady pressure or a pilot hole can be driven with rebar first to make the process easier. Cutting the end of the live stake to make a 45 degree angle point will also assist in pushing it through the ground. Live stakes should be pushed into the soil 2/3 of their length and special care should be taken to make sure that the buds are pointed upward. Live stakes can be harvested on site if there is an ample supply but one should not take more than 5% of the shrub or tree. Live stakes are also sold at many native plant nurseries and typically come in bundles of 50.

Live fascines are also comprised of dormant cuttings from native trees and shrubs but the cuttings are thinner in diameter and longer in length and bundled together in mass with twine. Willow species and dogwood species make the best live fascines. The selection of willow or dogwood whips can be gathered together with their cut ends facing the same way and should form a final length of 5-10 feet, bundled together, bound with untreated twine to form a diameter of 6 to 10 inches. Twine should be fastened around the fascine bundles every 12 inches or so. To install the fascine bundles along the streambank, shallow but long trenches should be dug to fit the length and diameter of the bundles which will be placed into the trench. The trenches should be dug, horizontally, into the slope at the "toe of the bank" which is located just above the water line of the stream. Trenches should be dug approximately ½ the diameter of the fascine. Once the trench has been dug to the proper depth and length the fascine can be placed into the trench and untreated wooden stakes, 2-3 feet long, can be driven vertically through the bundles every two feet until the top of the wood stake is flush with the top of the bundle. Next live stakes should driven through the bundle and through the soil in between the wooden stakes, also approximately every two feet apart. Once the fascine has been placed into the trench and staked into to place with both live stakes and dead untreated wooden stakes, the excavated soil can be deposited back over the fascine and gently tamped down, working the soil into the empty space between the whips that make up the fascine bundle. No more than 20 % of the fascine bundle should be exposed. Live fascine installation is more labor intensive and slightly more complicated than live staking but could still be a great option for the right volunteers.

## **Supplemental Plug Planting**

### **Year Three**

**After the NNIS have been controlled aggressively for the first couple of years and the bank stabilization efforts of live staking and live fascines installation has occurred it would be a good idea to consider planting herbaceous plugs that are adapted for wet soils. Herbaceous plants have fibrous root systems that are great for holding soil together but they also offer more diversity of plant life which is great for wildlife and insects. Plugs are easy to plant and often come in 2 inch container trays or tubes that are 5 inches in depth. Hopefully some native vegetation will have established naturally in the spacing located between the live stakes,**

The following document contains a schedule of operations, a native plant species list and budget for the recommended NNIS species control implementation and revegetation materials cost. EcoForesters crew time has not been calculated for planting days, for sake of allowing volunteers to participate in this rewarding phase of the project, however a labor cost quote for planting can also be provided upon request.

# Improving Public Access and Passive Recreation Use of Warren Wilson College Lands

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Warren Wilson College***

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Damian Fernandez  
701 Warren Wilson Rd  
Swannanoa, NC 28778

rmartin@warren-wilson.edu  
O: 828-771-3001

## ***Mary Fields***

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701 Warren Wilson Road  
Swannanoa, NC 28787

mfields@warren-wilson.edu  
O: 828-771-2052

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Improving Public Access and Passive Recreation Use of Warren Wilson College Lands

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Warren Wilson College

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

School or University

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

None

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Improvements

## Scope of Work

Scope of work and timeline.pdf

## Project Schedule

Scope of work and timeline.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

701 Warren Wilson Road

### Parcel Number

967954493700000

### Acreage

1005

### Zoning Designation

PS Public Service

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$141,580.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$141,580.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$46,720.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

In kind support for student and staff labor. This will be covered by College operating budget and Federal Work College funds. These funds are secured.

## Project Summary

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond’s goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

Warren Wilson College owns 1005 acres of forest and agricultural land in Buncombe County, all of which have been open to the public for recreational use for decades. The College's 17 miles of farm and forest roads and forest single track trails are used extensively by county residents for hiking, dog walking, birding, wildlife viewing, photography, swimming and other passive recreational pursuits. The College also has a long history of inviting county residents onto our land for workshops, demonstrations and interpretive hikes that educate

the public on the natural history of the area as well as conservation and management of natural resources. Despite this open access, the College has never asked the county or state for funding to manage and improve the infrastructure that provides public access to our land. All costs of managing the roads and trails used by the public have come from the College with some minor capacity provided by generous neighbors. Requested bond funds will be used to upgrade and improve the College's road and trail system used extensively by the public for passive recreation. The majority of our roads and trails are in serious need of grading and resurfacing due to significant use. This work will improve user safety, access and quality of experience for county residents using College lands for passive recreation activities and will allow Warren Wilson College to continue welcoming county residents to campus and providing these opportunities.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

\*Improvements

\*Yes, Swannanoa

\*Yes, we would complete the work by end of 2025 calendar year

\*Yes, the College will continue to oversee and manage the project through our federal work program Farm and Forestry crews

\*Yes, all of the Colleges trails and roads are open to the public

\*Yes, we are a private, non-profit college with 501(c)(3) status

## Improvements Narrative

### Improvements Narrative

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The improvements we are requesting funding to accomplish focus on our ~17 miles of farm roads, forest roads and forest single track trails, all of which are used extensively by the public for passive recreational activities. These improvements include grading work, resurfacing (pervious only), single track upgrades, waterbars/runoff diversions, hazard tree removal and interpretive signage installation. The work does not include any new trail or road creation as our current network extends throughout all of the campus lands. No bond funds will be used to improve roads within our 150 acres of built environment within central campus.

**\*\*Note - The uploaded trail map identifies lengths of the College Forest single track trails and forest roads that are used for hiking. Farm roads are also shown on the map but without distances.**

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)***

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**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

See The Center for Working Lands at Warren Wilson College for an overview of how our land is used to protect and promote biodiversity and natural ecosystems and educate our students and public on such activities. <https://www.warren-wilson.edu/about/center-working-lands/>.

Recent CWL newsletters that identify public educational opportunities:

<https://conta.cc/4afHCLk>

<https://conta.cc/3Vi79fH>

<https://conta.cc/3rxj0cy>

### **Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).**

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This project does not acquire or add to existing open space. It provides improved access to ~900 of current undeveloped open space. The College is in the process of putting conservation easements on the majority of its undeveloped land, all of which would be accessed by the roads and trails covered by this funding request. The north end of our campus contains one of our largest forested tract and is proximate to the Chemtronics property which provides a larger wildlife corridor between Warren Wilson College and private, state and federal open space (Pisgah NF and BRPW).

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The trails and road networks covered under this request are the essential infrastructure that allows the College to educate the public on the importance of conservation and wildlife. Without this network, the land would be inaccessible to the public. We view our land as an outdoor classroom that provides the public with opportunities to not only observe and interact with the natural environment, but also to be educated through our interpretive signage and first hand through workshops, lectures and demonstrations from our faculty and staff. Beyond infrastructure improvements, funds will also be used to upgrade and provide new interpretive signage for public education. Current and past signage has included Aquatic Ecology of the Swannanoa River, History of the Alexander Family in the Swannanoa Valley, Warren Wilson College Agricultural Practices, Forest Wildlife Management, Ecosystem Juxtaposition and Habitat Management, Indigenous History of the Swannanoa Valley.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

During the course of the project period, the project lead will be working with the College's Outdoor Leadership and Social Sciences faculty and students to quantify public trail use and demonstrated benefits. This work will be done through demographic research focused specifically on identifying user groups and understanding the valuation perspectives and benefits obtained by various groups. The results of this research will be used to better target our educational and recreational offerings around conservation and environmental learning. This work will be supported by The Center for Working Lands at Warren Wilson College and will not be part of this funding request.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)*

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### How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?

The initial work for Farm and Forest Road improvements will be contracted out to a local business. On the ground oversight will be conducted by the College Farm and Forest managers. Billing oversight and final signing off on work will be overseen by the Dean and Director of The Center for Working Lands. Single track trail improvements will be completed by the Warren Wilson College Forestry Crew with oversight by the College Forest Manager. The Dean and Director of The Center for Working Lands will monitor and facilitate the completion of the single track trail work.

### What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

We see no potential risks or impediments to the on the ground completion of this project. There is currently a financial impediment to this project being completed as the College has limited resources and our support public access to our land could become more limited in scope and/or experiences.

## Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

\*This project can begin as soon as funding is made available

\*The farm and forest roads will be completed by August 2024

\*Improvement of the forest single track trails will be a major initiative of the College's Ecological Forestry Crew and will be completed by the end of calendar year 2025.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

The only outside partners involved in the project will be the contractor that is hired to do the initial improvements to the farm and forest roads. Due to our status as a federally recognized work college with large student forestry and farm crews and the in house expertise that we have in environmental engineering, aquatic ecology, wildlife management and outdoor leadership, we will be able to complete this work ourselves as a service to the Buncombe County community.

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

Since the inception of the College, the land has been used for agriculture, forestry, education, research and recreation. Before the College was formed, the land was privately held by several landowners who also used it for agricultural outcomes. Previous to the establishment of the state of North Carolina, the land was important to the indigeneous peoples of the area as an area for worship and residence.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

Due to the fact that we are improving our current trail and road network rather than building new infrastructure, there are no apparent physical aspects that would impede completion. We do need to consider some rerouting of the River Trail along the Swannanoa River to bring it back off some sensitive riparian edges. Another consideration is safety in regards to black bear activity. Warren Wilson College Conservation Biology professor Liesl Erb is currently working to get BearWise certification for campus and we have held workshops on bear safety for the public.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

\*Our entire trail system is accessed via parking at Owen Park in Swannanoa. On weekends there is ample parking on campus that is utilized by trail users. There is also parking at the Jones Mountain and Berea trailheads.

\* We have been in contact with both the Swannanoa Greenway team and the Fonta Flora Greenway team about traversing Warren Wilson College Lands. Both of those proposed greenways would incorporate the College's River Trail which is ~2 miles of trail following the Swannanoa River through campus.

\*There are no official trails currently hooking up with the Warren Wilson College Trail system. However, adjoining landowners have created unofficial access to our trails from their properties.

\*Kayakers have access to our trails through the River Trail along the Swannanoa River.

\*The closest public transportation access to our trails is approximately 0.75 miles away at the intersection of Warren Wilson Road and Route 70.

## How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

\*The only limit to access is on campus parking during the week. There is ample parking at Owen Park and several parking spaces at the Jones Mountain and Berea Trailheads.

\*We allow some event planning such as weddings and photo shoots. Our land is also available for public school education events and private organizations to run workshops and other fee charging activities. Local Asheville City and Buncombe County schools also use our trail system for athletic training for cross country runners.

\*We work hard to keep our trail and road infrastructure limited, especially impervious surfaces, as the entirety of our land is used for agriculture, forestry and wildlife/land conservation research and education.

## If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

Warren Wilson College lands are bordered by residential communities. These communities all have access to the property through their bordering lands. The Craggy View community on the east side of our land has an access trail between Warren Wilson property and Owen Park. The recently established Sovereign Oaks community bordering College land to the west has worked with the College to connect a trail to our Berea parcel. The Sovereign Oaks community donates \$5000 annually for trail upkeep, and is the only community member that does so.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

Due to the extensive nature of the system, the topography of the land and our focus on water quality and habitat conservation, none of our trails or roads are made of impervious surfaces. The roads around the Farm Core where animals are kept is flat and accessible, but not ADA compliant.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

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### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

All of the College's land is open to the public, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic status. The Dean and Director of the Center for Working Lands works closely with the College's WIDE (Wilson Inclusion, Diversity, Equity) Office to create a welcoming and safe environment for recreational users of the College's land. We are currently working with the the College's ISA (Indigenous Student Association) to develop interpretive signage along our trail system that will highlight the indigeneous history of the Swannanoa Valley and surrounding areas. The River Trail also passes by and will bring attention to the archeological site that has been managed by Dr. David Moore. This site dates back to the Pisgah era and is an ongoing research and teaching resource open to the public.

### Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?

As mentioned above, the road and trail network is open to all recreational users regardless of background.

### Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?

If yes, which projects?

Warren Wilson College is proximate to:  
Jasper Apartments  
East Haven Apartments

### What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

As mentioned above, The River Trail passes and will bring attention to the archeological site that has been managed by Dr. David Moore. This site dates back to the Pisgah era and is an ongoing research and teaching resource open to the public.

### Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

The greater community has not been involved in the development of this proposal as it is an improvement project rather than a new acquisition project. However, we interface often and directly with recreational users. These users alert us to any trail hazards that might be apparent or other trail/road conditions that might need attention. Pre-Covid we had begun to offer volunteer trail days for the public which were beginning to have good participation. This is a public activity we intend to bring back once the current improvements are made. Through The Center for Working Lands we advertise workshops, demonstrations, interpretive hikes and lectures that are free and open to the public, as well as fee based educational programming. The Center for Working Lands newsletter is currently subscribed to by close to 2000 community members and has an open rate of 65% which is well above the industry standard. Recent activities include a Natural History Hike on Broyles Ridge, Winter Tree Identification, Identification and Conservation of Freshwater Fish of the Swannanoa River, The History of the Swannanoa Valley, Sheep Shearing Demonstration, Prescribed Fire Management, BearWise Safety and a Microscopic Safari.

### How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

We anticipate no negative impacts on any communities. The project provides a positive impact on the Warren Wilson College student community by providing educational opportunities in interfacing and working with the public, especially for our forestry and environmental studies students who typically go into careers managing the social aspects of natural resources.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

The Warren Wilson Forestry Crew manages all invasive species on campus. The major species targeted are Oriental bittersweet, tree of heaven, multiflora rose and Chinese privet. The crew no longer broadcast sprays herbicides, instead we cut and paint stumps or hand pull. This work is the main focus of the crew during early fall and happens as needed throughout the year. Trash and litter is managed by the Farm and Forestry Crews with a yearly focus on the Swannanoa River. Forest single track trails are maintained by hand by the Forestry Crew. This includes switchbacks, waterbars, steps and stone retaining walls and bridges crossing streams. The Forestry Crew currently possesses all the hand tools needed for this work. Forest and Farm roads are maintained mechanically through grading, gravel resurfacing and ditch clearing. We currently do not have the proper equipment for this work which is why we are requesting a mini excavator/track hoe through this proposal.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The roadways and trails covered under this proposal will be maintained post-project by staff and students of the College as they have been for decades. Principle management and maintenance will be conducted by: Blair Thompson, Warren Wilson College Farm Manager. Blair has an extensive regenerative agriculture background throughout the US. Blair is an experienced educator and is proficient in the use of all equipment that will be used to maintain WWC Farm roads and trails.

WWC Farm Crew Students. The 25-30 person crew works throughout the school year and during all breaks maintaining and improving the WWC Farm infrastructure including roads and trails. This work is done under the guidance of the Farm Manager.

Corinna Steinreuck, Warren Wilson College Forest Manager. Corinna has a BS in Ecological Forestry from WWC. Corinna is an accomplished trail builder and is experienced with single track trail design as well as forest road maintenance.

WWC Forestry Crew Students. The 15-20 person crew works throughout the school year and during all breaks maintaining and improving the WWC Forest infrastructure including roads and trails. This work is done under the guidance of the Forest Manager.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The financial management of the project will be overseen by Dave Ellum, Dean and Director of The Center for Working Lands at Warren Wilson College. Dr. Ellum is a silviculturist by training and oversees all aspects of the College's land management activities. He has been at the College for 17 years and currently manages all land budgets consisting of over 50 individual lines and a total of approximately \$250K annually. He also manages all philanthropy and grants for land operations and is currently managing nine donor/grant accounts totalling approximately \$350K. Dr. Ellum reports directly to the Warren Wilson College president in matters of fundraising and spending and is supported by both the College's comptroller and the office of Advancement and Marketing.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

Once we reset the trail/road system with the funds provided by this request, the upkeep and maintenance of the trails will be covered by the College and The Center for Working Lands operational budgets. We anticipate that the currently proposed improvements will bring the system to a condition that will not need another major overhaul for 10-15 years. Post improvements, the labor for maintenance and upkeep will be supplied by student work crews who are financially supported through Federal Work College funds and the College operating budget.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Through purposeful development of positive community relations, community users provide our eyes and ears on the upkeep and safety of the trails. Public users contact the Forestry Crew, Farm Crew or Public Safety whenever there is an issue on the trail/road network that needs our attention. The Forestry Crew students are also very interested in restarting the volunteer trail work days that were open to the public pre-Covid.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

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#### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

Improvements to the College's farm and forest road and trail network - \$89,300 (Quote from local contractor)  
 Interpretive Signage - \$17,280 (Quote from currently demployed signs)  
 Trackhoe for continued maintenance - \$35,000 (Industry average)

#### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

We are working with the Sovereign Oaks community to increase their giving to trail maintenance and improvements. The Dean and Director of The Center for Working Lands solicits direct philanthropy through the Center's newsletter and direct relationships. There are currently no other grant requests in process for this project.

#### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

In order of priority:

1. Improvements to the College's farm and forest road and trail network - \$89,300.00
2. Interpretive Signage - 10 @ \$1728.00 = \$17,280.00
3. Trackhoe for continued maintenance - \$35,000

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

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#### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services

- Other

This project will improve and provide continued access for passive recreation opportunities to Buncombe County residents, especially related to hiking, dog walking, birding, wildlife viewing photography, swimming, fishing and other passive recreational pursuits. Our trails also contribute to the tourism economy of Buncombe county as they are advertised by many regional and national outdoor publications.

## Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

This project and the continued public access to Warren Wilson College lands directly address the Buncombe County 2043 Comprehensive Plan, specifically:

1. Farms, Forests and Environmental Conservation
2. Health and Recreation
3. Growth, Equity and Conservation

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Jill Carter, Open Space Bond Project Manager, Jill.Carter@buncombecounty.org - emailed about project

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)*

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### How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?

The Forestry and Farm Crew students have a high level of presence on the trails as they conduct their daily work activities. The College's Public Safety officers also patrol the network and all trailhead signs provide the emergency number for Public Safety. In addition the Swannanoa and Riceville Fire Departments are on call and know the property very well as we provide access to them for safety and emergency training exercises.

### How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?

We have very little issue with vandalism on our forest and farm roads and trails. The road and trail system has deteriorated over time due to increasing use by the public, a lack of proper equipment to maintain forest and farm roads and financial constraints. The system has not deteriorated due to a lack of attention or poor management. The reset we are requesting through this proposal will bring the system back up to standard so that the crews can have a fresh start in maintaining this valuable community resource.

## How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

We do allow mountain biking on some of our forest roads and trails. Signage clearly identifies which trails are closed for cycling. The River Trail, our most used trail, is completely closed to bikers and we do not allow horses on any trails. The most often occurring conflict we experience is with dogs off leash. We have a strict leash policy which is enforced by our student crews and Public Safety officers.

## Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.

All trailheads and trail junctions are marked. Signage on allowable uses are also present at trailheads.

## *Applicant Experience*

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### Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

Warren Wilson College was founded in 1894. The Farm Crew has been active in one form or another since the College's inception and has been in its current form since the 1940's. The Forest Crew was initiated in the 1970's. Dr. Ellum has a background in Wildlife Biology (NCSU), Professional Forest Manager (Yale) and Silviculture (Yale) and has been teaching forestry and managing forests for over 20 years. Blair Bishop has been the Farm Manager at Warren Wilson College for four years and has managed farm operations throughout the midwest and California. Blair is highly skilled in large equipment operation and maintenance. Corinna Steinreuck has been the Forest Manager for three years and is a graduate of Warren Wilson College's Ecological Forestry Program. Corinna has an intimate knowledge of the College's forest lands and is a skilled trail builder. The educational and research components of the College lands are supported through The Center for Working Lands with engagement from faculty trained in forestry, agriculture, entomology, aquatic ecology, environmental engineering, genetics, ichthyology, herpetology, botany, ornithology and environmental science. The College's annual budget is approximately \$30M of which approximately 2% is used to manage the College's land operations.

### Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

See above for experience.

Dr. Ellum managed the 12,000 acre Yale Forests system for six years. These forests contain extensive systems of forest roads and trails that are privately owned but open to the public, similar to Warren Wilson College.

## Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

Kitzuma Contractors has been in business in Black Mountain since 2017. The College has worked with Kitzuma on several projects and has had successful results.

## Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

IRS Tax Exemption Letter.pdf

## Resumes of Key Staff

Ellum CV \_ 2024.doc

## *Budget*

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### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

The budget is fairly simple and breaks down to four discreet components:

1. Contractor quote to improve the farm and forest roads in an effort to get them back to desired condition where they can be maintained by student crews
2. Request for 10 interpretive signs that can be placed along the trail and road system identifying conservation, wildlife, environmental and historical contexts of the land
3. A piece of equipment that will allow the Farm and Forest crews to have increased efficiency in maintaining the roads and trails post improvements
4. In kind funds provided by federal Work College and College operating budgets for long-term maintenance of the road and trail system.

## Project Budget

Passive Rec Improvements Project Budget (1).pdf

## *Additional Documentation*

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### Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board

If applicable

*[Unanswered]*

## **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Warren Wilson College Trails new.doc (1) (7).pdf

## **Project Photos and Illustrations**

### **Letters of Support**

Warren Wilson College - Letter of Support to Warren Wilson College.pdf

### **Other Documentation**

WWC Land Map.JPG

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Scope of work and timeline.pdf
- Scope of work and timeline.pdf
- IRS Tax Exemption Letter.pdf
- Ellum CV \_ 2024.doc
- Passive Rec Improvements Project Budget (1).pdf
- Warren Wilson College Trails new.doc (1) (7).pdf
- Warren Wilson College - Letter of Support to Warren Wilson College.pdf
- WWC Land Map.JPG

Improving Public Access and Passive Recreation Use of Warren Wilson  
College Lands  
Ellum – March 2024

**Scope of Work**

This project will be conducted through four component activities:

1. A private contractor will be hired to grade and resurface all Farm and Forest roads that are accessed by the public for passive recreation activities.
2. The College's Forestry Crew will rehabilitate all Forest single track trails that require maintenance.
3. Interpretive signs will be placed at designated road and trail locations to provide educational opportunities for recreational users.
4. Long-term post improvement maintenance will be conducted by the College's Forestry and Farm Crews.

**Project Timeline**

1. Improvements to Farm and Forest Roads will be completed by August 2024.
2. Rehabilitation of Forest single track trails will be completed by end of calendar year 2025.
3. Interpretive signage will be in place by end of calendar year 2025.
4. Long-term post improvement maintenance will be conducted over the life of the project – projected 10-15 years.

Improving Public Access and Passive Recreation Use of Warren Wilson  
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Ellum – March 2024

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**Internal Revenue Service**

Date: January 11, 2006

WARREN WILSON COLLEGE  
P.O. BOX 9000  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28815-9000

Department of the Treasury  
P. O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

**Person to Contact:**  
Neco Sikora  
Internal Revenue Agent  
**Toll Free Telephone Number:**  
877-829-5500  
**Federal Identification Number:**  
56-0767736

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is in response to your request of January 11, 2006, regarding your organization's tax-exempt status.

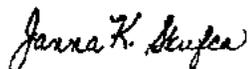
In September 1962 we issued a determination letter that recognized your organization as exempt from federal income tax. Our records indicate that your organization is currently exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that your organization is also classified as a school under sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that contributions to your organization are deductible under section 170 of the Code, and that you are qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely,



Janna K. Skufca, Director, TE/GE  
Customer Account Services

**DAVID S. ELLUM, PHD**  
**DEAN AND DIRECTOR, THE CENTER FOR WORKING LANDS**  
**WARREN WILSON COLLEGE**

Home:  
44 Woodland Drive  
Fairview, NC 28730  
(828) 989-8028

Office:  
Warren Wilson College  
Asheville, NC 28815  
(828) 771-3072  
dellum@warren-wilson.edu

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**Education**

Ph.D. Silviculture and Forest Ecology, 2007 - Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

*Dissertation Title: Demographic Patterns and Disturbance Responses of Understory Vegetation in a Managed Forest of Southern New England: Implications for Sustainable Forestry and Biodiversity Maintenance.*

M.F. Forest Management, 2001 - Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

B.S. Wildlife Biology, Summa Cum Laude, 1999 - North Carolina State University

Botany Minor, 1999 - North Carolina State University

Field Study in Conservation Biology, 1998 - Highlands Biological Research Station, Highlands, NC

A.S. General Science, Valedictorian, 1995 - Housatonic Community Technical College, Bridgeport, CT

**Teaching Experience**

Warren Wilson College, Assistant Professor of Sustainable Forestry, 2007-2011

Warren Wilson College, Professor of Ecological Forestry, 2011-2022

Courses Taught:

- Ecology
- Forest Biology
- Forest Management
- Silviculture
- Introduction to Environmental Studies
- Perspectives in Environmental Studies
- First Year Seminar(s)
- Topics in Conservation Biology: Novel Ecosystems
- Agroforestry: Concepts and Applications in Integrated Land Management
- Appalachian Semester: Ecological Change in the Southern Appalachians
- Novel Ecosystems

Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

- Instructor, Rapid Ecological Assessments
- Instructor, Management Plans for Protected Areas

- Instructor, Ecosystem Measurements
- Instructor, Dendrology and Wildlife Management

### **Academic Responsibilities**

Warren Wilson College:

- Finance, Operations and Land All Campus Committee, 2023 – Present
- Chair, College Sustainability Working Group, 2023 – Present
- Dean and Director, The Center for Working Lands, 2022 – Present
- Provost Leadership Team, 2021 – Present
- President’s Council, 2019 – 2021
- Dean of Land Resources, 2018 – 2022
- Extended Contract Committee, 2013; 2017 – 2018
- Student Success Committee, 2017 - 2018
- Assessment Team for American Farm School Study Abroad and School of Record Agreement, 2016
- SACS Compliance Certification Leader, 2014-2015
- Chair, Environmental Studies Department, 2012 - 2015
- Teaching Excellence Committee, 2012 - 2016
- Presidential Inauguration Committee 2012/13
- Presidential Search Committee, 2011
- Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair, 2010 – 2011
- Building and Grounds Committee, 2009 – 2011
- College Forest Director, 2009 - Present
- Long-Range Land Use Committee, 2009 – 2013
- Honorary Degree Review Committee, 2010
- Faculty Liaison for Duke 3/2 Program, 2007 – 2012

Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies:

- Alumni Board Member, 2013-2019
- Program Leader Summer Field Training Modules, 2002-2006
- Prescribed Fire Manager, 2002 – 2007
- Coordinator of Research for Yale School Forests, 2001 - 2007
- Invited Lecturer, University of Munich, Freising, Germany, 2006
- Yale-Myers Forest Certification Team – Dual certification: Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council, 2004
- Coordinator for Schoene Rene Yale FES/University of Munich Silviculture Summer Exchange Program, 2002 – 2007. France, Germany, Slovenia, Austria, British Columbia, N. California, Montana, Arizona
- Research Leader for Ashton Silviculture Lab, Summer 2003 and Summer 2004

### **Professional Experience**

- ABFFC Forest Farming Advisory Committee, 2023 – Present
- Conservation through Cultivation: Building a Sustainable Herbal Supply Chain through Production, Verification and Distribution, Advisory Board Member 2018 - 2020

- External Director of Environmental Engineering Academic Program, Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico. 2013 - 2017
- Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies Alumni Board, 2013 - 2019
- Cradle of Forestry in America. Board of Directors. 2013 - 2014
- Forest Stewards. Board of Directors. 2011 – 2014
- Land of Sky Regional Council: Linking Lands and Communities in Western North Carolina. Science Team Member. Spring 2008 – Fall 2008.
- Conservation Commission - Middlefield, CT, Selectman appointed Commission Member, January 2004 - January 2007 Appointment
- Conservation Commission/Open Space Steering Committee - Milford, CT, Mayor appointed Commission Member, August 1999 - October 2000
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission - Raleigh, NC, Non-game and Endangered Species Division, November 1998 - May 1999
- Triangle Land Conservancy - Raleigh, NC, Ecologist, August 1998 - May 1999

### **Honors and Awards**

Teaching Innovation Award, Warren Wilson College - 2014  
 Teaching Excellence Award, Warren Wilson College – 2011  
 Graduate Student Teaching Award, Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies – 2007  
 New England Botanical Club Graduate Student Research Award – 2005  
 Phi Beta Kappa – 1998  
 Phi Kappa Phi – 1997  
 Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom Scholarship – 1997  
 Connecticut Governor’s Award for Academic Excellence – 1995  
 Phi Theta Kappa – 1994

### **Funding - \$1.2 million raised at Warren Wilson College**

Second Nature Catalyst Fund  
 Pearl Jam Vitalogy Fund  
 USDA NIFA Grant  
 The Greater New Orleans Foundation  
 Quility Food Justice Fund  
 The Conservation Exchange  
 French Broad River Garden Club  
 Blue Ridge National Heritage Area  
 Sierra Nevada Brewing Company  
 Community Fund for Western North Carolina  
 Sovereign Oaks Trail Fund  
 Irene Pennington Broyles and Glenn Boone Broyles Fellowship  
 Environmental Leadership Center: Global Exchange for Sustainability  
 Tavener Family Foundation  
 Environmental Leadership Center: Global Exchange for Sustainability  
 Licor LEAF Grant  
 Appalachian Semester Grant

## Peer Reviewed Papers

Ellum, D.S., G.P. Berlyn, M.S. Ashton. In Prep. Acclimation responses of forest understory

herbs to sudden changes in light environment: Implications for plant conservation after timber harvests. *Journal of Applied Ecology*.

PhenoCam Dataset v2.0: Vegetation Phenology from Digital Camera Imagery, 2000-2018. Seyednasrollah, B., A.M. Young, K. Hufkens, T. Milliman, M.A. Friedl, S. Frohling, A.D. Richardson, M. Abraha, D.W. Allen, M. Apple, M.A. Arain, J. Baker, J.M. Baker, C.J. Bernacchi, J. Bhattacharjee, P. Blanken, D.D. Bosch, R. Boughton, E.H. Boughton, R.F. Brown, D.M. Browning, N. Brunzell, S.P. Burns, M. Cavagna, H. Chu, P.E. Clark, B.J. Conrad, E. Cremonese, D. Debinski, A.R. Desai, R. Diaz-Delgado, L. Duchesne, A.L. Dunn, D.M. Eissenstat, T. El-Madany, D.S. Ellum, S.M. Ernest, A. Esposito, L. Fenstermaker, L.B. Flanagan, B. Forsythe, J. Gallagher, D. Gianelle, T. Griffis, P. Groffman, L. Gu, J. Guillemot, M. Halpin, P.J. Hanson, D. Hemming, A.A. Hove, E.R. Humphreys, A. Jaimes-Hernandez, A.A. Jaradat, J. Johnson, E. Keel, V.R. Kelly, J.W. Kirchner, P.B. Kirchner, M. Knapp, M. Krassovski, O. Langvall, G. Lanthier, G.I. Maire, E. Magliulo, T.A. Martin, B. McNeil, G.A. Meyer, M. Migliavacca, B.P. Mohanty, C.E. Moore, R. Mudd, J.W. Munger, Z.E. Murrell, Z. Nesic, H.S. Neufeld, T.L. O'Halloran, W. Oechel, A.C. Oishi, W.W. Oswald, T.D. Perkins, M.L. Reba, B. Rundquist, B.R. Runkle, E.S. Russell, E.J. Sadler, A. Saha, N.Z. Saliendra, L. Schmalbeck, M.D. Schwartz, R.L. Scott, E.M. Smith, O. Sonnentag, P. Stoy, S. Strachan, K. Suvocarev, J.E. Thom, R.Q. Thomas, A.K. Van den berg, R. Vargas, C.S. Vogel, J.J. Walker, N. Webb, P. Wetzels, S. Weyers, A.V. Whipple, T.G. Whitham, G. Wohlfahrt, J.D. Wood, S. Wolf, J. Yang, X. Yang, G. Yenni, Y. Zhang, Q. Zhang, and D. Zona. 2019. PhenoCam Dataset v2.0: Vegetation Phenology from Digital Camera Imagery, 2000-2018. ORNL DAAC, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA.

PhenoCam Dataset v2.0: Digital Camera Imagery from the PhenoCam Network, 2000-2018. Milliman, T., B. Seyednasrollah, A.M. Young, K. Hufkens, M.A. Friedl, S. Frohling, A.D. Richardson, M. Abraha, D.W. Allen, M. Apple, M.A. Arain, J. Baker, J.M. Baker, C.J. Bernacchi, J. Bhattacharjee, P. Blanken, D.D. Bosch, R. Boughton, E.H. Boughton, R.F. Brown, D.M. Browning, N. Brunzell, S.P. Burns, M. Cavagna, H. Chu, P.E. Clark, B.J. Conrad, E. Cremonese, D. Debinski, A.R. Desai, R. Diaz-Delgado, L. Duchesne, A.L. Dunn, D.M. Eissenstat, T. El-Madany, D.S.S. Ellum, S.M. Ernest, A. Esposito, L. Fenstermaker, L.B. Flanagan, B. Forsythe, J. Gallagher, D. Gianelle, T. Griffis, P. Groffman, L. Gu, J. Guillemot, M. Halpin, P.J. Hanson, D. Hemming, A.A. Hove, E.R. Humphreys, A. Jaimes-Hernandez, A.A. Jaradat, J. Johnson, E. Keel, V.R. Kelly, J.W. Kirchner, P.B. Kirchner, M. Knapp, M. Krassovski, O. Langvall, G. Lanthier, G.I. Maire, E. Magliulo, T.A. Martin, B. McNeil, G.A. Meyer, M. Migliavacca, B.P. Mohanty, C.E. Moore, R. Mudd, J.W. Munger, Z.E. Murrell, Z. Nesic, H.S. Neufeld, W. Oechel, A.C. Oishi, W.W. Oswald, T.D. Perkins, M.L. Reba, B. Rundquist, B.R. Runkle, E.S. Russell, E.J. Sadler, A. Saha, N.Z. Saliendra, L. Schmalbeck, M.D. Schwartz, R.L. Scott, E.M. Smith, O. Sonnentag, P. Stoy, S. Strachan, K. Suvocarev, J.E. Thom, R.Q. Thomas, A.K. Van den berg, R. Vargas, C.S. Vogel, J.J. Walker, N. Webb, P. Wetzels, S. Weyers, A.V. Whipple, T.G.

Whitham, G. Wohlfahrt, J.D. Wood, J. Yang, X. Yang, G. Yenni, Y. Zhang, Q. Zhang, and D. Zona. 2019. PhenoCam Dataset v2.0: Digital Camera Imagery from the PhenoCam Network, 2000-2018. ORNL DAAC, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA.

- Chamberlain, J., Davis, J., Duguid, M., Ellum, D., Kruger, S., Marcano-Vega, H., McCoy, J., Prisley, S., Zasada, J. Non-Timber Forest Products and Production. Chapter in: Chamberlain, James L.; Emery, Marla R.; Patel-Weynand, Toral. 2018. Assessment of nontimber forest products in the United States under changing conditions. General Technical Report SRS-GTR-232. USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 268p. <https://doi.org/10.2737/SRS-GTR-2322018>. Assessment of nontimber forest products in the United States under changing conditions.
- Duguid, M.A., B.R. Frey, D.S. Ellum, K.D. Kelty, M.S. Ashton. 2013. The influence of ground disturbance and gap position on understory plant diversity in upland forests of southern New England. *Forest Ecology and Management*. 303:148–159
- Ellum, D.S., M.S. Ashton, T.G. Siccama. 2010. Spatial pattern in herb diversity and abundance of second growth mixed deciduous-evergreen forest within southern New England, USA. *Forest Ecology and Management*. 259:1416-1426.
- Ellum, D.S. 2009. Floristic diversity in managed forests: demography and physiology of forest of understory plants following disturbance in southern New England forests. *Journal of Sustainable Forestry*. 28(1-2):132-151.
- Aikens, M.L., D.S. Ellum, J.J. McKenna, M.J. Kelty, M.S. Ashton. 2007. The effects of disturbance intensity on temporal and spatial patterns of herb colonization in a southern New England mixed-oak forest. *Forest Ecology and Management*. 252:144-158
- Frey, B., J.J. McKenna, M.S. Ashton, D.S. Ellum, A.J. Finkral. 2007. Topography-related patterns in seedling establishment, growth and survival among masting species of southern New England hardwood forests. *Forest Ecology and Management*. 245(1-3):54-63.
- Ellum, D.S., M.S. Ashton, G.P. Berlyn. 2004. Between and within genera comparisons of morphological plasticity for *Betula* and *Acer* seedlings grown under various light conditions. *Forestry Across Borders: Proceedings of the New England Society of American Foresters 84<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting*. Gen. Tech. Rep. NE-314. USDA. Forest Service, Northeastern Research Station. p. 33-36.

### **Professional Papers**

- Ellum, D.S. 2009. Proactive Coevolution: Staying Ahead of Invasive Species in the Face of Climate Change and Uncertainty – Forest Wisdom, Forest Guild. Issue 13.
- Ellum, D.S. Open Space Management Plan for The Coe Hill Preserve, Middlefield, CT. 2007. Conservation Commission. Middlefield, CT.
- Finkral, A.J., D.S. Ellum. 2004. Floristic Patterns and Sustainable Forestry Practices: An Evaluation of The Forest Stewardship Council Standards for the Eastern Hardwood Forests of the United States. The Doris Duke Foundation.

- Clark, M.T., D. Ellum, M. Ford, S. Huefnagl, C. Margolis, M. Sterner. 2001. Management Plan for the Winterberry Pond Property, Sandisfield, MA. Robert Lieberman.
- Ellum, D.S. 2000. Natural Resources Inventory and Acquisition Priority Ratings for Potential Open Space Properties Within the Town of Milford, CT. Open Space Steering Committee. Milford, CT.
- Ellum, D.S. 1999. The Solomon Property: A Site Description with Considerations for Open Space Acquisition. Open Space Steering Committee. Milford, CT.
- Ellum, D.S. 1999. Site Description and Biological Inventory for the Alter Property, Milford, CT. Open Space Steering Committee. Milford, CT.
- Ellum, D.S. 1999. Land Assessment and Biological Inventory of the Triangle Land Conservancy's La Grange Riparian Reserve, Chatham County, NC. Triangle Land Conservancy. Raleigh, North Carolina.

### **Invited Lectures and Presentations**

2008:

- Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Summer Seminar Series  
Being an Educator in the Natural Resources – Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies
- North Carolina Organic Growers School Conference  
Maintaining Forest Understory Herbs While Managing for Timber: Practical Approaches
- Northern Arizona University, Graduate Research Seminar  
Growth Responses of Understory Herbs to Season of Canopy Removal and Gap Position in Southern New England Mixed Hardwood Forests

2010:

- Botanical Society of America National Meeting, Providence, RI  
Using Leaf Spectral Reflectance to Compare Rapid Acclimation and Developmental Plasticity in Forest Understory Herbs
- Black Mountain Arts Council, Black Mountain, NC  
A Botanical Tour of The Blue Ridge Parkway on its 75th Anniversary

2012:

- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Sustainability at Warren Wilson College: The Triad Approach

2013:

- 10th Convencion Regional Para La Celebracion Del Medio Ambiente, Puebla, Mexico  
Proactive vs. Reactive Management in the Face of Climate Change: Three Examples from US Forestry. Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Strategic Planning for Sustainability at Warren Wilson College.
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico

Physiology and disturbance responses of economically important forest understory plants of temperate broad-leaf forests of the eastern United States.

2014:

- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Panel Member: Environmental Ethics
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Career Leadership Seminar for Environmental Engineer Students
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Climate Change and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in US Forest Ecosystems

2015:

- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Congreso Internacional de Ingeniería Ambiental UPAEP, 2015  
Ecology and Management of Medicinal Plants in the Southern Appalachian Mountains, USA
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Congreso Internacional de Ingeniería Ambiental UPAEP, 2015  
Panel Member: The Role of Sustainability in Protecting Biodiversity
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Conducted class and workshop on Carbon Sequestration by Forests
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico  
Conducted workshop of Forest Mensuration

2016:

- WWC/Yale University Alumni Field Day at Warren Wilson College

2017:

- Western North Carolina Sustainable Forestry Conference, Asheville, NC.  
Historical Perspectives on Forestry and Silviculture in the Southern Appalachian Region.
- Forest Farming Intensive Conference, Organic Growers School, Asheville, NC.  
Advanced Propagation Methods; Shadehouse Propagation and Nursery Production.

2019:

- Yale-Myers Forest, Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Eastford, CT. Agroforestry Operations at Warren Wilson Forest.
- Walnut Creek Preserve, Mills Creek, NC. Ecology and Management of Medicinal Plants of the Southern Appalachians.
- Asheville Museum of Science, Asheville, NC. Variability, Resilience and Adaptation in Land Management Systems.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Farm and Forest Roads	\$89,300.00	Grading and Resurfacing Farm and Forest Roads
Interpretive Signage	\$17,280.00	Educational Improvements
Track Hoe	\$35,000.00	Post Improvement Maintenance
<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$141,580.00</b>	

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
In Kind Funding	\$21,720.00	Student labor covered by college and federal funds for one year
		20 students x \$9.05/hour x 120 hours each
	\$25,000.00	Forest and Farms Staff supervision for one year
		2 staff x 1/4 time
<b>Total Provided</b>	<b>\$46,720.00</b>	

Kitzuma Contractors, Inc.  
 206 Yates Ave.  
 Black Mountain, NC 28711

# Estimate

Date	Estimate #
3/27/2024	101

Name / Address
Warren Wilson College Blair Thompson C.P.O. 6255 PO Box 9000 Asheville, NC 28815-9000

Project
Farm

Description	Qty	Cost	Total
Jones Mtn road gravel per ton.	400	31.00	12,400.00
Gravel for all other roads on the farm. This is an allowance and my best guess at amount (tons)	900	31.00	27,900.00
Machine time/work to dress roads on farm loop and Big Bottom. Excavation to repair and prep Jones Mtn road for gravel	280	175.00	49,000.00
		<b>Total</b>	\$89,300.00

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_



Warren Wilson College  
 PO Box 9000  
 Asheville NC 28815

Contact: Mark Newman  
 Phone: (828) 771-3756  
 Email: mnewman@warren-wilson.edu  
 Project: Alexander Farms Trailheads

Quantity	Description	Unit Price	Extended Price
1	48" w x 24" h x .125 Gel Coat Laminate (GCL) Panels. Both different. Single-faced. Matte finish. Square cut. No holes.	\$450.00	\$450.00
1	Aluminum Cantilevered Exhibit Bases for 48" w x 24" h Panels. Visual area will be 47" w x 23" h. Includes (2) 2" x 3" x 62" posts for direct embedment. Painted a custom green color- Pantone TBD.	\$975.00	\$975.00

**Sale Amount: \$1,425.00**  
**Sales Tax: \$113.05**  
**Estimated Freight to 28815: \$190.00**  
**Total Amount: \$1,728.05**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- Panel Files: Pricing is based on receiving print-ready files. For more information, refer to our [File Preparation Guidelines](#). Completed files can be uploaded to our [FTP Site](#).
- Proofs: One scaled proof of each original will be submitted for the customer's approval. This printout will represent the actual color and resolution of the final embedded panel. Final changes may be made to this printout before proceeding to production.
- Packaging: Order will be bulk packed and one shipment.
- Pricing: Sale Amount is effective for 60 days after the quote date.
- Freight: Estimated freight does not include any special services such as a liftgate, inside delivery or delivery to a residential address. Freight will be delivered via an 18-wheeler truck. Depending on the size of the order, the shipment may need to be offloaded with a forklift.
- Freight Estimate: Freight cost shown above is an estimate generated on the day the quote is written. Estimate includes packaging and handling. Final freight charges can vary based on the volatility of the transit industry. Additional freight charges may be invoiced at time of shipment.
- Delivery: 30-40 business days after Pannier receives all approvals.
- FOB Destination: Freight Prepaid & Add
- Sales Tax: If sales tax exempt, please provide documentation.
- **Payment: Net 30 Days**

*Summer Timmer*

Summer Timmer  
 Sales Representative  
 724-265-4900 x207  
 slt@pannier.com

*Mark L Newman* 03-29-2023

Customer Acceptance/Date

Mark L Newman, Senior Director of  
 Development  
 Development Name and Title

# Signature Certificate

Reference number: 7WEQP-FE5HR-H5GFS-6AQPV

## Signer

## Timestamp

## Signature

### Mark Newman

Email: mnewman@warren-wilson.edu

Sent:

08 Mar 2023 21:30:17 UTC

Viewed:

08 Mar 2023 21:53:46 UTC

Signed:

29 Mar 2023 17:07:35 UTC



### Recipient Verification:

✓ Email verified

08 Mar 2023 21:53:46 UTC

IP address: 64.147.210.162

Location: Swannanoa, United States

Document completed by all parties on:

29 Mar 2023 17:07:35 UTC

Page 1 of 1

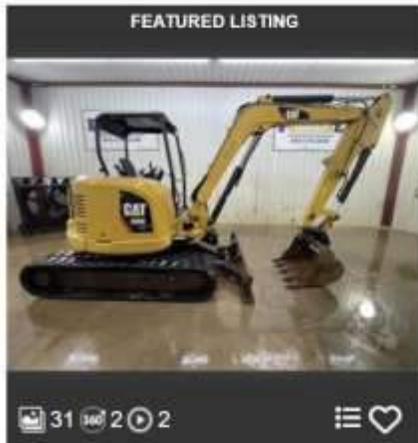


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For example purposes only.



### 2014 CATERPILLAR 305E CR

Mini (up to 12,000 lbs) Excavators

**Price: USD \$36,900**

CURRENCY: Get Financing\*

**Machine Location:**

Trinidad, Texas 75163

[View Rental Prices >](#)

**Hours:** 1,486

**Drive:** Track

**Horsepower:** 41.8 HP

**ROPS Type:** Open



Compare

**Providence Equipment, LLC**

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Phone: (903) 778-2000

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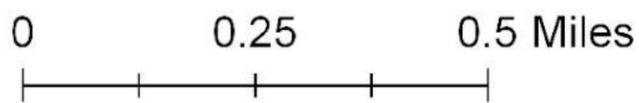
**Updated:** Tuesday, March 19, 2024 12:18 PM

Machine Highlights Year: 2014 Make: Caterpillar Model: 305E CR OROPS 2 speed HST Straight Blade Operating Weight: 10,970lb Hours: 1486  
Serial Number: CAT0305EUXFA03

**VIP**

[See More Details](#)

# Warren Wilson College Trail Map



## Legend

### Warren Wilson College Trails

#### Trail Type

----- Road, Hiking/Biking

..... Trail, Foot Traffic Only

———— Trail, Hiking/Biking

———— Public Roads

□ Warren Wilson College Boundaries

— Streams

■ Buildings

□ Fields

- - - - - Elevation Contours-50ft



**WARREN  
WILSON  
COLLEGE**



# Warren Wilson College Trail System

Compartment	Map ID #	Name	Bikes	Road / Trail	Length (m)	Elevation Gain (ft)
<b>Berea</b>						
	1	Anthony's Road	Yes	Road	0.16	67
	2	Berea Connector	Yes	Trail	0.21	40
	3	Big Berea Road	Yes	Road	0.30	33
	3	Big Berea Trail	Yes	Trail	0.31	33
	4	Bull Creek Trail	Yes	Trail	0.58	81
	5	Dam Pasture Connector	Yes	Trail	0.11	5
	6	Dam Pasture Road	Yes	Road	0.45	61
	7	Dam Pasture Trail	Yes	Trail	0.45	99
	8	Dodge Lake Trail	Yes	Trail	0.53	94
	9	Hemlock Springs Trail	No	Trail	0.34	121
	10	Sanders Connector	Yes	Trail	0.18	48
	11	White Pine Loop	Yes	Trail	0.56	31
<b>Christmas Tree Hill</b>						
	12	Christmas Tree Hill Road	Yes	Road	0.22	106
	13	Hodge Tom Connector	Yes	Road	0.09	19
	14	Jenson Trail	No	Trail	0.20	62
	15	Muhl Trail	No	Trail	0.45	146
	16	Trail of Fortune	No	Trail	0.41	68
<b>Dogwood Pasture</b>						
	17	Casey Connector	No	Trail	0.15	24
	18	Fitness Trail	Yes	Trail	0.22	70
	19	Fitness Trail Connector	No	Trail	0.03	32
<b>Jones Mountain</b>						
	20	Barefoot Trail	No	Trail	0.39	270
	21	Big Timber Road	Yes	Road	0.23	82
	22	Davidson Road	Yes	Road	1.12	514
	23	Freeman Ridge Trail	Yes	Trail	0.23	196
	24	Hemlock Trail	No	Trail	0.20	60
	25	Hung Tree Road	Yes	Road	0.22	83
	26	Kalmia Connector Trail	Yes	Trail	0.18	139
	27	Mindy Sue Trail	Yes	Trail	0.35	83
	28	Rhododendron Road	Yes	Road	0.79	149
	29	Ridge Top Trail	No	Trail	0.30	258
	30	Ruins Trail	Yes	Trail	0.30	132
	31	Stand Four Trail	Yes	Trail	0.19	112
	32	Upper Big Timber	Yes	Road	0.14	14
<b>River Trail</b>						
	33	Daisy Hill Road	Yes	Road	0.27	40
	34	River Trail East	No	Trail	0.90	24
	35	River Trail West	No	Trail	1.78	41
<b>Suicide Ridge</b>						
	36	Clingman's Road	Yes	Road	0.42	54
	37	Cold Springs Trail	No	Trail	0.85	187
	38	MACFaC Trail	No	Trail	0.05	41
	39	Mushroom Farm Road	Yes	Road	0.15	36
	40	Outward Bound Trail	Yes	Trail	0.08	27
	41	Pasture Connector	No	Trail	0.01	3
	42	Soccer Field Trail	Yes	Trail	0.34	34
	43	Suicide Ridge Trail	No	Trail	0.66	201
	44	Warren Wilson College Trail	No	Trail	0.39	166

## Warren Wilson College Trail System Rules

- Stay on designated trails.
- Park in designated areas.
- Keep pets leashed at all times.
- Do not litter.
- Do not disturb livestock.
- Do not enter farm buildings.
- Leave the property as you found it.
- Fires, camping, hunting, trail use after dark, and motor vehicles are all prohibited.



**WARREN  
WILSON  
COLLEGE**

Trail Map and Regulations



David Ellum &lt;dellum@warren-wilson.edu&gt;

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## Letter of appreciation to Warren Wilson College

1 message

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**John Koon** <johnkoonbrac@gmail.com>  
To: David Ellum <dellum@warren-wilson.edu>

Fri, Mar 29, 2024 at 2:04 PM

Blue Ridge Audubon Chapter would like to express its appreciation to Warren Wilson College and Farm for its wonderful stewardship of its land and its continuing devotion to ensure that its lands and inhabitants are conserved and enhanced. The lands under WWC's stewardship—from cultivated fields to open land and from managed forests to preserved riparian habitat—continue to be some of the most attractive habitat in Western North Carolina for resident and migratory birds, with over 200 species of birds being recorded on the farm, including valuable breeding territory for such threatened species as blue grosbeak and eastern meadowlark. This is because of WWC's astute land management, commitment to natural land use and preservation, and restoration of native plant habitats on much of its acreage.

The birding community derives a great benefit from not only the College's judicious conservation policies but also from its open and friendly relationship with the community. Warren Wilson College allows us generous public access to its farm fields, trails and open spaces so that the birding community can enjoy the copious number of bird species that utilize this wonderful habitat, and Blue Ridge Audubon has worked with WWC to develop programs on the campus including guided bird walks and evening programs to educate the public on the need and challenges of land conservation.

Blue Ridge Audubon Chapter considers Warren Wilson College a key partner in Buncombe County in our efforts to protect birds and the places they depend on to survive. We are thrilled with their continuing efforts to conserve the natural habitats on their lands and look forward to continuing to work with them in the future.

Best regards,  
John

John Koon  
President, Blue Ridge Audubon Chapter  
[JohnKoonBRAC@gmail.com](mailto:JohnKoonBRAC@gmail.com)  
[blueridgeaudubon.org](http://blueridgeaudubon.org)



# Ridgecrest Connector

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Town of Black Mountain***

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Anne Phillip  
160 Midland Avenue  
Black Mountain, NC 28711

O: 828-419-9300  
F: 828-669-4204

## ***Anne Phillip***

---

Anne.Phillip@tobm.org  
O: 828-419-9374

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](http://buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](http://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

**Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

**Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County’s County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

**Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

***Project Overview***

---

**Project Name\***

Ridgecrest Connector

**Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Town of Black Mountain

**Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Government

### Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

N/A

### Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

### Improvements

## Scope of Work

### Project Schedule

Potential Ridgecrest Connector Schedule.docx

## *Project Location*

---

### Address\*

The project begins close to 440 US-70 Black Mountain 28711

### Parcel Number

### Acreage

### Zoning Designation

Highway Business and Urban Residential 8

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$705,000.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$880,000.00

## Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$175,000.00

## Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

Feasibility study (MPO and Town of Black Mountain) \$35,000 - funded (study is almost complete)  
 Design and Engineering \$140,000 estimate cost. Town is applying for Great State Trails grant to cover 50% of the cost. The town will provide the additional 50% costs. Pending.

## Project Summary

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond’s goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

The Ridgecrest Connector is a multi-use path that will serve as a critical connection for the Fonta Flora State Trail. The project is available to the public at all times. The requested bond funding will pay for construction. It will increase the quality of life for residents of east Black Mountain by providing opportunities for passive recreation and also support the Town's economic development focused on recreation and the outdoors.

## *Eligibility*

### **Eligibility Summary\***

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

The proposed project is for improvements to excising land. There is no acquisition required.  
 The project is located in Buncombe County. It is within the Town of Black Mountain town limits.  
 The project can be completed with the time allowed by the Bond schedule.  
 The project includes planning for long-term management and maintenance.  
 The project is completely accessible to the public.  
 The Town of Black Mountain is a municipality in eastern Buncombe County.

## *Improvements Narrative*

### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The funding will be utilized for the construction of the Ridgecrest Connector.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education

- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The project aligns with the Open Space Bond's goals by significantly increasing access to recreational activities for residents living on the east side of Black Mountain, an area currently underserved by recreation facilities. The future spur from the Ridgecrest Connector will provide access to the 24-acre "Hemphill property," which is currently part of a feasibility and master planning process. This parcel is designated for recreation and is anticipated to offer hiking trails, mountain biking, and other passive recreation opportunities, operated by the town's parks and recreation department. By providing enhanced access to recreational amenities and promoting the development of passive recreation opportunities.

The project demonstrates a conscientious approach to environmental preservation by avoiding impacts on wetlands and forested areas. Unlike previously proposed projects alignments intruding on floodplains and the removal of trees from established forests. This alignment minimizes disruption to natural resources and infrastructure. By carefully considering the protection of forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, and tree canopy, the project aligns with the conservation and environmental impact criteria outlined in the Open Space Bond guidelines. This approach reflects a commitment to minimizing negative impacts on the natural landscape while and contributes to the protection an of vital ecosystems.

### Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

Yes the project nearby adjacent existing public property, nearly 50 acres that is currently part of feasibility and master planning process. About 24 acres is required to remain park space, but likely will be available for passive recreation.

### How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The construction of a new 2-mile trail in a previously disturbed area within the existing right-of-way will contribute to the conservation of open space and the protection of wildlife. By utilizing an already disturbed area, the project minimizes the potential negative impacts on undisturbed natural habitats. This approach aligns with the goals of the Open Space Bond, as it actively contributes to habitat protection. Additionally, the trail's development in this specific location will not only provide a new passive recreation opportunity but also support the preservation of wildlife habitat and biodiversity. The project's focus on utilizing existing disturbed areas for the trail's construction demonstrates a commitment to minimizing the potential negative impacts of land improvements, while actively contributing to the protection and restoration of natural resources and wildlife habitat

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

The project can measure area of sensitive environments that are being undisturbed in acres as part of the design process.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)*

---

### How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?

Town staff has significant experience in implementation of improvement projects similar to the Ridgecrest Connector and other parks and recreation implements.

### What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

Construction funding is the greatest challenge for this project. The town is confident funding for engineering/design work will be available.

### Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

The feasibility study for the project is almost complete. Staff is also working on securing funding needed for engineering/design work.

### Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

The Active Mobility Commission has reviewed potential alignments during the feasibility study process. NCDOT and the French Broad River MPO have been excellent partners in studying the optimal alignment for the Ridgecrest Connector.

### Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The land needed for this project has been part of e NCDOT right-of-way since US 70 was constructed.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The land utilized in this project is previously disturbed for roadway construction. The soils are compacted. It is mostly flat, but gains some gentle elevation toward to eastern limits of the project the Town limits.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

---

### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

The Ridgecrest Connector is a multiple use path that is accessible by existing road and sidewalk.

### How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

The project is entirely available to the public at all times. It may be temporarily utilized for a special event such as a 5k as part of a special event permit.

### If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The Ridgecrest Connector project provides is directly adjacent to a residential area in Black Mountain. It will increase passive recreation opportunities and enhance connectivity for citizens of Black Mountain, aligns with the goals of the Open Space Bond to promote public health equity. By addressing the undeserved population in the area, where a significant percentage of individuals live below 150% of the poverty level and there is a high prevalence of disability, obesity, and depression, the project can contribute to improving access to passive recreation and fostering community well-being. The emphasis on accessibility and inclusive, as outlined in the Open Space Bond guidelines, supports the project's potential to positively impact public health equity by providing recreational opportunities for a diverse range of community members. Additionally, the project's focus on promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation aligns

with the County's commitment to addressing the needs of underserved populations and enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

### **Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.**

The project will meet all grade, width and ramp requirements in the ADA design. The plans will be approved by NCDOT as part of an encroachment agreement.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)***

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### **How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?**

The project increases the level of parks and recreation service for the residents of east Black Mountain who are currently under served. The project, which aims to provide passive recreation opportunities and enhance connectivity for citizens of Black Mountain, aligns with the goals of the Open Space Bond to promote public health equity. By addressing the underserved population in the area, where a significant percentage of individuals live below 150% of the poverty level.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

There are no existing low-income or senior housing developments in the project area. However, housing may be included in the ongoing feasibility and master plan for the properties donated to the town, and if housing is included it will be close to the project area.

### **What are the historical or cultural features of the land?**

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

### **Describe the community support/involvement in the project.**

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

The Ridgecrest Connector has been called for in multiple planning documents, most recently the town's comprehensive plan, Elevate Black Mountain. Design of the project involved comment from the Active Transportation Committee. Additional community comment was planned, but did not move forward because the corridor was so constrained only one alignment was found to be possible. The community outreach took place during the original planning process when the Ridgecrest Connector was originally included in planning documents. Efforts included community meetings and Active Mobility Commission involvement. It was determined to be a high priority project.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

There are no anticipated negative impacts on the community anticipated in this project, however, open communication with residents of the area will be critical part of the design and construction planning efforts.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

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### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

Town public works department, parks and recreation department, Black Mountain Beautification Committee, and the Black Mountain Trails and Greenways Committee to annually remove invasive species aligns with the goals of the Open Space Bond. The project's focus on invasive species management and conservation efforts demonstrates a commitment to preserving natural resources and protecting the environment. By engaging community-based groups and local government departments in this collaborative effort, the project promotes community involvement in land management and maintenance, as outlined in the Open Space Bond guidelines. This partnership not only contributes to the conservation and restoration of natural habitats but also fosters a sense of environmental stewardship and community engagement. The project's emphasis on addressing invasive species aligns with the conservation and environmental impact criteria of the Bond, showcasing a proactive approach to protecting the natural beauty of Buncombe County and promoting sustainable land management practices. Regarding trash management, the town has an active litter pick-up program through the parks and recreation department, which will be expanded to include the Ridgecrest Connector project. Litter pick-ups are scheduled to take place each spring and fall, demonstrating the town's commitment to maintaining the cleanliness of the area and ensuring a positive recreational experience for residents and visitors.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

Public works staff will maintain the Ridgecrest Connector. The department is lead by Jamey Matthews more than 20 years of experience in the maintenance and management of public facilities.

### Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The Town's Finance Director, Tammy Holland will be responsible for the financial management of the project. Ms. Holland is a certified public finance officer, and has a degree in accounting.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

The Town maintains a capital improvement plan and each budget year includes regular maintenance activities as well.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

As previously stated, multiple Town departments partner with community groups for activities including invasive species removal and litter pick up.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

---

#### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

Project costs were developed by engineers at Kimley Horn who is conducting the feasibility study.

#### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

Additional efforts have been made and are on going other required elements of the project. No other applications are currently pending for construction.

#### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

The project could not move forward with less funding, however, the Town could pursue additional funding opportunities in combination with a partial award to fund the construction of the project.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)***

---

### **How will this project fulfill community needs?**

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

The Ridgecrest Connector project is designed to fulfill various community needs, including recreation, tourism, economic benefit, and public health. By being designated as part of the Fonta Flora State Trail, the project will provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and enhance connectivity for residents who are currently underserved. Additionally, the planned spur from the Ridgecrest Connector to the Town-owned property, which is being master planned for recreation facilities including hiking and mountain biking, aligns with the goals of the Black Mountain outdoor economic development plan. This alignment with the economic development plan is expected to benefit the community by promoting outdoor recreational activities, potentially boosting tourism, and contributing to the local economy. Overall, the project is positioned to address multiple community needs by providing enhanced recreational opportunities, promoting economic development, and supporting public health and well-being.

### **Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?**

If yes, which goals are impacted?

The project is called for in Buncombe County's master greenway plan and it will be dedicated as part of the Fonta Flora State Trail. NCDOT has recent awarded the FFTS funding to conduct a feasibility study to determine how to bring the trail from Point Lookout to the eastern Town limit which will connect with the Ridgecrest Connector.

### **Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?**

Yes

### **If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.**

Jessica Trotman, Planning and Development Services, [jessica.trotman@tobm.org](mailto:jessica.trotman@tobm.org)

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

The project will be designed by professional engineers with community input to address safety concerns.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

The original construction materials and methods are designed to be durable and long lasting. Public Work department will repair and/or remove any damage that may result from vandalism if it occurs.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

The design for the Ridgecrest Connector accommodate a variety of users of all ages and abilities.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

Once completed, the Town will include branded signage for the project and eventually Fonta Flora State Trail. It will have directional signing to town when a spur is constructed to the Hemphill recreational facilities, directional signs will be included for it as well. Information about the projecting maps, will be included on the Town's website an available in a printed the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center and other public locations in Black Mountain.

## ***Applicant Experience***

---

### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

The Town of Black Mountain has significant experience developing trails and passive recreation efforts. The Town's general fund continues to grow and the Town can afford to maintain the facility once complete. Key staff for the project include:

Jessica Trotman, Planning Director/Asst. Town Manager

Josh Henderson, Parks & Recreation Director

Tammy Holland, Finance Director

Angela Reece, Project Manage

**Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

The Town has developed and maintenance passive recreation facilities including parks and greenways. The Town has integrated significant stream and river restoration projects in Town parks including the Swannanoa River at Veteran's Park. Additional river work is currently being design as park of a 5 million dollar project on the Swannanoa River on undeveloped town property that is currently part of feasibility and master planning efforts. The proposed project will connect to these properties with a spur.

**Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.**

The Town of Black Mountain has robust planning, parks and recreation, and public works departments with significant experience developing, funding and implementing projects similar to the Ridgecrest Connector.

**Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)****Resumes of Key Staff**

Josh Henderson Resume.pdf

***Budget***

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**Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.**

The budget document shows estimated costs for design and construction costs. The feasibility study is not included.

**Project Budget**

Ridgecrest Connector OPCC.pdf

***Additional Documentation***

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**Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

R-24-09\_Resolution to Apply for Funding through Buncombe County Open Space Bond for Construction of Ridgecrest Connector Trail multi-use path.pdf

## **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

admin.scans@townofblackmountain.org\_20240328\_143315.pdf

## **Project Photos and Illustrations**

black-mtn-typical-ex c&g.pdf

## **Letters of Support**

## **Other Documentation**

admin.scans@townofblackmountain.org\_20240328\_143315.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Potential Ridgecrest Connector Schedule.docx
- Josh Henderson Resume.pdf
- Ridgecrest Connector OPCC.pdf
- R-24-09\_Resolution to Apply for Funding through Buncombe County Open Space Bond for Construction of Ridgecrest Connector Trail multi-use path.pdf
- admin.scans@townofblackmountain.org\_20240328\_143315.pdf
- black-mtn-typical-ex c&g.pdf
- admin.scans@townofblackmountain.org\_20240328\_143315.pdf

## Potential Ridgecrest Connector Schedule

Feasibility Study – Complete May 2024

Design and Engineering – Early 2025

Construction – Late 2025

# Joshua K. Henderson, CPRP, CPO

704.616.7017 | Asheville, NC | [henderson.joshuak@gmail.com](mailto:henderson.joshuak@gmail.com) | [LinkedIn](#)

## CAREER SUMMARY

- **Executive Recreation Leader** with focused experience in leading and developing programs, performance acceleration, and leading teams to drive operational success while executing growth, optimization, and detailed project management
- **Inspirational, transformational, and influential leader** with current oversight of 4 full time professions and 40+ part time/seasonal staff
- **Currently manage a \$1M+ annual budget** while focusing on a \$422K grant, using expertise in grant funds administration and growth strategies to ensure proper utilization of funds
- **Multifaceted background** in recreation management, mentoring, teaching, 1-on-1 mentorship, as well as advanced training and development to influence operational optimization, growth, and program delivery

## CORE COMPETENCIES

- Recreation Leadership
- Project & Program Management
- Coaching & Mentorship
- Training & Development
- Cross-Functional & Executive Collaboration
- Budget Management
- Event Coordination
- Community Involved Initiatives
- Relationship Building
- Process Improvements
- Reporting & Analytics
- Vendor Management

## PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

### **TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN – BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC**

#### **Recreation Director**

**2018 – Current**

- Oversee, manage, and mentor 4 full time professions and 40+ part time/seasonal staff, transforming the business from the ground up while focusing on planning, organizing, promoting, and executing town-wide parks and recreation programs
- Responsible for managing \$1M annual budget while focusing on employee performance, project management, and optimizing department policies to be cohesive and streamlines
- Influential to staff training and growth development programs, as well as growing volunteer staff through exceptional management, retention, and growth strategies
- Integral to the grant application process, including Park & Land Acquisition/Development projects, managing a \$422K grant from end-to-end to ensure proper administration of funds
- Spearhead the development and analysis of capital improvement projects for parks, recreation facilities, greenways, and public lands each budget year by establishing a CIP Plan, including looking at facilities and amenities, getting quotes, and turning it into the town manager for the improvement projects to be voted on
- Serves as a liaison between educational institutions, non profit groups, community organizations and public entities, including partnering up with nonprofits by donating portion of revenue of events to the organization and gaining promotions as a trade off
- Control and effectively delegate expenditures of appropriate funds while preparing detailed reports and maintaining records

### **GASTON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION – DALLAS, NC**

#### **Marketing & Special Event Coordinator**

**2016 – 2018**

- Led and coached a team of 10 part time employees and interns while focusing on designing and implementing large and small scale community special events and programs, utilizing strategic leadership and marketing to drive operational efficiencies
- Executed detailed marketing strategies and managed promotional efforts, securing sponsorship packages, donations, grants, and funding for events and programs due to community-focused leadership and interaction
- Responsible for managing content on department web pages and social media accounts, accelerating participation and awareness
- Made influential recommendations concerning events budget and request funds for the upcoming fiscal year, providing detailed analyses to ensure spending is on track and help influence cost-savings through vendor management

## **CROWDERS RIDGE CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER – GASTONIA, NC**

### ***Aquatics Director***

**2015 – 2016**

- Responsible for hiring, supervising, and mentoring 12 lifeguards while focusing on the oversight of all aspects of the waterfront including swimming, water slides, blob, and boating
- Developed and implemented safety and emergency procedures, ensuring a safe environment for participants and following all processes and procedures
- Provided in-service training sessions for all waterfront staff throughout the summer, ensuring a new vertical of revenue generating opportunities and executing throughout the facilitation of camp-wide programs

## **NORTH GASTON HIGH SCHOOL – DALLAS, NC**

### ***Teacher's Assistant for Exceptional Children***

**2013 – 2016**

- Utilized leadership and advanced training to serve as a 1-on-1 with a student with a developmental disability, including assisting the teacher with administrative tasks pertaining to the curriculum and tutoring as needed
- Developed effective working relationships with students, teachers, administrators, and parents

## **REVOLUTION CHURCH – GASTONIA, NC**

### ***Student Services Director***

**2011 – 2015**

- Assisted in the growth and development of 60+ students and parents while managing a \$10K budget and providing oversight for a 16-member adult leadership team
- Led, planned, and organized events for middle and high school level students, focusing on maintaining a positive and healthy environment for students and establishing key relationships with local middle and high schools
- Organized and developed fundraising initiatives to influence growth and revenue while staying consistent with the budget

## **ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**

### **APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY – BOONE, NC**

#### ***Student Conduct Counselor, Office of Student Conduct***

### **GRAVATT CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER – AIKEN, SC**

#### ***Waterfront Director***

## **EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY - BOONE, NC**

***Master of Arts in College Student Development Concentration: Student Affairs Practice***

***Bachelor of Science in Recreation Management / Concentration: Recreation and Park Management,***

***Minor: Psychology***

**CERTIFIED PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONAL**

**EFFECTIVE SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL**

**GRANT WRITING CERTIFICATE**

**CERTIFIED POOL OPERATOR**

**Opinion of Probable Construction Cost  
Feasibility**

**PROJECT:** Ridgecrest Trail Connector  
**NUMBER:** 016490001  
**EST. BY:** John Moore  
**CHECK BY:** Alex McIntyre

**DATE:** 3/8/2024

Item#	Section	Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Amount
1	800	Mobilization	1	LS	\$78,000.00	\$78,000.00
2	SP	Comprehensive Grading	1	LS	\$58,000.00	\$58,000.00
3	520	Aggregate Base Course	1236	TON	\$55.00	\$67,956.23
4	610	Asphalt Conc Surface Course, Type S9.5C	366	TON	\$200.00	\$73,290.00
5	620	Asphalt Binder for Plant Mix	22	TON	\$875.00	\$18,917.98
6	848	4" Concrete Multi-Use Path	791	SY	\$60.00	\$47,439.00
7	848	Concrete Curb Ramps	15	EA	\$4,000.00	\$60,000.00
8	846	6" X 12" Concrete Curb	21	LF	\$40.00	\$840.00
9	852	6" Monolithic Concrete Median (Surface-Mounted)	385	SY	\$140.00	\$53,949.00
10	1515	Relocate Existing Fire Hydrant	1	EA	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
11	310	Storm Drainage	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
12	SP	Traffic Control	1	LS	\$51,000.00	\$51,000.00

Subtotal	\$521,892.21
Construction Contingency (35%)	\$182,662.27
Engineer's Estimate	\$704,554.48
SAY	<b>\$705,000.00</b>

1. Unit costs used in this cost opinion are representative of typical market costs as best known to the Consultant as of the date of this estimate, and do not account for inflationary cost escalation.

2. Quantities used in this cost opinion are approximations based on the Conceptual Exhibit exhibit provided by Kimley-Horn dated 03-08-24 and are subject to revision prior to bid.

3. The Engineer has no control over the cost of labor, materials, or equipment, or over the Contractor's methods of determining prices or over competitive bidding or market conditions. Opinions of probable costs, as provided here, are made on the basis of the Engineer's experience and qualifications and represent the Engineer's judgment as a design professional familiar with the construction industry. The Engineer cannot and does not guarantee that proposals, bids, or actual construction costs will not vary from opinions of probable cost prepared for the Owner.

*Council Member Alice Berry made a motion to approve the following resolution. A vote of 4-0 in favor. Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller was absent.*

**RESOLUTION TO PURSUE A PASSIVE RECREATION LANDS GRANT  
THROUGH BUNCOMBE COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOND**

*Resolution #R-24-09*

**WHEREAS**, in November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved an Open Space Bond; and

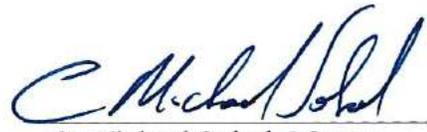
**WHEREAS**, the Open Space Bond is a funding project that will increase conservation of lands, construction of greenways, and development of passive recreation lands; and

**WHEREAS**, the goals of the Open Space Bond are to preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of live for its residents, and improve access to recreational activities in the area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Black Mountain will apply for a Passive Recreation Lands grant through the Buncombe County Open Space Bond for the construction of the Ridgecrest Connector Trail multi-use path.

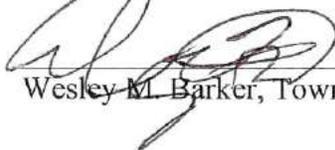
**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Black Mountain Town Council bless Town staff to apply for funding through the Buncombe County Open Space Bond for construction of the Ridgecrest Connector Trail multi-use path.

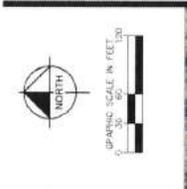
**READ, APPROVED AND ADOPTED**, by a vote of 4 to 0 on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.



C. Michael Sobol, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk



**Ridgecrest Trail Connector Concept Plan**

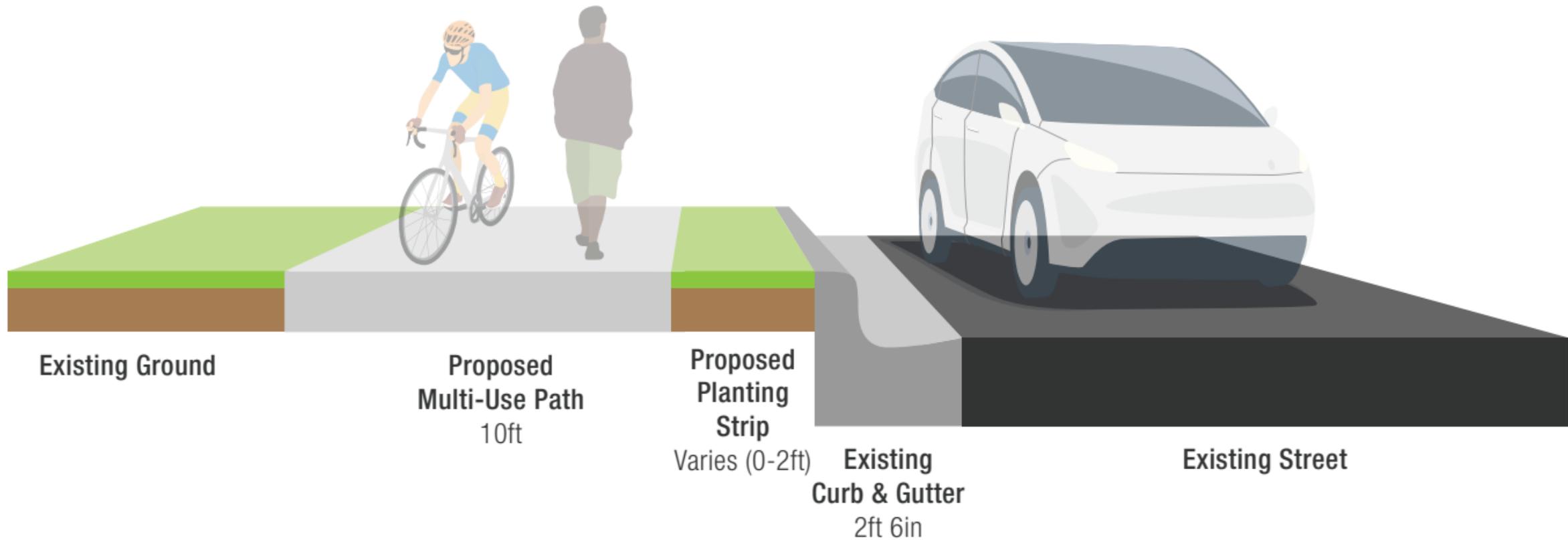
DATE: 03-08-2024

SHEET 2 OF 2

**Kimley»Horn**

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER  
2018 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2019 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2020 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2021 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2022 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2023 LICENSE NO. 10001  
2024 LICENSE NO. 10001

THIS DOCUMENT IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. THE USER SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED HEREIN. THE USER SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES. THE USER SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES. THE USER SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.



Existing Ground

Proposed  
Multi-Use Path  
10ft

Proposed  
Planting  
Strip  
Varies (0-2ft)

Existing  
Curb & Gutter  
2ft 6in

Existing Street



# Riverside Park Improvement

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Town of Woodfin***

---

Shannon Tuch  
90 Elk Mountain Road  
Woodfin, NC 28804

SPowers@Woodfin-NC.gov  
O: (828) 253-4887

## ***Richard Amory***

---

240 Sugar Creek Rd  
Weaverville, NC 28787

richamory1@gmail.com  
O: 8285139621  
M: 8285139621

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Riverside Park Improvement

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Town of Woodfin

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Government

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Improvements

## Scope of Work

Woodfin Riverside Park\_Open Space Bond Project Scope of Work.pdf

## Project Schedule

Woodfin Riverside Park\_Open Space Bond Project Schedule.docx.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

1476 Riverside Dr. Woodfin, NC 28804    1630 Riverside Dr. Woodfin, NC 28804

### Parcel Number

9730-04-5547, 9730-04-4117, 9730-03-2884, 9730-03-1357

### Acreage

8

### Zoning Designation

The entire Riverside Park is made up of four contiguous parcels. The original park consists of the northern 3 parcels at 5.07 acres, all zoned Transitional District (IDs listed above). The 3.35-acre expansion parcel is zoned Community Shopping.

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$3,368,660.00

**Total Project Cost\***

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$12,045,315.00

**Non-Bond Funding**

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$8,676,655.00

**Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.**

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

Secured:

- Woodfin GO bonds proceeds & General Fund contribution\* - \$673,583
- 2017 Buncombe County TDA TPDF grant - \$740,000
- 2022 Buncombe County TDA TPDF grant - \$5,890,000
- Land and Water Conservation Fund grant (NPS) - \$498,928
- Riverlink - community contributions - \$234,144
- CFWNC Pigeon River Fund grant - \$35,000
- NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant - \$400,000
- Water Resources Development grant - \$200,000
- Duke Energy grant - \$5,000

Total - \$8,676,655

\* An additional \$2,042,670 from Woodfin GO bonds and General Fund contributions are used for land acquisition, design and engineering, and project overhead costs.

Pending:

- Golden Leaf Foundation - \$1,136,994

## *Project Summary*

### **Project Summary Narrative.**

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

Riverside Park was Woodfin's first park on the French Broad River. A beloved community resource for more than twenty years, it is now the centerpiece of the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway (WGB), which will establish a regional outdoor recreation destination in Western North Carolina. The WGB plan includes 5 miles of new greenways connecting Silver-Line and Riverside Parks in Woodfin and beyond to Asheville, an in-stream whitewater feature ("Taylor's Wave") adjacent to an expanded Riverside Park, and riparian conservation measures.

The final steps in WGB park construction include: 1) improvement of the existing facilities at Riverside Park; 2) enhancements to user experiences in the expansion area; and 3) a passive river user/aquatic life channel bypassing Taylor's Wave. As the only components not yet fully funded, these improvements align perfectly with the Open Space Bond's goals. Today, Riverside Park is primarily used by Woodfin residents for walking, jogging, fishing and picnicking. It is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty (U.S. DOT) and its tables, benches, walking paths and other amenities are overdue for renovation.

Open Space Bond funding would support passive recreation infrastructure throughout the park; the Taylor's Wave bypass; and measures to control flooding, preserve water quality and restore native flora. These improvements will enhance the quality of life for Woodfin's diverse population and protect a vital natural resource.

## *Eligibility*

### **Eligibility Summary\***

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

The Town of Woodfin is located in central Buncombe County and was incorporated in 1971. The Town proposes to use Open Space Bond funds to improve Riverside Park—a passive recreation site that has been heavily utilized by the local community for over twenty years. All park improvements are projected for completion by May 2026, well within the Bond schedule. It is a major component of the larger Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project, which began with the development of Silver-Line Park, located 1.4 miles upstream of Riverside Park. The Town’s successful completion of Silver-Line Park in 2022, and the protocols it has put in place to maintain that model facility, demonstrate Woodfin’s capacity and commitment to stewarding these resources for long-term community benefit.

## *Improvements Narrative*

### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Open Space Bond funding would support long-term passive recreation at Riverside Park through the following improvements:

- 1) Site grading and preparation—limbing existing vegetation, invasive removal, tree protection measures, earthwork, fine grading, erosion control and riverbank stabilization.
- 2) Paving and circulation throughout the entire park—existing parking lot rebuild with traffic calming markers, wheel stops, and guardrails; pedestrian plaza at the expansion site; base concrete for vertical structures; and natural surface trails.
- 3) Site elements—picnic and bistro tables; benches, swings, bike racks, trash/recycling containers and water fountain; seating walls at the expansion site, riverbank boulder toe wall, and retaining walls; playground with slide, tightrope, and boulder scramble; entrance, accessibility, and traffic signage; and interpretive, educational, and historical signage.
- 4) Exterior cladding and roofing rebuild to existing bathroom.
- 5) Utilities, stormwater management and drainage—water, sewer, and electrical services for the entire park; food truck connections near the pedestrian plaza; interior lighting for vertical structures; bioretention swales and wetlands.
- 6) Park plantings, including riverbank restoration.
- 7) Aquatic life and recreational boating bypass—An alternative to navigating Taylor’s Wave. Bond funds would be used only for the bypass channel, which represents 20% of the wave structure.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)

- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The project will:

1) Improve surface water quality through extensive erosion control measures and stormwater management. A bioretention treatment swale and bioretention areas in the parking lot and two other areas will mitigate the effect of the trails, parking area and other hard surfaces by slowing the flow of water and filtering pollutants, including sediment, a major stressor on water quality. The river bank will be stabilized with native plantings and boulder groupings.

2) Enhance fish and wildlife habitats by: preserving a forested area in the center of the park, which supports multiple species of summer roosting bats as they use the river corridor for flight and forage; and cleaning up the expansion area—a former landfill—by removing fill materials, restoring it to natural grade and replanting it with native species. The selected vegetation includes canopy and understory trees, shrubs, and a variety of herbs, forbs, and grasses that can thrive in the diverse conditions of the site.

3) Expand public access to the water by constructing a boulder scramble, multiple boulder toewall segments, and native plantings to stabilize the bank and protect the beach access areas.

4) Provide passage for aquatic life through a bypass channel.

5) Increase citizens' awareness about their roles in protecting these resources by designing and installing 6-7 English-Spanish interpretive/educational signs exploring the history of the French Broad and the ecology of the site.

### **Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).**

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

n/a

### **How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?**

Stakeholder feedback during the Riverside Park master planning process in 2020 identified habitat creation as the 2nd highest-rated goal for the park, after connectivity to the greenway. The project's design firm Equinox Environmental will coordinate with partners, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to develop six to seven English-Spanish interpretive signs highlighting the ecology of the river and the environmental value of the park.

It is well-documented that communities that connect more directly with water resources become much better environmental stewards. Western North Carolina’s leading environmental river-oriented advocacy groups– RiverLink, French Broad Riverkeeper, and Mountain True–have all deeply embraced and supported this project since conceptualization.

The dynamic interaction of water and rock has, over millions of years, shaped the Southern Appalachian region and made it home to over 10,000 species of flora and fauna. It is recognized as one of the most biodiverse places on Earth. The new and expanded Riverside Park will connect the public to this story, allowing residents, students, and visitors to walk the path of the French Broad River through time. Educating ourselves about how the river has shaped our region will inevitably shed more light on the importance of protecting our rivers today. It will be a space that brings the community together to learn about the forces of nature that have influenced and inspired us to call this place home.

### **How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?**

- 1) Improving water quality – Completion of streambank stabilization work, restoration of riparian buffers with native plantings and other erosion control measures will serve as evidence of reduced sedimentation and improved water quality.
- 2) Mitigating flooding - Removing a significant amount of fill material will increase flood storage on site, resulting in positive changes in the flood boundaries, which reduces flood risks for public infrastructure and adjacent private property, including structures.
- 2) Enhancing fish and wildlife management and habitats – The preservation of a forested area in the center of the park, and the transformation of the expansion area (the former Waste Pro site) through cleanup, regrading and native plantings will serve as evidence of enhanced habitat.
- 3) Expanding public access – Greater numbers of residents and visitors will access the river at Riverside Park. The Town of Woodfin will conduct periodic park usage studies, including point-in-time head counts, using Town staff and community volunteers.
- 4) Increasing citizens’ awareness about their roles in protecting these resources – Visitors to Riverside Park will learn about the natural history of the French Broad River, the riparian ecology of the area and choices they can make to help conserve it for future generations. The Town will consider engaging the Park’s neighbor, French Broad River Academy, to conduct informal surveys of park users, as it did previously at Silver Line Park.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

The Woodfin Greenway & Blueway is a set of linked projects that require sustained coordination among a team of public and private stakeholders, community advocates and technical experts. The plan has gained high visibility and captured the imagination of a growing circle of supporters–and it has also already made significant progress.

The successful completion of Silver-Line Park was the first phase of the project and the first test of this partnership's effectiveness. A \$2.25 million Buncombe County TDA Tourism Product Development Fund grant in 2017 was essential to that early "win." We celebrated Silver-Line's grand opening on April 21, 2022 with a very well-attended community event. Many of its green infrastructure elements, including flood-preventing wetlands, are carried over in the design of Riverside Park.

The project is highly accountable to Woodfin voters, who demonstrated their intention to conserve and enjoy the French Broad River back in 2016, when 71% approved a \$4.5 million bond referendum that helped launch the WGB. This was an almost unheard-of commitment for a town of Woodfin's size.

The improvement of the existing five acres of Riverside Park, in particular, may be the most modest element of the WGB vision but it is the element nearest to the heart of the Woodfin community, who already know and rely on that shared space. Funding for its careful renovation and environmental stewardship is the final piece needed to complete the WGB's two anchor parks.

### What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

One lesson learned through the Silver-Line experience, which we have applied to Riverside Park, is to coordinate with permitting agencies earlier in the process. For Silver-Line, we chose to secure permits post-design in order to accelerate construction in the wake of pandemic-related work stoppages and supply chain issues. This resulted in an expanded scope of construction and additional delays. For Riverside Park, all permits, other than the floodplain permit (Buncombe County), are already in hand.

A greater number and complexity of variables at Riverside Park and the Wave site introduce more unknowns regarding endangered species, marine habitat considerations, and construction in the riverbed. To mitigate risk, the design team built a physical model of Taylor's Wave and aquatic life bypass channel in August 2023. This investment yielded valuable data to inform the final design. The logistics of riverbed construction require us to first complete the environmental remediation and site preparation work at Riverside Park. This will provide a staging area for Wave construction, which will involve use of a cofferdam.

Our analysis of 20 years of hydrological data is guiding our timing of this phase to coincide with the months of lowest water flow. If, however, a high water event were to occur during Wave construction—and compromise the cofferdam—it could delay completion of that phase and the subsequent land-based improvements that are the focus of this funding request.

### Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

At the time of application, the Town has solicited a second round of bids for construction of Riverside Park and Taylor's Wave during March 2024. We anticipate awarding the contract to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder in May 2024. The first round of bidding in January 2024 yielded bids exceeding available

funding. To keep the project moving, the Town opted to re-bid the base project with optional elements, for which funding might be secured as construction begins.

**Timeline for Completion** - The Town is requesting a detailed construction schedule from all bidders. In anticipation of this definitive schedule, we estimate a construction period of 18 - 24 months, from June 2024 to May 2026.

**Timeline for Public Use/Access** - Construction of Taylor's Wave will occur early in the timeline, in 2024. Once complete, river users may put in/take out either upstream or downstream of the whitewater and bypass channels. Fishing downstream of the Wave in the French Broad River, or from the riverbank in the existing Riverside Park, will be minimally impacted during most of the construction period. Public access to the improved Riverside Park will follow immediately after construction is complete, estimated May 2026.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

The WGB partner organizations in this unique collaboration are listed below, along with their roles and key team members.

The Town of Woodfin team—responsible for parks development, project management, strategy and community engagement—consists of Mayor Jim McAllister and the Town Council, Town Manager Shannon Tuch, Project and Facilities Director Adrienne Isenhower, Grant Writing Consultant Rich Amory, Special Projects Consultant Eric Hardy, and Strategic Advisor Marc Hunt.

The Buncombe County Government team—responsible for greenway development, project management, strategy and community engagement—consists of Chairman Brownie Newman and the County Commission, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Tim Love, County Manager Avril Pinder, and Recreation Services Director Allison Dains.

RiverLink, the strategic fundraising partner, is represented by Executive Director Lisa Raleigh.

Equinox Environmental—responsible for Riverside Park and Silver-Line Park designs, environmental assessment and project consulting—is represented by David Tuch, Principal, who serves as the project's primary liaison.

HNTB, Inc., greenway designer, is represented by Jeff Hess.

S2O Design and Engineering, designer of Taylor's Wave, is represented by Scott Shipley, Principal and Lead Designer.

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

The existing 5-acre park is on land acquired by the Town in 1998. It contains a parking lot, pavilion, picnic tables, asphalt walking paths that circumnavigate the property, rock steps that provide access to the river, and a small footbridge that crosses a stream to the north. The 3.35-acre expansion area was most recently used for storage of trash and recycling containers by Waste Pro. The majority of the project site is within the French Broad River's floodplain, though the Waste Pro portion has been altered more significantly. The site was elevated over decades with landfill material and about 70% is paved with concrete. The concrete is cracked and deteriorating, which may in part be due to the settling of fill as deep as 15 feet.

The Craggy Mountain Line, now an historic recreational railway, runs parallel to the planned greenway and borders Riverside Park. In addition to carrying freight along the river during the height of manufacturing a century ago, this rail line was also used to transport workers to and from neighboring mills.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

This project requires the excavation, removal and proper disposal of 23,869 cubic yards of landfill materials from the 3.35-acre expansion area at the south end of Riverside Park—a large and sensitive operation.

The potential presence of endangered species in the park has been an important consideration. The primary land-based concern of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the gray bat. In response, we are now conserving all trees 5" or greater in diameter, so they can be used by gray bats and northern long-eared bats during summer foraging and roosting. This will reduce the project's impact on trees by 70% from the original design.

To satisfy Section 7 formal consultation under the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the lead Federal agency for the water-based project elements, requested a survey of the study area for endangered Appalachian elktoe mussels. No mussels were found and the overall mussel habitat was found to be limited and of marginal quality. USFWS used the survey data, project designs and engineering drawings to author a Biological Opinion that the proposed actions will result in a "May Affect- Not Likely to Adversely Affect" determination for Appalachian elktoe, thereby satisfying Section 7 ESA formal consultation. The USACE completed a Statement of Findings & Environmental Assessment which led to a Finding of No Significant Impact.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

Riverside Park is currently accessible by Riverside Dr. (NC 251) and the French Broad River. The 5 miles of greenway planned to run the length of the river within Woodfin, and link Silver-Line and Riverside Parks, will connect to greenways being developed by the City of Asheville to the south. Connecting the WGB to the recently completed greenway in Asheville's River Arts District will be a multi-use path to be constructed by the NC Department of Transportation in conjunction with the I-26 Connector project, as well as a parallel greenway trail on the river's edge planned by the City of Asheville. Within about 5 years, once all currently-planned greenways are complete, our region will offer a continuous network of more than 20 miles in the

French Broad River corridor from Asheville through Woodfin, allowing access to Riverside Park by foot and bike.

In addition, there is strong potential for synergy between WGB and the existing Craggy Mountain Line, and our intention is that both Silver-Line Park and Riverside Park will accommodate Craggy Mountain Line guests disembarking to enjoy the riverfront facilities and view.

## How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

All outdoor project components will be open and available to the public all day long, 365 days per year. Amenities will include parking, drinking fountains, tables and benches, and river access. Restrooms and changing rooms will be closed during the winter. There is no charge to use facilities on an informal, first-come, first-served basis. However, it will be possible to reserve the pavilion at a modest fee of \$33 for 3 hours.

## If the project is in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The River Walk and Cityview neighborhoods directly adjacent to the park across Riverside Drive are newer single-family home developments. At the moment, there are no protected crossings from these neighborhoods to the park but town leadership has been discussing options with the NCDOT and expect more detailed recommendations with the town's new bike and pedestrian plan, which is currently in development. A large residential area across the river, generally referred to as West Woodfin, is also in very close proximity to the park and will have a protected sidewalk on the new Craggy Bridge that will allow pedestrians to cross over the river safely and directly into the park. The WGB's five-mile greenway will connect many neighborhoods and users from outlying areas directly to the park.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

All proposed facilities, from the parking areas to trails to seating areas and the boat ramp, are designed in full compliance with the ADA and ABA. This includes all minimum required dimensions, features and specifications. The grand staircase in the expansion area is designed with an integrated ADA-compliant ramp and a ramp from the upper parking lot to the beach is also ADA-compliant.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)***

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### **How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?**

Public parks and greenways are shared assets that can help mitigate income-based disparities in health and quality of life. The WGB will offer Woodfin residents greater access to the French Broad River and connectivity to school, work and other resources. However, access to green spaces increases property values and can drive up housing costs, resulting in gentrification and even greater inequity. The Town of Woodfin and our WGB project partners are sensitive to the inherent risks of public investments of this type and to the concerns of the “just green enough” movement, which argues against over-investment in green amenities at the expense of other equity-focused interventions. We are committed to balancing our efforts to improve Woodfin’s environment, quality of life and economy with support for policies and programs that will ensure the availability of affordable housing in the Town and will engage our most vulnerable populations.

We list related action steps in our response to “How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?” below. These types of collaboration with community non-profit partners—linked to potential capital investments—could add much-needed services for our lower-income and underserved populations. This and other related town initiatives that are early in the planning process are seeking to rebalance community resources and offset potential gentrifying impacts of more recent investments and new construction.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

Woodfin is an historically blue-collar community with remnants of what was once a strong manufacturing economy, based on the river. Places like it, located at the industrial edges of urbanized areas, are often less likely to offer opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation and safe multi-modal transportation options. They are also more likely to suffer from environmental inequities, like the dumping of waste materials.

Woodfin’s population of 7,936 (as of 2020) is relatively more diverse and economically disadvantaged than Buncombe County overall. The share of residents identifying as Hispanic is nearly twice as large in Woodfin as in the County (12.9% vs. 6.8%). Other indicators include those lacking college degrees (63% vs. 58.6%) and those without health insurance (21.4% vs. 14.6%). The foreign-born population is 8.7%, compared to the 6% foreign-born in Buncombe County and 7.3% in Asheville. Woodfin’s poverty rate of 20.9% is significantly higher than the County’s 13.9% rate and its median household income of \$50,794 is 8% lower than the County median.

While Taylor’s Wave, and the related amenities planned for Riverside Park’s expansion area, promise to drive significant regional tourism to Woodfin, the improvement of the existing park will be of primary benefit to Woodfin residents and their well-established passive recreation needs.

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

A new senior housing community was approved in May 2023 and is currently in review for construction permits. Once complete, this project will add 152 senior housing units to Woodfin. Also recently approved and adjacent to the senior housing project is a new 120-unit affordable housing project that will be deed restricted to be affordable to those households earning at or below 60% of the Area Median Income. Both of these new projects are just down the street from an existing Mountain Housing Opportunities apartment development, Northpoint Commons. All three communities are located approximately 2 miles from Riverside Park. Also worth noting is that the West Woodfin community directly across the river from Riverside Park is

a low-wealth area characterized by individually owned manufactured homes on private septic systems and wells. While not officially classified as an affordable housing community, the area west of the river has an ad valorem value of approximately 50% of the town's average.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The cultural history of this stretch of the French Broad is primarily related to manufacturing, rail transport, and travel. An historic plaque will interpret the history of the railroad that used to pass over the river at this site. Remnants of bridge pilings remain at the river's edge on the northwest corner of the property. These are safety hazards for river users and animals due to the sharp protruding metal and potential for entrapment. A review by the State Historical Preservation Office found no cause for protected status, allowing the project to remove the piles.

The historic Craggy Mountain Line's proximity to the WGB offers a significant growth opportunity for a unique tour experience currently available by special charter only, or for the possible re-purposing of the existing rail infrastructure for other transportation needs.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

Riverside Park planning began in October 2019, when the Town of Woodfin and Equinox organized a Steering Advisory Committee (SAC) to guide the process and coordinate the efforts of stakeholders, including the Town, Buncombe County and RiverLink. Equinox held its first meeting with the SAC on November 7, 2019 to develop the vision, goals, and program elements for the Riverside Park Expansion Master Plan. Selection of the program elements was based on support and input from previous public meetings for the WGB.

Once initial concepts were developed, the SAC provided comments in a meeting on January 9, 2020. The Town approved the first draft Master Plan on July 20, 2020. In August 2020, the plan was presented online along with a public survey to gather input on design, project elements, phasing and programming. The Woodfin Town Commissioners adopted a revised Master Plan on April 20, 2021. Public engagement continued in the summer of 2021, when the community was invited to a public forum to comment on planned park amenities. A second companion public survey drew nearly 700 responses.

More recently, the Town completed a comprehensive planning process that included targeted outreach and engagement of Woodfin's underserved, underrepresented residents. This work—filtered through an equity lens—will help guide future actions regarding services, public safety, economic opportunity, health and wellness, growth and development. Action steps are detailed in the following response.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

Action steps resulting from the planning process referenced above include:

- In-kind and volunteer support for the monthly Woodfin Community Market, which provides food and other essentials to low-income neighbors at the Woodfin Community Center, through a partnership with Catholic Charities and MANNA.
- Adoption of a Resolution committing up to \$200,000 to the Asheville Buncombe Community Land Trust to secure affordable housing in Woodfin.
- Initiation of the Community Partner Grant Program that issues grants to local non-profits or other organizations working to meet community needs. Current recipients include: RiverLink - bringing experiential outdoor education focused on the French Broad River to Woodfin Elementary School, where approximately half of the student body are children of color; Catholic Charities - funding the purchase of non-food hygiene items (i.e. diapers, soap, toothbrushes) for the Woodfin Community Market; and Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry - providing emergency assistance to low-income residents experiencing crisis events.
- A feasibility study that looks at the redevelopment of the Woodfin Town Hall property to include community event and meeting space, along with separate building space for other community service providers (e.g. early education).
- A comprehensive update to the town's manufactured housing standards that would expand options for new manufactured housing and discourage displacement of existing communities.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)***

### **What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?**

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

All aspects of the project fall within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation system for the Town of Woodfin. The Woodfin Town Council is planning accordingly. Once Riverside Park is under construction in 2025, the Town will hire a full-time staff member to manage WGB maintenance .

With Silver-Line Park, the Town developed an inspection checklist and task table (see attached to "Riverside Park Maintenance and Management Plan"). It will develop similar documents for Riverside Park as part of a long-term maintenance and facilities plan that is budgeted for Fiscal Year 2025, coinciding with improvements to the existing 5.07-acre park and construction on the 3.35-acre expansion area.

Also influencing this plan will be the recommendations from the Town's Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave Event Management Task Force. This group completed its work earlier this year, focusing on river safety, event and traffic management, and general park use and maintenance.

Inspection and action items will include:

- Invasive species management, in both the constructed wetlands and along the riverbanks;
- Regular landscape maintenance (trimming, mowing, replanting);
- A regular schedule for solid waste and recycling collection and clean-up (with extra pick-ups scheduled for busy weekends);
- Cleaning of public restrooms (a task to be shared by Town staff and a private contractor); and
- Litter clean-up along greenway, trails, walkways and other common areas.

## Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

A WGB maintenance worker, to be hired in 2025, will be dedicated to physical upkeep of the park. This individual will work under the direction and supervision of the town's Project and Facilities Director who, along with the support of the Finance Director and Town Manager, will oversee the long-term care, planning, and use of the park.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

Sheri D. Powers, Woodfin's Finance and Budget Director since 2021, will be responsible for managing project finances. Ms. Powers has thirty years of experience in various aspects of government finance, with the last twenty dedicated to positions in the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and the Town of Woodfin. She also has an extensive record of community service through board and committee work for a range of nonprofit organizations.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

Annual operations and maintenance are estimated at \$45,000, once the entire Woodfin Greenway & Blueway is constructed. Full operations and maintenance funding will be incorporated into the Town's annual budget from its general fund, with revenues to the general fund deriving primarily from property taxes.

As stated above, maintenance and management protocols established for Silver-Line Park will guide the development of similar documents for Riverside Park.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Community members and partner organizations will contribute significantly to the care and maintenance of this shared resource. The Town will recruit and train a group of volunteer park ambassadors, who will be present in Riverside Park on a regular weekly schedule, covering summer evening and weekend hours. The ambassadors will monitor park usage, serve as a resource to users, and identify safety and maintenance concerns to share with Town staff. Additionally, the Town will work with local education and non-profit organizations on routine landscape and facility maintenance that aligns with their respective goals and mission. A pilot with the French Broad River Academy, located directly adjacent to the park, has already proven successful. Other organizations have expressed similar levels of interest and support.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

Riverside Park Maintenance and Management Plan.pdf

### *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

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#### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

The project components to be completed using bond funds, and their estimated costs, are listed below. The costs are derived from the lowest responsive, responsible bid received in the second round of construction bidding on March 21, 2024.

Site grading and preparation: \$675,700  
 Paving and circulation: \$603,000  
 Site elements (tables, seating, structures, etc.): \$600,200  
 Renovation to existing bathroom structure: \$75,000  
 Utilities, stormwater management and drainage: \$481,000  
 Park plantings, including riverbank restoration: \$83,000  
 Aquatic life and recreational boating bypass channel: \$850,760

#### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

Approximately 72% of total estimated project costs are secured. Should the County award the full amount requested for Passive Recreation, the project will be 100% funded. If any other funding is awarded prior to a final decision by the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners, the Town will make the corresponding application amendment. A \$1,137,000 grant request to the Golden Leaf Foundation is the only other pending request at this time.

#### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

Should the County award less than the full amount of this request for Passive Recreation, the highest priority components, which would be the first completed with bond funds, are site grading and preparation (\$675,700), utilities, stormwater management and drainage (\$481,000) and the aquatic life and recreational boating bypass channel (\$850,760), totaling \$2,007,460. All of these must be completed before other improvements begin.

As mentioned previously, the first round of bidding in January 2024 yielded bids exceeding available funding. To keep the project moving, the Town opted to divide the work into four sequential phases and re-bid the base project with optional elements, for which funding might be secured as construction proceeds.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

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### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

The improvement of Riverside Park will provide passive recreational facilities required for the public health and quality of life of Woodfin residents and ensure the community's access to the French Broad River. It will also significantly improve the health of the section of the river adjacent to the park and conserve trees, plants and wildlife native to the area for the lasting benefit of future generations.

The larger Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project, centered on Riverside Park and Taylor's Wave and linked to Asheville's emerging greenway system, will be a first for Western North Carolina and an unprecedented opportunity to extend regional tourism and economic development in Woodfin. Continuous greenway projects of 20+ miles do not exist in our region, let alone one that will allow visitors to craft personalized daily itineraries and experience much of what the region has to offer on a single route.

As has occurred at other popular greenway destinations like Swamp Rabbit Trail and American Tobacco Trail, and at other recreational rivers like the Nantahala and Pigeon Rivers, we expect significant expansion and creation of outfitting businesses that rent bicycles and river gear along with shuttle service, retailers that sell gear, food, beverage, and supplies, and food service/beverage establishments. We estimate that the WGB project will attract 28,700 overnight visitors by Year 3 of full operation, along with perhaps 55,000 day visitors.

### Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

Woodfin Together is the name of the effort launched in 2022 to create a new comprehensive plan for the Town of Woodfin. The current draft lays out a long-term vision that speaks directly to a quality of life that provides residents with equal access to civic opportunities, nature, jobs, goods, and services. Two of the five topic areas, A Livable Built Pattern and Sustainable Town, prioritize equitable, high-quality access to nature and the French Broad River, green stormwater management and other measures to restore a healthy watershed for paddling, fishing, swimming, and wildlife habitat.

This project's focus on improved stormwater management aligns with the Buncombe-Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, of which Woodfin is an active participant.

A goal of the Buncombe County Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is to "Expand and Maintain Cultural and Recreational Assets." Increased Passive Recreation investment in the WGB expands and diversifies recreation

opportunities by both activity and geography. An award leverages nearly \$11 million already committed by partners for both construction and non-construction costs (e.g. design, engineering and overhead).

## Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Ricky Hurley, Town of Woodfin Planning Director, rhurley@woodfin-nc.gov

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)*

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### How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?

The Town's approach to safety at Riverside Park has three components: 1) The park is located along Riverside Dr. (NC 251), a major transportation corridor with high visibility and easy access. Woodfin Police routinely patrol the existing park, along with the rest of the corridor, ensuring both the safety of park visitors and the security of park facilities; 2) Following the recommendations of the Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave Task Force, we will develop special signage and water safety demonstrations to educate park users on safety in the park and on the river; and 3) A full-time maintenance staff person will be in the park for a period of time every day of the work week, and volunteer park ambassadors will visit the park regularly to connect with users.

### How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?

Along with regular monitoring by Woodfin staff, the Town's Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee performs an annual survey of each of the Town's park facilities to track conditions over time and identify needed maintenance and repairs. This survey report is then used to help inform the budget for maintenance and capital improvements. We anticipate the improved and expanded Riverside Park will be extremely popular, with a critical mass of visitors naturally discouraging mischief and/or vandalism by others. Woodfin Police will also patrol the park regularly, particularly in the night time, to ensure the facilities are properly secured.

### How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

Riverside Park is a moderately sized, linear park that will have a tourism-focused active recreation area around Taylor's Wave and the grand pavilion in the expansion area to the south. This area will be actively managed by volunteers and town staff and is distinct from the community-oriented passive recreation area that represents the existing park. Activities in this area will tend toward quieter opportunities for walking, jogging, picnicking, etc. Conflict between user groups will be naturally mitigated by people congregating in

the area of the park that best meets their needs. Additionally, the design of the park separates vehicular traffic from pedestrians, with different walking surfaces directing people to different activity areas. The planned greenway will also effectively separate greenway users passing through the park from other park visitors.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

The Town of Woodfin is participating in a partnership with other local governments and Connect Buncombe on developing a uniform etiquette signage plan for the greenway, which will run through Riverside Park. Additionally, the town is included in the county-wide wayfinding signage program managed by the Tourism Development Authority that helps direct visitors to area attractions. Recent conversations with the TDA have highlighted the need to add area wayfinding signage for Silver-Line Park, Riverside Park, and Taylor's Wave in 2024 as they move forward with other necessary updates.

Lastly, the town has standard "Park Rules" and other informational/interpretive signage that will be applied to Riverside Park as well, including more specific signage informing visitors on water safety. Park information will also be posted on the Town's website, social media, and through other media outlets.

## *Applicant Experience*

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### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

The Town of Woodfin is governed by a Council - Manager form of government. The citizens elect three Town Council Members to staggered four-year terms every two years and elect a Mayor every four years in non-partisan elections. The Town Council meets monthly and/or by special call of the council. Town operations fall under the authority of a Town Manager appointed by the Town Council. The Manager is also the statutory budget officer of the town and is delegated additional authorities and responsibilities by the locally elected officials.

The Town's 38 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee are organized into five departments: Administration; Parks & Recreation; Planning and Zoning; Police; and Public Works. Woodfin does not have dedicated parks and recreation staff at this time. The Project & Facilities Director, with support from other administrative staff, is responsible for project management, parks and recreation contracts administration, and parks planning; the Public Works department is responsible for parks maintenance. The Town of Woodfin has a general fund expenditure budget of \$7,673,146 for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, 2024.

### **Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

The Town's successful construction of Silver-Line Park—a 4.5-acre conservation and passive recreation project built on land converted from other uses—is the most recent and relevant precedent for the improvement of Riverside Park. The Town has also recently completed \$3 million in street improvement projects and has made significant investments in stormwater management.

## Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

Equinox Environmental is the designer and environmental consultant for Riverside Park. Founded in 1998 and based in Asheville, Equinox supports projects focused on conservation, sustainability, and environmentally responsible land development throughout the Southeast. Its clients include a wide range of private, public, and nonprofit entities, and individual landowners. Equinox has received numerous honors and awards, which can be found listed at this link: <https://equinoxenvironmental.com/about/honors-awards/>

S2O Design and Engineering, the firm responsible for the design of Taylor's Wave, is the global leader in whitewater park design and engineering. President Scott Shipley is among the best-known American kayakers in the world today and holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Mechanical Engineering from top-ranked Georgia Institute of Technology. Major projects that Shipley has designed include the 2012 Olympic Venue, the U.S. National Whitewater Center—the largest whitewater park in the world, the Holme Pierrepont National Watersports Centre, and the Teesside Whitewater Park.

Shipley's accolades include a "Best of What's New" design award from Popular Science, the Everest Award, and The Jack-Kelly Fair Play award, presented by the U.S. Olympic Committee.

A gallery of recent projects can be found at this link: <https://s2odesign.com/projects/>

## Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

### Resumes of Key Staff

Resume\_S Tuch.pdf

## *Budget*

### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

The attached project budget shows all estimated costs related to the expansion and improvement of Riverside Park and the construction of Taylor's Wave as the centerpiece of the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project. This request for Open Space Bond funding would support passive recreation infrastructure throughout the park; the Taylor's Wave bypass; and measures to control flooding, preserve water quality and restore native flora. The column "Open Space Bond Request" allocates portions of categorical subtotals (e.g. Site grading and

preparation) to these purposes, for a total request of \$3,368,660. If Buncombe County awards this amount,, the project will be fully funded.

The line item detail is derived from the lowest responsive, responsible bid received in March, 2024. The page following the complete line item budget details the project components specific to this Open Space Bond request.

## **Project Budget**

Riverside Park Budget for BCOSB Proposal.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

### **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Riverside Park Overall Site Plan Map\_small file.pdf

### **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Woodfin Riverside Park Photos.pdf

### **Letters of Support**

Woodfin Riverside Park\_LOS.pdf

### **Other Documentation**

Master Plan Link\_Resumes.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Woodfin Riverside Park\_Open Space Bond Project Scope of Work.pdf
- Woodfin Riverside Park\_Open Space Bond Project Schedule.docx.pdf
- Riverside Park Maintenance and Management Plan.pdf
- Resume\_S Tuch.pdf
- Riverside Park Budget for BCOSB Proposal.pdf
- Riverside Park Overall Site Plan Map\_small file.pdf
- Woodfin Riverside Park Photos.pdf
- Woodfin Riverside Park\_LOS.pdf
- Master Plan Link\_Resumes.pdf

**TOWN OF WOODFIN**  
**BUNCOMBE COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOND – 2024 PASSIVE RECREATION LANDS APPLICATION**  
**RIVERSIDE PARK IMPROVEMENTS**  
**SCOPE OF WORK**

The Town of Woodfin requests \$3,368,660 in Open Space Bond funding to support long-term passive recreation and conservation measures at Riverside Park. These investments represent 28% of the estimated \$12,045,315 budget for Riverside Park Expansion and Improvement and Taylor’s Wave, an engineered whitewater feature, as part of the larger Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project.

**Site grading and preparation:**

- Limbing existing vegetation, invasive removal, tree protection measures
- Earthwork (rough grading, excavation, stabilizing subgrade, haul off, etc.)
- Fine grading
- Erosion control measures and riverbank stabilization

**Paving and circulation:**

- Existing parking lot rebuild with traffic calming markers, wheel stops, and guardrails
- Pedestrian plaza at the expansion site
- Base concrete for vertical structures
- Natural surface trails

**Site elements:**

- Picnic and bistro tables (standard and ADA-compliant)
- Benches, swings, bike racks, trash/recycling containers, water fountain
- Seating walls at the expansion site, riverbank boulder toe wall, retaining walls
- Playground with slide, tightrope, and boulder scramble
- Entrance, accessibility, and traffic control signage
- Interpretive, educational, and historical signage

**Renovation to existing bathroom structure:**

- Exterior cladding and roofing rebuild

**Utilities, stormwater management and drainage:**

- Water, sewer, and electrical services for the entire park
- Food truck connections near the pedestrian plaza
- Interior lighting for vertical structures
- Bioretention swales and constructed wetlands

**Park plantings including riverbank restoration:** Approximately 10,000 units of native, non-invasive plant material

**Aquatic life and recreational boating bypass channel:**

Taylor’s Wave includes a bypass channel allowing fish and other forms of aquatic life, as well as users of recreational craft, an alternative to navigating the wave structure. Only the bypass channel is included in this application while the rest of the Wave is funded through other sources. Approximately 20% of the wave structure in the French Broad River will be reserved as a bypass.

**TOWN OF WOODFIN**  
**BUNCOMBE COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOND – 2024 PASSIVE RECREATION LANDS APPLICATION**  
**RIVERSIDE PARK IMPROVEMENTS**  
**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

A detailed project schedule for Riverside Park will be finalized with the input of the selected contractor, with construction anticipated to begin in the spring/summer of 2024. A general, projected schedule for the project is as follows:

Construction Bid Opening	March 21, 2024
Site Mobilization (through an executed LOI)	April 2024
Contract Signed / Sitework Begins	May 2024
Wave Construction	June - Sept. 2024*
Riverside Park Construction - Base contract	Sept. 2024 – May 2025
Riverside Park - Options 1 & 2	June 2025 – Dec. 2025
Riverside Park – Options 3 & 4	Jan. 2025 – May 2026

\*Wave construction is designed to occur during the period of lowest water flow in the French Broad River (June-September) with river right completed first, followed by river left (two halves, approached from opposite sides of the river). Since the Wave is constructed in two segments, the schedule has some flexibility to move construction of river left should conditions warrant.

**TOWN OF WOODFIN**  
**RIVERSIDE PARK MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This provisional plan outlines aspects of the long-term maintenance and management of an expanded and improved Riverside Park, as part of the larger Woodfin Greenway & Blueway (WGB) project. All aspects of the project fall within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation system for the Town of Woodfin. A WGB maintenance worker, to be hired in 2025, will be dedicated to physical upkeep of the park. This individual will work under the direction and supervision of the town's Project and Facilities Director who, along with the support of the Finance Director and Town Manager, will oversee the long-term care, planning, and use of the park.

With Silver-Line Park (the first phase of the WGB project), the Town developed a park inspection checklist and task table (see attached). It will develop similar documents for Riverside Park as part of a long-term maintenance and facilities plan that is budgeted for Fiscal Year 2025, coinciding with improvements to the existing 5-acre park and construction on the 3.35-acre expansion area. Also influencing this plan will be the recommendations from the Town's Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave Event Management Task Force. This group completed its work earlier this year, focusing on river safety, event and traffic management, and general park use and maintenance.

Inspection and action items will include:

- Invasive species management, in both the constructed wetlands and along the riverbanks;
- Regular landscape maintenance (trimming, mowing, replanting);
- A regular schedule for solid waste and recycling collection and clean-up (with extra pick-ups scheduled for busy weekends);
- Cleaning of public restrooms (a task to be shared by Town staff and a private contractor); and
- Litter clean-up along greenway, trails, walkways and other common areas.

Annual operations and maintenance are estimated at \$45,000, once the entire Woodfin Greenway & Blueway is constructed. Full operations and maintenance funding will be incorporated into the Town's annual budget from its general fund, with revenues to the general fund deriving primarily from property taxes.

Community members and partner organizations will also contribute significantly to the care and maintenance of this shared resource. The Town will recruit and train a group of volunteer park ambassadors, who will be present in Riverside Park on a regular weekly schedule, covering summer evening and weekend hours. The ambassadors will monitor park usage, serve as a resource to users, and identify safety and maintenance concerns to share with Town staff. Additionally, the Town will work with local education and non-profit organizations on routine landscape and facility maintenance that aligns with their respective goals and mission. A pilot with the French Broad River Academy, located directly adjacent to the park, has already proven successful. Other organizations have expressed similar levels of interest and support.

# Silver-Line Park Yearly Inspection Check List



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspected by: \_\_\_\_\_

INSPECTION TASK	COMPLETE?	NOTES	FOLLOW UP ACTION NEEDED
Determine if pea gravel needs replenishment	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Determine if playground mulch need replenishment	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect playground surface for tears, burns, or other deterioration	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect drinking fountain for functionality	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect fasteners to determine if any need to be tightened	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect playground features for protrusions, splinters, or disrepair	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect electrical outlets for functionality	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Determine if repainting is necessary on striping	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect all trees for overall health and whether there are dead limbs	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect gutters of pavilion and train platform to ensure they are clear	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect drop inlets for debris	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect forebays and stormwater control measure (SCM) to determine if sediment removal is needed	<input type="checkbox"/>		

# Silver-Line Park Yearly Inspection Check List



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspected by: \_\_\_\_\_

INSPECTION TASK	COMPLETE?	NOTES	FOLLOW UP ACTION NEEDED
Inspect weir structures of stormwater control measure (SCM) for blockage, sediment build-up and debris	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect site for erosion or sedimentation concerns; Identify areas of exposed soil	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect shoulder of greenway for proper drainage off of path	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect metal connections, chains, and fasteners for rust	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect metal landscape edging, which can come up out of the ground	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Inspect planted material for dead or diseased plants	<input type="checkbox"/>		

# Silver-Line Park Maintenance Schedule



ACTION	FREQUENCY					NOTES	WHO CAN OVERSEE:	
	WEEKLY	QUARTERLY	YEARLY	AS NEEDED	SPECIAL SEASONAL		TOWN/CONTRACTOR	VOLUNTEERS
<b>LANDSCAPE</b>								
<i>Water plants</i>	■			■		Weekly; biweekly through summer for 3 months.	■	■
<b>Weeding:</b>								
<i>In gravel beds</i>				■	■	Twice in the spring, can utilize torch. Herbicide only when necessary and under the direction of a specialist.	■	■
<i>Around wetland edge</i>				■	■	Twice in the spring, twice in the fall. Herbicide treatment <b>not</b> recommended in this area.	■	■
<b>Mowing:</b>								
<i>Edges/lawn/high use areas</i>					■	Once weekly during the growing season; mulch leaves with mower in the Fall. Minimize the use of gas-powered blowers due to their high levels of pollution.	■	
<i>Edge lawn at garden beds, mulch beds, &amp; natural surfaces</i>					■	Weekly during growing season.	■	
<i>All other areas</i>	■					2-3 times per season.	■	
<b>Lawn:</b>								
<i>Aerate and fertilize, re-seed and fence off</i>				■	■	Once in the Fall or after large event.	■	
<i>Re-seed as necessary to prevent exposed soil.</i>				■		Yearly in in Fall, or February-March.	■	
<b>Mulching:</b>								
<i>Garden beds</i>			■			Reapply mulch only once it begins to break down. Spot mulch if there are only random void areas. Replace whole mulch layer if necessary. Allow fallen leaf material to remain in beds and break down for added nutrients.	■	■
<i>Play area</i>			■	■		To maintain depth for safety (9"); may require more frequency of application.	■	
<b>Plant Care:</b>								
<i>Prune shrubs as necessary throughout the year.</i>				■		2 times a year; early Spring or late Fall (depending upon species).	■	
<i>Prune trees as necessary.</i>				■		Once every five years; early Spring or late Fall (depending upon species).	■	
<i>Cut/trim vegetation at entrance , 30-feet on both sides for visibility</i>	■					2-3 times per season.	■	■

# Silver-Line Park Maintenance Schedule



ACTION	FREQUENCY					NOTES	WHO CAN OVERSEE:	
	WEEKLY	QUARTERLY	YEARLY	AS NEEDED	SPECIAL SEASONAL		TOWN/CONTRACTOR	VOLUNTEERS
<i>Remove or treat invasive plants.</i>				■	■	2 times a year or per guidance provided by invasive management specialists. All chemical treatment applications must be completed by a licensed professional.	■	■
<b>UTILITIES</b>								
<i>Inspect Lights / Electrical Outlets</i>		■	■				■	
<i>Portable toilets</i>	■			■		Ensure portable toilets are cleaned and maintained on a weekly basis.	■	
<b>CLEANING/TRASH REMOVAL/REPAIRS</b>								
<i>Empty trash, recycling, &amp; pet waste stations</i>	■					Empty 2-3 times a week.	■	
<i>Trash pick-up around the park</i>	■						■	■
<i>Clean out grills</i>	■					Weekly during peak season.	■	■
<b>Clean and Maintain:</b>								
<i>Pressure wash concrete paths and pads</i>		■				2 times a year; Winter & Summer.	■	
<i>Paint/stain/sand site furnishings or structures as needed, including pavilions and picnic tables</i>				■		As needed, or within 3 days of noticing graffiti.	■	
<i>Pressure wash Pirate Ship play equipment</i>			■	■			■	
<i>Remove sediment deposits at the boat ramp</i>			■	■		At least twice yearly.	■	■
<b>Stormwater:</b>								
<i>Culverts - check for sediment or debris to move</i>				■		After large storm events. Ensure proper function. Make repairs immediately.	■	
<i>Inspect stormwater control measures.</i>				■		After large storm events. Ensure proper function. Make repairs immediately.	■	
			■			Follow Operation and Maintenance agreement per county permit requirements	■	

# Silver-Line Park Maintenance Schedule



ACTION	FREQUENCY					WHO CAN OVERSEE:		
	WEEKLY	QUARTERLY	YEARLY	AS NEEDED	SPECIAL SEASONAL	NOTES	TOWN/CONTRACTOR VOLUNTEERS	
<i>Rubber play surface:</i>								
Clean by washing						Weekly during high-use seasons. Process: <b>1)</b> Brush and hose off entire surface to remove food, drink, and loose debris. A pressure washer may be used at a setting not to exceed 1500 psi. Do not place the spray nozzle closer than 12" to the surface; <b>2)</b> On heavily-stained isolated spots, while surface is still damp from hosing, apply a sufficient amount of a mild household or commercial detergent for adequate coverage using a hand-held spray bottle. Scrub thoroughly with a 10" medium bristle scrub brush; <b>3)</b> For general cleaning: While surface is still damp from hosing, apply a mixture of full strength mild household or commercial detergent and water using a garden pump sprayer to an area of approx. 4' x 4' in size at a time; <b>4)</b> Avoid harmful solvents, i.e. chlorine, disinfectants, degreasers, etc. <i>For more detail, see PlayBound Poured-In-Place Maintenance General Guidelines by Surface America.</i>		
Repair if torn or displaced - contact Surface America (800-999-0555, <a href="http://www.surfaceamerica.com">www.surfaceamerica.com</a> )						These steps should be followed immediately upon inspection to avoid further deterioration.		

## SHANNON MICHELLE TUCH

72 Eller Ford Rd., Weaverville, North Carolina, 28787 ♦ 828.768.4749 ♦ shannontuch@gmail.com

### *Experience:*

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#### **Local Government – Western North Carolina. 2002-Present.**

➤ **Town Manager, Town of Woodfin (2022-Present)** – Oversee municipal operations for a town with a population of just over 8000 in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Responsible for the delivery of town services including police, solid waste, stormwater, streets, planning & zoning, and parks and recreation. Additional responsibilities include preparing an annual budget, working with elected council members on various goals, priorities, and policies, identifying and pursuing grants, and town communications.

➤ **Principal Planner, City of Asheville (2015-2022)** - Various duties including: supervise the Design & Development Division including historic resources; work with the Planning & Zoning Commission and Design Review Committee to manage meetings and agendas; prepare and present development, rezoning, design review and annexation cases; research, prepare and present zoning text amendments; consult (internal & external) on planning policy; advise planning staff and other city staff on specific zoning and land use matters; present publicly on various planning and zoning related topics; manage division budget.

➤ **Zoning Administrator, City of Asheville (2007-2020)** - Oversee and manage the zoning division including: supervising enforcement and administrative staff; work with the Board of Adjustment and manage meetings and agendas; prepare and present variance cases; provide and document formal zoning determinations; work with legal staff to defend city decisions in appeals; routinely interpret and apply the Unified Development Ordinance, state statutes and other laws and ordinances fairly and consistently.

➤ **Development Services Director, City of Asheville (2013-2015)** - Responsible for the management of a 50+ person department with respect to development review, permitting and inspections involving coordination and management of a multi-disciplinary (building safety, zoning, and site engineering) and multi-functional (development review, permit intake & tracking, record management, inspections & enforcement) department; collaborate with the City Manager's Office, department directors and other city leaders on policy and budget management as well as work with the development community and other community partners; manage department budget.

➤ **Assistant Planning Director, City of Asheville (2007-2013)** - Responsible for assisting the director in the management of a 30 person department with respect to development review for a wide variety of commercial and residential projects, community development programs and historic resources; work with the Board of Adjustment and Planning & Zoning Commission; prepare and present reports to various commissions and City Council; assist with long range and other community planning initiatives; manage department budget.

➤ **Technical Review Manager, City of Asheville (2005-2007)** - Responsible for managing the city's technical review process; worked with technical staff and managed meeting agendas & coordinated review comments between staff and the development community; responsible for creating and implementing a new development review process and permit tracking system; conducted a development review survey and performed analysis; conducted outreach to the development community; supervised one administrative staff member.

> **Urban Planner II (2002-2005)** – Perform development review of wide range of residential and commercial projects; prepare and present staff report & findings to the Technical Review Committee, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Council; prepare and present wording amendments; provide special assistance on matters related to landscaping, grading, stormwater, and site design; create illustrative graphics for city projects.

**Private Planning & Design Firms. 1998-2002.**

> **Landscape Architect** – Worked with various planning and design firms on the development of construction documents for small, mid, and large scale commercial and urban park projects, traditional neighborhood development master plans; provide AutoCAD support for a variety of project needs; create site analysis documents using GIS and other computer programs.

- **Associate. Design Associates.** Asheville, North Carolina.
- **Associate. Cole Jenest & Stone.** Charlotte, North Carolina.
- **Associate. Walker Macy.** Portland, Oregon.

***Education, Certifications & Licenses:***

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**Charette Management and Facilitation.** National Charrette Institute, 2017.

**Registered Landscape Architect (RLA).** North Carolina, License #1731 (ongoing).

**Master of Landscape Architecture.** Honors, University of Georgia, 1998.

**Bachelor of Arts.** Honors, University of Missouri, 1992.

***Special Projects, Assignments & Trainings***

**Racial Equity Institute - Phase I.** 2017.

**GroWNC Steering Committee.** 2012-2013.

**Leadership Asheville.** 2012.

**City of Asheville Culture of Leadership.** 2011.

**UNC Institute of Government - Development Review Benchmarking Study.** 2007-2008.

**City of Asheville Development Review LX Team.** 2005.

**City of Asheville Housing Trust Fund Committee.** 2004-2006.

***Presentations & Awards:***

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**Regulation & Enforcement of Short-term Rentals through Land Use and Zoning.** NC-APA, NCAZO, NC Bar Association CLE, CREIA, Land of Sky Association of Realtors. 2016 - 2018.

**SBA Startup in a Day Competition - Start Small Model.** \$50,000 Grant award recipient. 2015.

**Homestays - A New Economic Opportunity.** City of Asheville Housing Fair. 2015.

**The History of Conditional Zoning.** Asheville Coalition of Neighborhoods - Neighborhood Summit. 2013.

**Development Recovery Incentives that Support Sustainable Development.** NC-APA. 2011.

**Have it Your Way - Fast Food Restaurant Design.** NC-APA. 2009.

**NC State Legislative Delegation & Asheville City Council Joint Meeting on Annexation.** 2007.

**The Practice of Land Subdivision.** NC Bar Association CLE. 2007.

**Big Box Design Standards.** NC-APA. 2006.

**YWCA - Tribute to Women of Influence.** Award Nominee. 2008.

***Organizations & Affiliations:***

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**Congregation Beth ha Tephila.** 2017-present. Board Member/Secretary (2020-present)

**Asheville Jewish Community Center.** 2004-present. Board member/Board President (2011)

**City of Asheville Technical Review Committee.** 2002-present. Technical staff; Chair (2005-2007)

**City of Asheville Stormwater Committee.** 2008-2011.

**City of Asheville Housing Trust Fund Committee.** 2004-2006. Committee Member.

**Western North Carolina Green Building Council.** 2002-2006. Member/Board Member (2005).

***Professional References:***

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**Cathy Ball.** City Manager, Johnson City, TN (former Asst. City Manager for Asheville, NC). (828) 691-4623. cball@johnsoncitytn.org

**Jeremy Goldstein.** Real Estate Broker/developer/businessman - GM Property Group (former Chair of the Asheville Planning & Zoning Commission; current member of Asheville's Design Review Committee). (828) 230-8025. jgold@gmproperty.com

**Esther Manheimer.** City of Asheville Mayor & Land Use Attorney - Van Winkle Law Firm. (828) 231-8016. emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com

**John Spake.** Real estate broker/developer/businessman - Spake Real Estate. (828) 674-3372. john@spakerealestate.com

**Stacy Merten.** Principal Planner, Asheville, NC (former Historic Resources Dir. for Asheville) (828) 777-0352. smerten@ashevillenc.gov

Woodfin Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave - Complete Project Budget

MARCH 2024 LOW BID Park  
Wave  
Total

7,791,521  
4,253,794  
12,045,315

	Item	Description	Total Cost	Open Space Bond Request
	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SITE GRADING &amp; PREPARATION</b>		
1	PARK-1	MOBILIZATION	365,000	
2	PARK-2	CLEARING & GRUBBING (APPROX 5.4 AC)	100,000	
3	PARK-3	LIMBING VEGETATION UP AROUND PICNIC AREA, CLEARING EXCESS AND OVERGROWN AREAS	75,000	
4	PARK-4	REMOVAL/CRUSHING IN PLACE OF RIGID PAVEMENT	91,370	
5	PARK-5	DEMO AND HAUL OFF (STRUCTURES AND DEBRIS)	110,000	
6	PARK-6	EARTHWORK(ROUGH GRADING, EXCAVATION AND HAUL OFF) *100% CUT TAKEN OFF SITE	584,791	
		INSTALL AND OPERATE WATER CONTROL	170,000	
		TRANSPORT 36" DIAM. BOULDERS	14,400	
		FURNISH BOULDERS	14,400	
		INSTALL 36" DIAM. BOULDERS	21,600	
		FURNISH AND INSTALL 3500PSI FIBER-REINFORCED CONCRETE	33,000	
		FURNISH AND INSTALL 3"-4" COBBLE BEDDING MATERIAL	8,930	
		FURNISH AND INSTALL 18" D50 RIPRAP (BANK TOE PROTECTION)	11,050	
		FURNISH AND INSTALL MIRAFI 180n FILTER FABRIC	600	
7	PARK-7	IMPORT STRUCTURAL FILL FOR AREAS OF OVER EXCAVATION (SITE CONTAINS UNDOCUMENTED FILL; QUANTITY IS AN ESTIMATE OF ANTICIPATED IMPORTED FILL	21,560	
8	PARK-8	FINE GRADING	444,261	
9	PARK-9	DUKE LIGHT POLE REMOVED	9,000	
10	PARK-10	PAVEMENT SUBGRADE STABILIZATION (REFER TO GEOTECH REPORT)	95,250	
11	PARK-11	BUILDING SUBGRADE STABILIZATION (REFER TO GEOTECH REPORT)	35,000	
12	PARK-12	PIPE CULVERT STABILIZATION (REFER TO GEOTECH REPORT)	20,000	
13	PARK-13	OIL TANK REMOVAL	1,000	
14	PARK-14	TREE PROTECTION FENCE	1,909	
15	PARK-15	INVASIVE REMOVAL	15,800	
	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>EROSION CONTROL</b>		
16	PARK-16	INLET PROTECTION	2,600	
17	PARK-17	OUTLET PROTECTION	2,000	
18	PARK-18	DITCH OUTLET PROTECTION	500	
19	PARK-19	CONSTRUCTION ENTRANCE (MUDMAT)	6,000	
20	PARK-20	PROTECTIVE MAT (OVER SEWER LINE)	8,000	
21	PARK-21	CONCRETE WASHOUT	900	
22	PARK-22	REINFORCED SILT FENCE	15,788	
23	PARK-23	EROSION CONTROL MATTING (100% BIODEGRADABLE, NORTH AMERICAN GREEN)	7,290	
24	PARK-24	ROCK CHECK DAMS	3,450	
25	PARK-25	SEDIMENT TRAPS (INCLUDES BAFFLES)	6,000	
26	PARK-26	TEMPORARY DIVERSION DITCH	1,890	
27	PARK-27	TEMPORARY SLOPE DRAIN PIPE	1,520	
28	PARK-28	TEMPORARY SEEDING (INCLUDES STRAW)	3,330	
29	PARK-29	ENHANCED RIVER ACCESS STABILIZATION (SILT CURTAIN)	25,000	
30	PARK-30	TEMPORARY STONE CHECK DAMS-STREAM CROSSING	750	
31	PARK-31	BYPASS PUMPS, PIPING, FILTER BAG, AND DISSIPATOR	7,500	
		<b>Site Grading and Preparation Sub Total</b>	<b>2,336,438</b>	<b>675,700</b>
	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PAVING &amp; CIRCULATION</b>		
32	PARK-32	PEDESTRIAN ASPHALT SURFACE (INCLUDES 8" DEPTH CABC AND 2" ASPHALT)	49,674	
33	PARK-33	ASPHALT RE-SURFACE (INCLUDES MILLING AND 1.5" ASPHALT)	16,590	
34	PARK-34	VEHICULAR ASPHALT SURFACE (INCLUDES 8" DEPTH CABC AND 3" ASPHALT)	159,225	
35	PARK-35	VEHICULAR ASPHALT RE-SURFACE (INCLUDES POTENTIAL RE-USE OF EXISTING BASE AND 4" ASPHALT)	69,370	
36	PARK-36	CONCRETE CURB (6")	11,050	
37	PARK-37	CONCRETE CURB (4", MOUNTABLE)	8,600	
38	PARK-38	CONCRETE CURB (FLUSH)	56,610	
39	PARK-39	CONCRETE CURB + GUTTER	28,800	
40	PARK-40	GRAVEL VERGE	9,045	
41	PARK-41	PEDESTRIAN CONCRETE PAVING - FIBER REINFORCED, 6" THICKNESS, 2" CABC (INCLUDES STANDARD CONCRETE STAIR)	396,375	
42	PARK-42	CONCRETE PAVING/SLABS FOR STRUCTURES - REBAR REINFORCED, VAPOR BARRIER (New Park)	60,000	
		CONCRETE PAVING/SLABS FOR STRUCTURES - REBAR REINFORCED, VAPOR BARRIER	60,000	
43	PARK-43	DECOMPOSED GRANITE SURFACE (WITH STABILIZER)	3,060	
44	PARK-44	VEHICULAR CONCRETE PAVING - 8" THICKNESS, 8" CABC	273,500	
45	PARK-45	TIMBER STAIR	14,000	
46	PARK-46	TRAFFIC CALMING PAVEMENT MARKERS	960	
47	PARK-47	PRECAST CONCRETE WHEEL STOPS	7,725	
48	PARK-48	VEHICULAR GUARDRAIL	19,470	
49	PARK-49	GUARDRAIL	52,250	
50	PARK-50	SAFETY RAILING (Above Wetland) (Creek)	29,425	
51	PARK-51	STANDARD HAND RAILING	52,085	

Woodfin Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave - Complete Project Budget

52	PARK-52	GRAND STAIR CENTER RAIL	30,405	
53	PARK-53	GRAND STAIR EDGE RAIL	11,310	
54	PARK-54	DECORATIVE RAIL	31,150	
55	PARK-55	PAINTING & STRIPING (PARKING SPACES, ARROW STRIPING,CROSS WALKS, STOP BARS)	15,000	
56	PARK-56	GRASS PAVE (TRAILER PARKING)	24,506	
57	PARK-57	RECLAIMED CONCRETE PAVER	3,875	
58	PARK-58	COMPACTED GRAVEL PAVING	1,260	
59	PARK-59	STEPPING STONE WEIR (IN PARKING STORMWATER)	9,750	
60	PARK-60	BOULDER STEPPING STONES	1,500	
61	PARK-61	FLAGSTONE (INFILTRATION TRENCH EDGING)	24,964	
62	PARK-62	NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL	986	
63	PARK-63	GRAND STAIR CASE WITH INTEGRATED RAMP (INCLUDES CONCRETE AND BASE; LIGHTING AND RAILS ARE SEPARATE LINE ITEMS)	250,000	
		<b>Paving and Circulation Sub Total</b>	<b>1,782,519</b>	<b>603,000</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>SITE ELEMENTS</b>		
		<b>GENERAL AMENITIES</b>		
64	PARK-64	PICNIC TABLES (STANDARD)	29,880	
65	PARK-65	PICNIC TABLES (ADA)	3,450	
66	PARK-66	BISTRO TABLES (ADA)	29,800	
67	PARK-67	CONCRETE BENCH	23,400	
68	PARK-68	WOOD BENCH	2,950	
69	PARK-69	BENCH SWING	26,000	
70	PARK-70	ENHANCED RIVER ACCESS & STABILIZATION (GENEST PRECAST BOAT RAMP)	70,000	
71	PARK-71	TRASH AND RECYCLING	11,900	
72	PARK-72	PET WASTE STATION	3,500	
73	PARK-73	GRILLS	5,850	
74	PARK-74	DRINKING FOUNTAIN	7,000	
75	PARK-75	BIKE RACK	8,750	
76	PARK-76	FOOTWASH	7,500	
77	PARK-77	BOLLARD (PLAZA)	9,800	
78	PARK-78	STEEL BOLLARD-EMBEDDED	8,250	
47	PARK-47	STEEL BOLLARD-SURFACE MOUNT REMOVABLE	2,250	
79	PARK-79	BOULDERS (TERRACE material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	2,040	
80	PARK-80	BOULDERS (HARDSCAPE material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	510	
81	PARK-81	BOULDERS (LANDSCAPE / CONCRETE CURB material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	2,520	
		<b>WALLS</b>		
82	PARK-82	CONCRETE HEADWALL	19,250	
83	PARK-83	RIVER BANK BOULDER TOE (boulder material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	76,500	
84	PARK-84	BOULDER WALL / HEADWALL (AVG WALL HEIGHT 2', MAX HEIGHT 4'; boulder material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	109,060	
85	PARK-85	CONCRETE SEAT WALL	19,250	
86	PARK-86	CONCRETE RETAINING WALLS (AVG WALL HEIGHT 1.5', MAX HEIGHT 4')	133,000	
		<b>PLAYGROUND</b>		
87	PARK-87	CULVERT SLIDE	7,500	
88	PARK-88	TIGHTROPE	17,000	
89	PARK-89	ROCK SCRAMBLE (boulder material at rate prenegotiated with Hedrick Quarry)	14,625	
		<b>TRAFFIC SIGNAGE (INSTALLED PER SPEC), INTERPRETATION &amp; WAYFINDING</b>		
90	PARK-90	ENTRANCE SIGN	18,000	
91	PARK-91	TRAFFIC CONTROL (TC- SIGNAGE AND RECREATION SIGN, PER POST)	3,000	
92	PARK-92	ACCESSABILITY SIGN (AC- SIGNAGE)	1,050	
93	PARK-93	FISH SCULPTURE	45,000	
94	PARK-94	INTERPERATIVE SIGN (INCLUDING INTERPRATIVE SIGN and HISTORIC PLAQUE)	28,500	
95	PARK-95	INTERPERATIVE SITE ELEMENTS (STAMPS & INTEGRAL COLOR IN CONCRETE - DOES NOT INCLUDE CONCRETE RETAINING WALL INTEGRAL COLOR)	44,625	
		<b>ACCESSIBILITY ELEMENTS</b>		
96	PARK-96	DETECTABLE WARNING PLATE (2' WIDTH)	1,250	
97	PARK-97	ACCESSIBLE RAMPS	5,000	
		<b>GENERAL BOULDER COST</b>		
98	PARK-98	BOULDER (Transport-haul & installed)	285,000	
		<b>Site Elements Sub Total</b>	<b>1,082,960</b>	<b>600,200</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>STRUCTURES</b>		
99	PARK-99	PREFAB METAL OVERLOOK PAVILION	170,000	
100	PARK-100	PREFAB METAL NORTH PAVILION	65,000	
101	PARK-101	RESTROOM PRE-FABRICATED w/ FAMILY ROOMS & STORAGE	350,000	
102	PARK-102	PREFAB METAL CHANGING STRUCTURE	100,000	
103	PARK-103	CLADDING PREFAB RESTROOMS	90,000	
104	PARK-104	CLADDING AND ROOF REBUILD OF EXISTING RESTROOM	75,000	<b>75,000</b>
105	PARK-105	PEDESTRIAN FOOTBRIDGE STREAM CROSSING (BEDDING, CULVERT, CONCRETE HEADWALL AND	135,000	
		<b>Structures Sub Total</b>	<b>985,000</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>UTILITY SERVICES</b>		
106	PARK-106	WATER		
107	PARK-107	WATER METER PIPING/VAULT	15,000	
108	PARK-108	FREEZEPROOF YARD HYDRANTS	9,750	
109	PARK-109	1.25-1.75" PVC PIPE AND VALVES	91,800	
110	PARK-110	2" PVC WATERLINE	17,550	

Woodfin Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave - Complete Project Budget

111	PARK-111	6" PIPE ENCASEMENT (OPEN CUT)	9,750	
112	PARK-112	WET TAP CONNECTION	10,000	
113	PARK-113	6" BORING AND ENCASEMENT	16,500	
114	PARK-114	SEWER		
115	PARK-115	4" PVC	3,300	
116	PARK-116	6" PVC	12,000	
117	PARK-117	YARD PIPING CLEANOUTS	800	
118	PARK-118	YARD PIPING COUPLINGS	1,600	
119	PARK-119	4" FLOOR DRAIN WITH TRAP	2,000	
120	PARK-120	MANHOLE AND CONNECTION (NEW CONNECTION)	17,500	
121	PARK-121	MANHOLE ELEVATION ADJUSTMENT (EXISTING MANHOLE RIM ELEVATION LOWERED)	6,000	
122	PARK-122	BYPASS PUMPING	4,000	
123	PARK-123	PLUMBING (PREFAB RESTROOM, INCLUDING PIPE, BACKFLOW PREVENTER, FLOOR DRAINS, CLEANOUTS, VENTS, AND VALVES)	30,000	
124	PARK-124	ELECTRICAL		
125	PARK-125	125A FEEDER (TO RESTROOM)	19,800	
126	PARK-126	200A FEEDER (TO RESTROOM)	13,950	
127	PARK-127	NEW PRIMARY DUCT BANKS	24,000	
128	PARK-128	400A PANEL BOARD (Panel A)	19,000	
129	PARK-129	FOOD TRUCK CONNECTIONS	9,990	
130	PARK-130	PAVILION LIGHTING	82,500	
131	PARK-131	STAIR/RAMP LIGHTING	14,000	
132	PARK-132	BRANCH CIRCUIT WIRING	8,500	
133	PARK-133	UTILITY SITE WORK (INCLUDING MOBILIZATION, LABOR, OVERHEAD, PROFIT, & MISC. CONCRETE)	9,000	
		<b>Utility Services Sub Total</b>	<b>448,290</b>	<b>300,000</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>PLANTING</b>		
134	PARK-134	SEED & LAWN (SEED MIXES)	12,285	
135	PARK-135	RIVERBANK RESTORATION (LIVE STAKES, NC MOUNTAINS RIPARIAN BUFFER MIX (ERNMX-304)	1,475	
136	PARK-136	PLUGS	12,188	
137	PARK-137	PINT	1,542	
138	PARK-138	QUART	9,051	
139	PARK-139	1 GAL.	11,711	
140	PARK-140	3 GAL.	5,150	
141	PARK-141	5 GAL.	6,165	
142	PARK-142	TREES	19,800	
143	PARK-143	MULCH (SHREDDED HARDWOOD)	10,833	
		<b>Planting Sub Total</b>	<b>90,200</b>	<b>83,000</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>STORMWATER &amp; DRAINAGE</b>		
144	PARK-144	4" PIPE, HDPE	4,940	
145	PARK-145	15" PIPE, HDPE	4,920	
146	PARK-146	18" PIPE, HDPE	21,400	
147	PARK-147	24" PIPE, HDPE	26,810	
148	PARK-148	CREEK BED IN HARDSCAPE (INFILTRATION TRENCH)		
149	PARK-149	INFILTRATION SYSTEM (EGRP BY PARJANA)	70,000	
150	PARK-150	INFILTRATION TRENCH FILL (WITH CLEAN #57 STONE, SAND, AND FILTER FABRIC)	21,600	
151	PARK-151	RIVER COBBLE WITH MORTAR AND SAND SETTING BEDS	8,000	
152	PARK-152	CONCRETE DROP INLET, INSTALLED	33,000	
153	PARK-153	CURB INLET, PRETREATMENT (PRETX)	3,800	
154	PARK-154	BIORETENTION/BIOSWALE	27,000	
155	PARK-155	UNDERDRAINS	38,100	
156	PARK-156	BOULDER CHECK DAM	10,725	
157	PARK-157	STORMWATER WETLAND (2560 SF)	45,000	
158	PARK-158	POCKET WETLANDS, INCLUDES SOIL MIX AND PREPARATION (3,565 SF)	35,000	
159	PARK-159	SEDIMENT TRAP WITH AREA DRAIN	7,500	
		<b>Stormwater and Drainage Sub Total</b>	<b>357,795</b>	<b>181,000</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>Contingency</b>		
			708,320	
		<b>TOTAL PARK Cost Estimate</b>	<b>7,791,521</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>SITE SETUP</b>		
1	WAVE-1	INSTALL AND MAINTAIN BMPs	200,000	
2	WAVE-2	INSTALL RIVER SAFETY MEASURES AND SIGNAGE	50,000	
3	WAVE-3	INSTALL AND OPERATE WATER CONTROL	950,000	
4	WAVE-4	NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY PROTECTIVE SERVICES (FLAGGING)- anticipated for 6 weeks	90,000	
5	WAVE-5	CONSTRUCTION SURVEY AND STAKEOUT	30,000	
		<b>Site Setup Sub Total</b>	<b>1,320,000</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>IN-STREAM WORK AND BANK TERRACING</b>		
5	WAVE-5	TRANSPORT 36" DIAM. BOULDERS	223,290	
6	WAVE-6	FURNISH BOULDERS	223,290	
7	WAVE-7	INSTALL 36" DIAM. BOULDERS	334,935	

Woodfin Riverside Park & Taylor's Wave - Complete Project Budget

8	WAVE-8	FURNISH AND INSTALL 3500PSI FIBER-REINFORCED CONCRETE	543,000	
9	WAVE-9	FURNISH AND INSTALL REINFORCING STEEL	34,688	
10	WAVE-10	FURNISH AND INSTALL 3"-4" COBBLE BEDDING MATERIAL	123,335	
11	WAVE-11	FURNISH AND INSTALL 3"-4" COBBLE IN CONCRETE BETWEEN BOULDERS (BYPASS & WAVE	11,900	
12	WAVE-12	FURNISH AND INSTALL MIRAFI 180n FILTER FABRIC	9,303	
13	WAVE-13	FURNISH AND INSTALL 18" D50 RIPRAP (SCOUR POOLS, TRENCH BACKFILL, BANK TOE	112,700	
14	WAVE-14	EXCAVATION OF NATIVE BEDROCK TO DESIGN GRADE	168,000	
15	WAVE-15	EXCAVATION AND GRADING OF NATIVE MATERIALS	139,350	
16	WAVE-16	INSTALL EQUIPMENT ACCESS RAMPS AND ROADS	75,000	
17	WAVE-17	RECLAIM EQUIPMENT ACCESS RAMPS AND ROADS	75,000	
18	WAVE-18	UNCLASSIFIED HAUL OFF	97,545	
		<b>In-stream Work and Bank Terracing Sub Total</b>	<b>2,171,336</b>	<b>850,760</b>
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>DEMOLITION OF EXISTING RAILROAD PIERS</b>		
19	WAVE-19	INSTALL EQUIPMENT ACCESS RAMPS AND ROADS	150,000	
20	WAVE-20	RECLAIM EQUIPMENT ACCESS RAMPS AND ROADS	45,000	
21	WAVE-21	DEMO AND REMOVAL OF EXISTING RR BRIDGE PIER MATERIALS	90,000	
22	WAVE-22	EXCAVATION OF NATIVE BEDROCK TO DESIGN GRADE	90,750	
		<b>Demolition Sub Total</b>	<b>375,750</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>ALLOWANCES</b>		
23	WAVE-23	ADDITIONAL EXCAVATOR TIME AS DIRECTED BY ENGINEER		
24	WAVE-24	ADDITIONAL BEDROCK REMOVAL		
25	WAVE-25	ADDITIONAL 3' DIAMETER BOULDER FURNISH AND INSTALL		
26	WAVE-26	BURIED AND PLANTED RIPRAP BANK STABILIZATION BELOW BYPASS (IF NECESSARY)		
27	WAVE-27	ADDITIONAL WAVE TUNING CYCLE (OPEN WATER CONTROL, ALLOW ENGINEER TUNING, CLOSE WATER CONTROL)		
<b>ITEM</b>		<b>Contingency</b>		
			<b>386,709</b>	
		<b>WAVE Cost Estimate</b>	<b>4,253,794</b>	
		<b>TOTAL PROJECT Cost Estimate</b>	<b>12,045,315</b>	<b>3,368,660</b>

**Funding Priority Request Details**

<b>RIVERSIDE PARK IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>HIGH</b>	<b>1 Site grading and preparation:</b> Limbing existing vegetation, invasive removal, tree protection measures Earthwork (rough grading, excavation, stabilize subgrade, haul off, etc.) Fine grading Erosion control measures and riverbank stabilization	\$ 675,700
<b>MED</b>	<b>2 Paving and circulation:</b> Existing park rebuild with traffic calming markers, wheel stops, and guardrails Pedestrian plaza at the expansion site Base concrete for vertical structures Natural surface trails	\$ 603,000
<b>MED</b>	<b>3 Site elements:</b> Picnic and bistro tables (standard and ADA-compliant) Benches, swings, bike racks, trash/recycling containers, water fountain Seating walls at the expansion site, riverbank boulder toe wall, retaining walls Playground with slide, tightrope, and boulder scramble Entrance, accessibility, and traffic control signage Interpretive, educational, and historical signage	\$ 600,200
<b>LOW</b>	<b>4 Renovation to existing bathroom structure</b> Exterior cladding and roofing rebuild	\$ 75,000
<b>HIGH</b>	<b>5 Utilities, stormwater management and drainage</b> Water, sewer, and electrical services for entire park Food truck connections near the pedestrian plaza Interior lighting for vertical structures Bioretention swales and constructed wetlands	\$ 481,000
<b>LOW</b>	<b>6 Park plantings including riverbank restoration</b> Approximately 10,000 units of native, non-invasive plant material	\$ 83,000
<b>TAYLOR'S WAVE</b>		
<b>HIGH</b>	<b>7 Aquatic life and recreational boating bypass channel</b> Approximately 20% of the wave structure in the French Broad is reserved for passive recreational users and wildlife critters as an alternative to navigation through the wave channel	\$ 850,760
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 3,368,660</b>















## French Broad River Woodfin River Park

### The French Broad River Paddle Trail

The French Broad River Paddle Trail is a scenic route for paddlers and anglers. It follows the river through lush greenery and offers a peaceful escape from the city. The trail is suitable for all skill levels and provides a unique perspective of the river's ecosystem.



For more information on the trail, visit our website or contact the park office. We provide detailed maps and safety guidelines for all users.





Buncombe County  
Passive Recreation Lands  
200 College St.  
Asheville, NC 28801

March 1, 2024

Dear Members of the Buncombe County Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee,

As advocates for a sustainable and resilient future, Asheville GreenWorks is proud to lend our support to the Town of Woodfin's application for funding aimed at enhancing Riverside Park.

We are heartened to learn that funding has been secured for the expansion of Riverside Park and Taylor's Wave, underscoring the commitment to enhancing our community's outdoor spaces. However, we must also address the pressing need for improvements to the existing Riverside Park. This beloved park has been a cornerstone of the Woodfin community for decades, offering a tranquil retreat for hard-working residents seeking solace in nature.

Despite its enduring popularity, years of use and occasional flooding from the French Broad River have taken their toll on Riverside Park. The proposed shovel-ready project represents a critical opportunity to rejuvenate this cherished space. Not only will it refresh amenities and walking paths, but it will also tackle pressing issues such as water quality and flooding through innovative stormwater management, streambank restoration, and the introduction of native plantings.

Asheville GreenWorks wholeheartedly endorses this project, recognizing its potential to not only improve recreational opportunities but also to safeguard the ecological integrity of the area. We urge the subcommittee to recognize the immense value and necessity of funding these essential improvements.

Thank you for your diligent review and consideration of this matter. Together, let us ensure that Riverside Park continues to serve as a haven for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ERB".

Eric Bradford  
Interim Executive Director / Asheville GreenWorks

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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

March 2, 2024

Buncombe County  
Passive Recreation Lands  
200 College St.  
Asheville, NC 28801

Dear Buncombe County Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee Members,

I am reaching out to express the YMCA of Western North Carolina's full support for the Town of Woodfin's efforts to secure funding for the revitalization of Riverside Park.

Community empowerment is at the heart of the YMCA's mission. The Y has a longstanding partnership with the Town of Woodfin, which helps us provide vital services such as a fitness center, afterschool childcare programs, mobile food markets, and youth sports. Through these initiatives, we strive to address the needs of our community, including those most vulnerable.

While the YMCA is known for our active recreation offerings, we also recognize the growing importance of passive recreation opportunities for community well-being. A tranquil, accessible park like Riverside Park provides a sanctuary where individuals and families can unwind and rejuvenate, offering invaluable benefits to our community's health and vitality. With proper investment, the park could further enhance its offerings to benefit residents, particularly those from lower-income and minority backgrounds, as well as visitors seeking a peaceful retreat.

As champions of inclusivity and community well-being, the YMCA supports prioritizing the enhancement of spaces like Riverside Park. Doing so will demonstrate our collective commitment to creating a more equitable and enriching environment for all. We urge you to join us in backing the Town of Woodfin's efforts to make Riverside Park a beacon of tranquility and unity in our community.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Warm regards,

Paul Vest  
President & CEO

**YMCA OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA**

40 N. Merrimon Ave., Suite 309, Asheville, NC 28804 P 828-251-5909 ymcawnc.org



Asheville  
Buncombe  
Community  
Christian  
Ministry

20 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Asheville, NC 28806  
(828) 259-5300 www.abccm.org



**Buncombe County**  
**Passive Recreation Lands Program**  
Asheville, NC 28801

March 14, 2024

Dear Members of the Passive Recreation Subcommittee,

I am writing to you today with support for the Town of Woodfin's application to Buncombe County for a Passive Recreation grant aimed at enhancing Riverside Park.

In my capacity at ABCCM, I am acutely aware of the daily challenges faced by our low-income residents. The unforeseen nature of emergencies, accidents, or crisis events can swiftly disrupt the lives of families, plunging them from stability into uncertainty and often leading to adverse outcomes. It is through support of the Town of Woodfin that ABCCM has expanded vital emergency financial aid and other forms of assistance to these families and individuals, providing a lifeline until they can regain their footing. Having witnessed firsthand the positive impact of the community grant program initiated by the Town in 2022, through our North Samaritan Crisis Ministry located within Woodfin, I can attest to the invaluable support it has provided to those in need.

While our primary mission remains centered on serving the most vulnerable members of our community through our existing programs, I appreciate and support the Town of Woodfin's commitment to fostering holistic well-being among its residents. Recognizing that not everyone has access to spacious backyards or flower gardens, the proposed enhancements to Riverside Park offer a much-needed opportunity for individuals and families to socialize or relax after a long day or difficult event. Moreover, I am grateful for Buncombe County's interest in allocating funding to preserve outdoor spaces that promote conservation and passive recreation opportunities. While active recreation undeniably offers benefits, the tranquility and beauty of a well-maintained outdoor space can be particularly therapeutic for those navigating crisis situations.

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your dedication and efforts to support our community. I sincerely hope that you will consider the Town of Woodfin's request and join us in bringing this vision of a revitalized Riverside Park to fruition.

With gratitude,

**Reverend Scott Rogers**  
**Executive Director**



# Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte

*Strengthening Families. Building Communities. Reducing Poverty.*

March 8, 2024

Buncombe County  
Passive Recreation Lands  
200 College Street  
Asheville, NC 28801

To Whom It May Concern on the Buncombe County Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee,

The Western Region Office of Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte in Asheville is excited to offer our support for the Town of Woodfin's application to the Buncombe County Passive Recreation Lands Fund. This application seeks funding to finalize the renovations of Riverside Park, nestled adjacent to Riverside Drive and the picturesque French Broad River. It's an amazing park that I've been to numerous times enjoying the beauty of Woodfin and the French Broad River.

Catholic Charities is a Christian ministry of charity, service, and justice dedicated to providing help to those in need, hope to those in despair, and inspiration for others to follow. Through our various supportive social services, including the organization of the monthly Woodfin Community Market in conjunction with MANNA FoodBank, we strive to make a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families facing hardships in Woodfin and throughout western North Carolina. Collaborating closely with MANNA and the Town of Woodfin, we have diligently worked for three years to combat food insecurity in our area. In this fiscal year, since July 1, 2023, the Woodfin Community Market has provided essential assistance to almost 1,200 families (almost 5,000 individuals), offering not only food but also non-food essentials crucial for their well-being, like diapers, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, and pet food.

While our focus remains steadfast on our specific mission, we deeply appreciate the Town of Woodfin's shared commitment to serving those in need. Riverside Park stands as a community asset, offering an amazing outdoor setting for community and family gatherings, walking paths for users of all ages, and moments of quiet contemplation by the banks of the French Broad River. We firmly believe that the Town of Woodfin will serve as a responsible steward of the enhanced park facilities, enriching the lives of our residents.





# Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte

*Strengthening Families. Building Communities. Reducing Poverty.*

In endorsing the Town of Woodfin's application, we express our gratitude for your thoughtful consideration towards funding their efforts. Your support will undoubtedly contribute to the continued growth and prosperity of our community, fostering an environment of inclusivity, recreation, and shared enjoyment for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Jesse Boeckermann  
Western Region Director  
Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte  
(828) 820-5153  
[jdboeckermann@ccdoc.org](mailto:jdboeckermann@ccdoc.org)





Dear Woodfin Commissioners,

March 14, 2024

My name is Will Yeiser and I am the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the French Broad River Academy, a split-gender middle school for boys and girls with two campuses located along the banks of the French Broad River here in Woodfin. Our entire community of teachers, students, staff, and families are very excited about the Greenway and Whitewater Wave project slated to begin this summer in Woodin.

I am writing you today to express my support for the completion of Riverside Park. Much like our two campuses located at 1990 and 1420 Riverside Drive, the park's location is a former industrial site that has been neglected for decades. I am intimately familiar with the commitment of resources, time, and energy required to convert a site of this nature into a safe, clean, green, and thriving park that will serve the public. As a professional educator for over thirty years now, I also understand the importance of demonstrating to the surrounding community that we can protect and restore the French Broad while creating an invaluable asset for generations to come by taking on this project. Actions speak louder than words, and consider the impact if this could be the moment when Woodfin's actions communicate that restoration of the riverfront matters to all. Imagine how this project might inspire other businesses and homeowners to do their part and the collective outcome on the river and the surrounding watershed for generations to come. I get excited about the possibilities as I write this letter.

I also understand that the park will provide climate resilience through flood design and management of runoff. I believe this is critical as we will inevitably face increased extreme weather events in our community and worldwide in the coming years. Our North Campus at 1990 Riverside Drive is located downstream and any action you can take to mitigate flooding and other weather events will help protect our school and surrounding businesses from potential damage and disruption of services. The proposed riparian vegetation and intentional landscaping will help stabilize the banks and reduce erosion and sediment runoff, the number one pollutant of the river.

In addition to checking one more box of the greenway master plan and connecting to the River Arts District Greenway, completion of this park will increase our capacity to incorporate the river and the surrounding watershed into our experiential learning curriculum. The park will be adjacent to our South Campus and just a short walk from our North Campus enabling quick and easy access for our students and staff.

Whether we are maintaining and improving park features through our service learning program, demonstrating how the capture and filtration of runoff improves water quality, or, more importantly, engaging local Woodfin children who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience the French Broad and its surrounding parks through our tuition-free

*"To build character and integrity for a lifetime of learning, service, and leadership."*



summer camps, the completion of Riverside Park will increase our ability as an educational institution to increase our impact and access to the river while addressing equity issues in our community and ultimately bringing about increased restoration and protection of this magnificent resource.

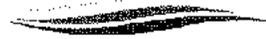
Please complete Riverside Park as designed and if I can do anything to support this process, please let me know. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at [wyeiser@fbriveracademy.org](mailto:wyeiser@fbriveracademy.org) or 828.713.9734.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Yeiser".

Will Yeiser  
Co-founder/Executive Director  
French Broad River Academy

# RIVERLINK



EXPERIENCE. LEARN. CONSERVE.

## Buncombe County Passive Recreation Grant

Re: The Town of Woodfin's Grant Request for Riverside Park

Dear Committee Members:

RiverLink is delighted to submit a letter of support on behalf of the Town of Woodfin's Riverside Park expansion. RiverLink is the nonprofit partner of Woodfin Greenway Blueway (WGB) and we are thrilled to be working together to deliver this environmental and economic asset to the region.

Your support of the Riverside Park expansion and improvements is in direct alignment with your Passive Recreation funding priorities and goals. Together with the in-river kayak wave and the new five miles of greenway, WGB will be an extraordinary amenity to the Woodfin community, which has been a significant financial supporter of this ambitious project, and a regional destination for outdoor recreation, but most importantly an environmental asset given the design and implementation of Riverside Park from a stormwater management and water quality perspective to providing educational opportunities and increased recreational access.

The proposed environmental remediation and restoration, river bank stabilization, new green infrastructure, and educational signage at Riverside Park addresses align perfectly with your criteria for funding including : 1) Conservation and Environmental Impact; 2) Feasibility; 3) Accessibility; 4) Equity; 5) Long-Term Management and Maintenance; and 6) Costs and Leveraged Funding. Your support will make a significant difference in the remaining funding needs of the project and the associated implementation timelines.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of funding and to help complete the transformation of this 4.5 acres, formerly used as landfill, into a local passive recreation amenity and an environmental and water quality asset along this vulnerable and currently impaired stretch of the French Broad River.

With gratitude,

Lisa Raleigh, PhD  
RiverLink Executive Director

170 LYMAN STREET  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801  
828.252.8474  
WWW.RIVERLINK.ORG

## Buncombe County-Passive Recreation Grant

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of the River Walk Home Owner's Association board, we are delighted to express our support for the Town of Woodfin's Riverside Park project.

Our community, River Walk, comprises over 113 residential properties situated directly across Riverside Dr. from the current Riverside Park. Given the industrial and commercial nature of Riverside Drive, this park serves as a crucial outdoor space for residents. Without it, the surroundings would be considerably less suited for residential living. Therefore, we are enthusiastic about the town's initiative not **only** to expand the park and its amenities but also to tackle the existing flooding issues.

Presently, during heavy or prolonged rainfall, the park often becomes unusable due to flooding. Even after the water recedes, sediment deposits make the walking paths hazardous until they are cleaned by town staff, which can take some time. We understand that the planned enhancements will not only improve the park's amenities but also address these stormwater and flooding challenges, thereby enhancing its usability and safeguarding the water quality of the French Broad River.

Furthermore, as members of this community, we recognize the significant role that parks play in fostering the health, well-being, and social cohesion of our neighborhood and others along Riverside Dr. As our population continues to grow, these outdoor gathering spaces will become increasingly valuable and essential for the vitality of our community.

Thank you for your consideration of the town's application, and thank you for your assistance in supporting publicly accessible outdoor spaces overall.



Lolly Frederick  
River Walk HOA Board President



[Link to Riverside Park Master Plan](#)

# Adrienne D. Isenhower

41 Bango Drive, Leicester NC 28748 Phone: 336-380-0661  
aisenhower08@gmail.com

## EDUCATION

2004                    **B.S. Political Science**, Appalachian State University  
2006                    **Master of Public Administration**, Appalachian State University

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

2010                    **Municipal and County Administration Course**, UNC School of Government  
2014                    **Paralegal Certificate Program**, University of Tennessee  
2017                    **Nonprofit Management Graduate Certificate**, UT-Chattanooga  
2018                    **Certified Zoning Officer Training** – UNC School of Government

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## EXPERIENCE

### Town of Woodfin

*September 2022-Present*

#### Projects and Facilities Director

- Oversee multi-million dollar parks and greenways project
- Administer contracts associated with planning and maintenance for all Town parks and facilities
- Coordinate street paving project and ongoing maintenance
- Assist with coordination of trash and recycling cart rollout
- Manage stormwater program and MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permit
- Supervise two employees (Stormwater Administrator and Public Works Manager)
- Supervise Americorps member serving as Volunteer Coordinator
- Coordinate various contracts for public works purposes
- Search and coordinate potential grant opportunities for various projects and programs

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### Town of Woodfin

*October 2020-Present*

#### Planning Director

- Coordinate and direct staff in functions of planning, zoning code enforcement, and issuance of development permits
- Supervise review of plans to ensure compliance with approved codes
- Serve as staff liaison to Planning Board and Board of Adjustment
- Serve as stormwater administrator and coordinate planning efforts for compliance with Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit
- Research and recommend policies, procedures and processes related to development
- Design and manage processes to obtain input from the community
- Assist in project management for two parks projects and a greenway project
- Serve as Deputy Town Clerk

---

### Land of Sky Regional Council

*December 2017-October 2020*

#### Regional Planner/Zoning Administrator

- Serve as Zoning Administrator for the Town of Montreat
- Serve as Planner/Code Enforcement Officer for the Town of Biltmore Forest
- Review residential plans for new construction, additions and renovations for zoning compliance
- Staff liaison to Board of Adjustment and Planning Board

# **Adrienne D. Isenhower**

41 Bango Drive, Leicester NC 28748 Phone: 336-380-0661

aisenhower08@gmail.com

- Enforce stormwater and hillside development ordinances
- Oversee process for update of all development ordinances: zoning, hillside development, stormwater, and flood damage prevention
- Field all development related questions or concerns
- Review and update ordinances based on new 160D legislation for municipalities in the region
- Complete site inspections for zoning permit work and code violations
- Assist with regional stormwater programming

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## **Goodwill Industries – Knoxville, Inc.**

Placement and Supported Program Manager

*May 2017 – December 2017*

- Assist individuals with barriers to employment find jobs
- Job development with area businesses to create opportunities for clients
- Facilitate topics and activities for weekly job club
- Organize, create, and maintain necessary paperwork

GoodGuides Program Manager/Support Specialist

*February 2014-December 2016*

- Assisted with recruitment and action planning of mentoring program for at-risk youth
- Provided career awareness activities through workshops and field trips
- Maintained community partnerships and recruited volunteer mentors and youth mentees
- Ensured quality programming as dictated by grant guidelines
- Achieved recruitment goals and program goals that met grant requirements

Placement Program Manager

*July 2013 – December 2013*

- Assisted individuals with barriers to employment find jobs
- Developed employer contacts throughout the community
- Facilitated classroom topics and discussions related to job readiness
- Increased program participation through development of Job Club

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## **City of Lenoir, NC**

*December 2012-June 2013*

Interim Planning Director

- Handled citizen requests regarding planning or zoning issues
- Served as plan review and zoning compliance officer
- Served as liaison to planning board and City Council
- Responsible for two major subdivision reviews and approvals

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## **Town of Waynesville, NC**

*October 2011-August 2012*

Administrative Assistant

- Administrative tasks associated with performance appraisals and personnel files
  - Led Wellness Committee and assisted with development of citywide wellness initiative
  - Led Safety Committee and reviewed monthly safety issues and policies
  - Coordinated annual health fair for town employees
-

# **Adrienne D. Isenhower**

41 Bango Drive, Leicester NC 28748 Phone: 336-380-0661  
aisenhower08@gmail.com

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## **Town of Sylva, NC**

*May 2009-September 2011*

Town Manager

- Coordinated with Mayor and Council on policy development and implementation
- Networked and developed relationships with community organizations and businesses
- Oversight of construction of new fire station and served as chief budget officer
- Coordinated and developed grant proposals and awarded three proposals simultaneously
- Served as planning board liaison and educator
- Identified potential programs, projects, and policies to enhance town services

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## **City of Lenoir, NC**

*August 2006-May 2009*

Planner

- Data collection for various projects such as building permits and comprehensive planning
  - Developed street index through Geographical Information Systems
  - Coordinated zoning compliance and verification
  - Coordinated eCivis grant system for all city departments
  - Developed policy and coordinated all special events within the city
-

# ***Sheri D. Powers***

24 Powers Ridge Road, Weaverville, NC 28787

Sheripsb@gmail.com

Cell (828) 242-2014

## **Summary**

Proven professional with thirty years of experience. A self motivated, results-focused individual with diverse experience and a solid track-record. Possess strong leadership skills utilizing hands on team building management style with excellent technical and communication skills. Resourceful problem solver with proven ability to bring quick resolution to challenging situations as well as build lasting relationships with co-workers and customers.

## **Areas of Expertise**

- Received CPA license in the State of Florida in 1994.
- In-depth understanding of North Carolina Budget and Fiscal Control Act coupled with a strong technical understanding of all areas of government finance and management.
- Diverse employment background and broad experience and educational background provide the expertise to understand and implement best business practices and to get the job done with proficiency and professionalism.
- Strong computer skills including expertise with Munis Software, Workday Software, Microsoft Office applications and a variety of proprietary systems.
- Organized, restructured, and helped implement new business technology system components to transform manual system to computerized format in municipal government setting.
- NC licensed General Contractor and NC licensed Real Estate Broker
- Experienced with managing complex relationships with elected and appointed officials.

## **Experience**

Town of Woodfin

### **Finance and Budget Director**

February 2021-Present

Oversee all financial operations of the Town of Woodfin including budget, debt, financial reporting, human resources, payroll and utility billing.

Buncombe County

June 2011-2021

### **Business Administrator II – Sheriff**

Manage all business operations of the Buncombe County Sheriff's Office. Responsibilities include managing staff and operations for the Sheriff's functional areas of Budget, Personnel, Purchasing, Fleet, Accounts Payable, Contracts, Grants, Facility Construction, Maintenance, Records, and Financial Reporting.

Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College

January 2013 – 2021

### **Adjunct Instructor – Business and Accounting**

Instructor for college level advanced accounting courses. Course design, instruction, and reporting of Financial, Managerial and Government Accounting semester long courses.

City of Asheville, Asheville, NC

March 2010 – June 2011

### **Accounting Services Manager – Disbursement Services**

Manager of the City's payroll and accounts payable operations as well as assisting with CAFR preparation, budget, general ledger reconciliations, procurement card processing and travel expense reimbursements. Business Technology Information System Project functional lead providing

leadership in design and implementation of Chart of Accounts, General ledger, Budget, Fixed Assets, Work Orders, Accounts Payable and Payroll/HR modules. Successfully reengineered inadequate accounts payable processes and refined staffing requirements.

City of Asheville, Asheville, NC Nov 2008 - March 7, 2010

**Accountant**

General accounting duties including general ledger maintenance, bank reconciliations, capital asset management, assisting with CAFR preparation, budget review, and a phase one BTIP functional lead.

Powers Development Group, LLC, Asheville, NC 2003 - 2008

**CEO – Managing Partner**

CEO of a commercial Real Estate Development firm. Oversee all aspects of commercial development operation including design, permitting, construction, advertising, leasing, financial and accounting activities. Developed and leased over 55,000 square feet of company owned commercial space to date.

Gateway Holdings, Inc., Homestead, FL 1998 - 2001

**Controller – Co-Owner**

Responsible for day to day and overall financial management of holding company and all subsidiaries. Subsidiary companies consisted of a Century 21 Real Estate Franchise with forty five full time agents, ARESCO security and technology company, Gateway Property Management Company and multiple commercial and residential real estate holdings.

Shiver and Associates, Inc., Homestead, FL 1993 - 2000

**Controller - Co-Owner**

Responsible for Real Estate appraisal firm's financial operations. Duties included billing, overseeing A/P and A/R systems, payroll, general ledger, purchasing and financial reporting.

City of Miami Springs, Miami Springs, FL 1993 - 1993

**Interim Finance Director**

Responsible for all aspects of City's financial functions including strategic planning and leadership, A/R, A/P, payroll, utility billing, project reporting, cash management, financial statement production and distribution, grant administration, overseeing annual independent audit, and preparation of operating and capital budgets. Participated in biweekly televised City Council meetings. Accepted position on a temporary basis. Offered permanent position.

City of Florida City, Florida City, FL 1988 - 1993

**Finance Director**

Responsible for all aspects of City's financial functions including strategic planning and leadership, A/P, A/R, payroll, utility billing, project reporting, cash management, financial statement production and distribution, grant administration, overseeing annual independent audit, and preparation of operating and capital budgets. Management of City's financial systems pre and post hurricane Andrew recovery.

**Education**

Florida International University, Miami, FL 1994

M.A. Business-Accounting

Masters Degree in Accounting including course work in Business Administration, Business Law and Computer Science.

Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 1988

B.S., Business Administration

Graduated with a triple major in the areas of Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate and Urban Analysis.

North Buncombe High School, Weaverville, NC 1984  
H.S.

### **Community Service**

Partnership for Substance Free Youth in Buncombe County 2013-2018

#### **Finance Chair**

Helped with grant management and community financial support, worked to organize and staff drug takeback events, youth education programs, and membership meetings.

North Buncombe High School 2007-2012

#### **Volunteer**

Exam Proctor, Football Program's Meal Coordinator – Gathered donations, scheduled and served pregame and postgame meals for 50-60 coaches and athletes weekly for four seasons.

Homestead Family YMCA, Homestead, FL 1996 - 2001

#### **Board Member, Finance Chair**

Member of the Board of Directors. Provided direction, set goals and reviewed performance of executive staff. Served as finance chair/treasurer for three years. Participated in annual capital campaign.

Community Bank of Florida, Homestead, FL 2001 - 2004

#### **Executive Advisory Committee**

Advisory board of community professionals and leaders reporting to the bank's CEO and Board of Directors.

Baptist Hospital, Homestead, FL 1998 - 2003

#### **Ladies of the Pineapple Ball**

Committee that organizes and hosts the Annual Hospital Ball that generates over \$200,000 a year for the Homestead Hospital foundation.

American Cancer Society, Homestead, FL 1994 - 2001

#### **Board of Directors**

Served as a member of Board of Directors and on numerous committees such as the Relay for Life, Fashion Show and New Directions.

# Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Town of Weaverville***

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Selena D Coffey  
30 South Main Street  
PO Box 338  
Weaverville, NC 28787

scoffey@weavervillenc.org  
O: 8286457116  
F: Town of Weaverville

## ***Selena D Coffey***

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30 South Main Street  
PO Box 338  
Weaverville, NC 28787

scoffey@weavervillenc.org  
O: 8286457116

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Town of Weaverville

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Government

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

Not applicable

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Improvements

## Scope of Work

Scope of Work - Weaverville Watershed Trails.pdf

## Project Schedule

Project Budget and Timeline.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

Unassigned Eller Cove Road, Weaverville, N.C. 28787

### Parcel Number

9751769307

### Acreage

309

### Zoning Designation

Open Use (OU)

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$1,072,030.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$1,072,030.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$0.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

The Town will attempt to partner with non-profits to raise funds if necessary to complete this project. We are also considering approaching Buncombe County and the Town of Woodfin to partner on this project, since the project property is in the unincorporated area of the County and adjacent to Town of Woodfin's annexed parcels. The Town sees a collaboration by Weaverville, Buncombe County, and Woodfin to be of great benefit to the community and region.

## Project Summary

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### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

The Town of Weaverville owns a 309-acre watershed that is protected under a conservation easement with the North Carolina Land and Water Fund. The property is forested with mature hardwood-dominant forest

types providing long-range views, and quiet forest space. The objective of this project is to protect and manage the natural resources while allowing for public passive recreational, scientific, educational, and cultural uses that meet the requirements of the conservation easement and this Open Space Bond. The Town has a professionally-designed trail master plan that identifies over 9 miles of potential trails. The trail design utilizes an existing network of old logging roads, and adds trails throughout the property with a minimal impact approach. Public access will be possible from cyclist-friendly Elk Mountain Scenic Highway where we also plan to create a small parking area. The existing water supply equipment and reservoir will be fenced off to protect the Town's equipment and ensure public safety. The bond funding would be used to pay for trail construction, parking area creation, installation of reservoir fencing, and initial trail system maintenance. The project is perfectly aligned with the goals of the Open Space Bond and would be an asset to Buncombe County residents. It will help protect the watershed and give Buncombe County access to a unique multiuse trail system unlike any other in the, improving residents quality of life and access to outdoor recreation.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

We are requesting the use of Bond funds exclusively for land improvement and maintenance. The property is currently under fee title ownership by the Town and has a conservation easement in place that prohibits industrial, commercial, and agricultural use as well as prohibits the disturbance of natural features, plants and animals. The property is located in Buncombe County situated between Eller Cove Rd and Elk Mountain Scenic Highway, with public access proposed off of Elk Mountain Scenic Highway. If awarded Bond funds, the timeline to implementation fits perfectly within the Bond schedule. The project is essentially "shovel ready" and work could proceed almost immediately after funding is secured. The Town anticipates a project completion timeline of under two years. Long term management and maintenance of the property has been thoroughly considered and a clear plan is in place. The Town has developed a draft management plan that details management and maintenance. Furthermore, the trail master plan discusses trail specifications, construction, and maintenance needs. Routine trail maintenance activities will be used to engage the community to demonstrate sustainable trail principles and impart conservation values. The project will be free to access and open to the public, the entire purpose of our funding proposal is to make the property accessible to the public.

## *Improvements Narrative*

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### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

We propose to use the Open Space Bond funds in four different ways; three of which are needed in order to open the property to the public, and one needed afterwards. First, a sustainable trail system needs to be constructed. Trail construction will utilize the existing resources and also create new trails. Trail construction will be executed utilizing the highest industry standards, allow for some ADA accessibility, and include clear signage and maps to help visitors navigate the property. Use of natural materials will be greatly prioritized over any other non-natural materials. Second, a small parking area needs to be established to accommodate visitors who would drive to use the property. The parking area will be constructed utilizing natural materials, have a porous surface, and have as minimal an impact as possible on vegetation and water quality. Third, fencing needs to be erected to protect the reservoir and water supply equipment, as well as ensure public safety. The Town will contract this out to a local, reputable fencing company that has experience constructing fencing in wooded terrain. The fourth element deals with maintenance. The Town of Weaverville proposes to use Open Space Bond funds for maintenance up until the 2030 bond timetable. This will ensure the new trails, parking, and fencing will be sustainable in the long term.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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**Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:**

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Project design plans have been developed in coordination with experienced biologists to minimize wildlife impacts. The Project area is protected under easement to conserve natural communities and water quality. The site provides high quality Chestnut Oak and Rich Cove Forest types known to support various wildlife including listed bats, rare birds, salamanders, and diverse herbaceous flowering plants (see Baseline Report, 2017). The Trail Management Plan implements protections to sensitive natural resource areas, especially streams. Stream buffers prohibit certain uses such as logging and off-trail hiking to prevent impacts to water quality and aquatic habitats. Other prohibited uses like hunting, horseback riding, and motorized vehicles (except for emergency responders and adaptive cycles) apply to the entire property to reduce impacts to

wildlife. The trail alignments and parking areas have been carefully selected to minimize erosion potential, stormwater runoff, number of stream crossings, maintenance, and disturbance to native vegetation. Invasive plants occur onsite including multiflora rose, garlic mustard, oriental bittersweet, and Japanese spiraea. Fortunately, these species occur in relatively discrete locations and proposed trail access would facilitate prudent management and monitoring. The proposed parking area is collocated with the largest concentration of multiflora onsite which will simplify eradication at this location.

## Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

The Project does not rely on the acquisition of new land, but it does create additional public open space for recreation on land that is protected under conservation easement. The Project would provide a unique experience for diverse passive outdoor recreation user groups like hikers, mountain bikers, trail runners, adaptive cyclists, families, dog walkers, wildlife observers, etc. In addition to recreation uses, the Project will support education-focused user groups (including after school programs, see below) to demonstrate sustainable natural resource management principles. Site access will also facilitate wildlife monitoring and help inform prudent, long-term wildlife management practices.

Although public access to hiking and biking opportunities exist in the general vicinity, the site is situated in an area where growing demand for public outdoor spaces exceeds supply (see maps section). The Project occurs along Elk Mountain Scenic Highway (EMSH), a common accessway to the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) and nearby Rattlesnake Lodge that is also a popular cycling route. The Project is designed and strategically situated to complement the recreation opportunities that occur nearby. The Project would also provide a unique cycling route from the Town of Weaverville to the BRP that minimizes use on busy roadways like Reems Creek Road.

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The Town acknowledges that safe, public access to natural resources is essential for promoting wildlife conservation values. The Project will be an asset to Buncombe County Schools, local colleges, and youth groups to demonstrate ecological principles and promote wildlife conservation (see letters of support). The Project provides opportunities for interactive school fieldtrips and educational infrastructure to showcase the site's wildlife communities. It will be available for local colleges to conduct field classes, monitor wildlife, and perform studies that inform adaptive wildlife management. Partners have indicated that acoustic monitoring for rare bats may be particularly useful for wildlife resource agencies to effectively conserve these animals. The Project will expand recreation opportunities for birdwatchers and other wildlife observers. Moreover, the Town will encourage user groups to document wildlife observations via iNaturalist, eBird, and similar public repositories to inventory wildlife onsite. The Town is committed to engage the communities it serves to showcase and implement sustainable outdoor recreation practices at the Project. Routine trail maintenance led by the Town and supported by partners from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Elevated Trail Design, Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association, Carolina Mountain Club, and other youth programs will provide opportunities to impart wildlife conservation values to the community.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

According to wildlife managers, habitat loss due to development is among the greatest threats to wildlife and most challenging issues to address. Fortunately, most of the natural communities onsite are healthy and successfully protected from future development via conservation easement. Future on-the-ground conservation successes include invasive species control and management for erosion/sedimentation. Success of invasive species management will be measured in area of habitat restored and associated effort (person-hours) from partners. Our goal is to completely eradicate invasive plant species from the site.

The Project's potential to facilitate education and instill conservation values is among its greatest assets. Our partners from local Schools and Universities acknowledge the Project's potential to serve as an outdoor classroom to demonstrate ecological principles and practice wildlife/habitat monitoring techniques. Routine trail maintenance activities would also engage the community to demonstrate sustainable trail principles and impart conservation values. Conservation successes achieved through education, outreach, demonstration, and intentional public engagement provide durable conservation benefits that extend far beyond the site boundary. These intangible environmental benefits are difficult to measure precisely, but can be inferred from metrics like number of partners, number of students and participants, volunteer-hours, etc.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)*

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### How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?

The Town of Weaverville feels it has done much preparation and planning to ensure that the project is well situated to be completed successfully. The Land and Water Fund requires a management plan in place prior to passive recreational public use within the watershed easement area. We currently have a draft management plan that has been reviewed both by Town and easement staff and could be formally adopted with approval by the Weaverville Town Council, which is strongly supportive of the trail system concept. A trail master plan has been funded by the Town and has been completed by a professional trail design and construction firm, making the project "shovel ready". Throughout the entire management and trail master plan development, the Town has developed a collaborative relationship between the Town, easement staff, and the community. The amount of community support for this project is tremendous. Private citizens have informally organized into a friends group that includes members of local hiking and bike advocacy groups, contributed significant planning effort to date, and has the capacity to provide trail maintenance if feasible. The Town feels it has a well thought out trail concept and has addressed all of the potential impediments to successful implementation. All required and interested parties are in full support to see the property opened to public use.

### What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

Thanks to the variety of people involved in the planning and preparation of this project, the Town has thought a lot about potential risks and impediments to completion. One primary concern is the potential popularity of the trail system, and how that popularity might overwhelm the parking and capacity of the site. The Town has reached out to law enforcement, the local fire department, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation to make everyone aware of the project and to allow ample time for planning and preparation. Another concern is users attempting to access the property off of Eller Cove Rd. The right of way access goes through private property and ends at the Town's water supply equipment. The Town does not want to create

issues for the landowners or the public accessing the water supply equipment area. Ample signage and communication with the public is planned to try and minimize this potential issue.

## Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

The project planning is nearing completion and the Town is transitioning towards trying to secure funding for installation and construction. The draft management plan has been created and reviewed, and the trail master plan has already been funded and created.

Timeline for completion is estimated to take no more than two years after funding is secured. The trail master plan estimates trail installation could be completed in a 10-11 month timeline. The Town of Weaverville has doubled this timeline to accommodate any potential delays and allow ample time for fencing installation and parking area creation.

Public use could proceed almost immediately after all project elements are installed.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

Town of Weaverville - Property owners and land managers

North Carolina Land and Water Fund - Weaverville watershed conservation easement holders

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy - Monitoring and enforcement of the Weaverville watershed conservation easement

Elevated Trail Designs - Contracted by the Town to develop the trails master plan for the watershed property  
Mark Endries - Private citizen. Initial trail concept, management plan writing, grant writing, project proponent

Byron Hamstead - Private citizen. Wildlife Biologist. Grant writing, project proponent

## Please describe the historical uses of the land.

Prior to 1912, this property was undisturbed mountain woodland, used only for hunting, logging, and gathering of food such as nuts, honey, and fruit. The property has remained relatively undisturbed for generations. In 1913 the Town acquired 100 acres of property in the Eller Cove area as a watershed for the Town's citizens. During 1913, a small concrete dam was built and water lines were laid to transmit the flow of water from this watershed to the south and central areas of Weaverville. From 1913, this watershed remained undisturbed and continued to provide water to the Town until 1923 when a drought affected the water supply and limited production. After several later droughts, additional improvements were made at Eller Cove in the 1970's to expand the acreage to 309.82 acres and to increase the storage capacity and add more distribution lines, but the water supply was not affected or increased. Based on the Town's efforts to provide drinking water from other sources, including wells and a connection with the City of Asheville, use of the Eller Cove watershed was discontinued in the late 1970's. Since that time, the watershed has not been used for any purpose. At present, the Town's water needs are served by a modern water treatment plant which pulls water from the Ivy River. A conservation easement was granted by the Town to the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy in 2017 to preserve the property for future generations.

## Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The property is a typical steep mountain woodlands with 100% of the property covered with mature forests, except for the surface of the small lake and dam (3 acres +/-), the road surface of Elk Mountain Scenic Highway (1/3 acre), overgrown former logging roads, and stream beds. Our trail master plan has delineated trails that make the most of the space available in a sustainable manner to create a diverse and low-density trail system that uses the most up-to-date industry standards. The physical aspects of the property will make construction of the proposed trails and stream crossings relatively difficult due to limited access for equipment, work crews, and delivery of materials. Careful staging of the work will be necessary to work in a progressive manner, using existing and then completed trails within the property and parking areas along Elk Mountain Scenic Highway to limit disturbance of the forest and minimize any erosion. Steeper trails will utilize S curves in order to create a traversable climb, and existing logging roads will be used to develop more accessible trails. We do not foresee any issues that would not be resolvable. Care has been taken to minimize the disruption of the natural resources and hydrology of the property during the planning phase and will be carried forward during installation.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)*

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### Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

The trail system is accessible by two roads, Eller Cove and Elk Mountain Scenic Highway. Motor vehicles will arrive at the property at the Southwest corner parking area. With dedicated parking available on site, and a variety of trail terrain, folks of all ages and abilities will be able to enjoy the Watershed property. A large number of folks will also arrive by Bicycle, as this trail system serves as the connector for a bike loop originating and ending in Weaverville. This loop will allow cyclists to avoid busy travel corridors such as Reems Creek. Bicycle through-travel of the Watershed would connect Eller Cove Rd to Elk Mountain Highway. Bikers can begin in Weaverville or take Elk Mountain Highway from North Asheville/Beaverdam from Asheville. Elk Mountain Highway is already very popular with the cycling community in Buncombe County, and this large connector loop will draw folks. The attached ConnectionsMap details how easily accessible this Trail system is by bike.

### How does the project address public access and use?

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?

- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

Elk Mountain Scenic Highway and Eller Cove Road are rural roads that link directly to areas of Weaverville, Woodfin, North Asheville, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Town anticipates people will arrive to the property using bicycles and motorized vehicles. The trail system will include an accessible, off road parking area. This trail system will be open and free to the public to enjoy. The Town does not intend to offer any spaces on the property for rent, or allow for events to happen on the Property. This does not include any volunteer work events, or similar free service events. Included in the plan is construction of seating areas for visitors to enjoy the views, and enjoy the trails at their own pace.

### If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The nearest communities to this project include Weaverville, Woodfin, North Asheville/Beaverdam Valley, and neighborhoods across North Buncombe County. Elk Mountain Scenic Highway is very popular with the cycling community, and adding this trail system would not only add value to the communities in Weaverville looking to hike and walk outdoors in a safe, peaceful space, but also add value for the existing cycling community who are using the surrounding areas. There are few open multimodal recreational spaces for all ages and accessibility levels in this area of North Buncombe County.

### Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

Compliance with ADA accessibility standards on the project must be balanced with the desire to preserve/protect the unique natural features of this steep and rugged property and wildlife present. Full compliance with the ADA is not practicable on the trails based on anticipated trail slope and width, but many standards can be met. The trail system generally follows the existing logging roads and provides a firm and stable trail. The running slope on the trails average 3-10%. The cross slope for trails will be 1.5-2%, which is less than 3% and in compliance with the ADA. The clear tread width will be at least 36" (ADA required) and will average between 36" and 48". An 8' cleared corridor is planned to avoid overhead/protruding obstacles. Routine and as-needed trail maintenance will resolve overhead, protruding, and tread obstacles. Gates/barricades used to prohibit vehicular access to the trails will be designed to allow easy access to the trail system. An Entry Level Trail (see map) is planned as an out-and-back trail (roundtrip approx. 3 miles long) along a ridgeline and viewshed that will be quite approachable to those with special physical needs and to new and young hikers and bikers. The Town would also like to provide accessibility to most of the trail system for Adaptive Mountain Biking, which encompasses a broad range of riders who typically cannot ride a standard mountain bike and requires adapted equipment and trails to suit their physical and other abilities.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

This trail system will be open to the public and encourage participation of all, regardless of background, identity, or different abilities. One of the goals in creating this trail system is encouraging and promoting healthy activities to all residents in the surrounding communities. Another goal is allowing public exposure to

the mature forest and wildlife on the property, including birds like the Cerulean Warbler, a species with declining numbers and a particular affinity for our mature forested area. The development of accessible paths encourages folks across demographics and abilities to discover the best way for them to interact with this system of trails. The Town wants to create a recreation environment that will offer the opportunity for affirmation, celebration, and appreciation of different recreation approaches, styles, perspectives, and experiences.

### **Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?**

The Weaverville Town Council adopted a Title VI Civil Rights Compliance Policy on April 27, 2020, to formally enact the Town's longstanding practice of providing programs and services on a nondiscriminatory basis. Pursuant to that policy and in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, the Town operates its programs, activities, and services without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or income level. The Town assures that every effort will be made to ensure that no person will be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that it administers.

### **Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?**

If yes, which projects?

In February of 2023 the Town of Weaverville voted in favor of establishment of an affordable housing development with over 150 units. As of 2023, 37.7% of Weaverville residents were over the age of 60.

### **What are the historical or cultural features of the land?**

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The Town of Weaverville purchased this property over a century ago in an effort to protect the Eller Cove Watershed from pollutants, which at the time supplied the Town's drinking water. By 1993 the river was no longer a viable water source for the Town, and the Watershed was set aside as an emergency water supply. Between 2013-2017, the Town worked with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy to place a conservation easement on the acreage. The easement protects the headwaters of Reems Creek, the forested habitat, the scenic views, and the largely forested area of, mature chestnut oak forest, rich cove forest, and montane oak-hickory forest.

### **Describe the community support/involvement in the project.**

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

In addition to a group of Town Staff dedicated to this project, we have a group of community members supporting the development of this grant application and the development of these trails. There is community support to develop a Friends of the Watershed group that would assume a level of responsibility and ambassadorship. As you will see from the Letters of Support, we are in communication with established hiking and biking groups in the area and have their support, including the Carolina Mountain Club, Pisgah Rage, and Pisgah Area Sorba.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

We do not foresee this project having any potential negative impact on the surrounding communities. Alternatively, the project will support and mitigate potential negative impacts of population growth by preserving and providing free, wild open spaces for recreation.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

The Town plans to continue as the lead land manager of the property and provide the maintenance and management of the property as it has for the past century unless collaborations are formed with the County and/or the Town of Woodfin. Current maintenance work is performed by the Weaverville Public Works Department. Once the project is completed with a new trail system and parking area, there will be an entirely new set of maintenance and management needs for the property. For the first few years after trail installation, the Town would like to contract that work out to the professional trail construction company that designs and builds the trails, with the intent of eventually hiring staff with the expertise and skills necessary to correctly manage the trails long term. Additionally, there is strong community support to develop an official Friends of the Watershed group that would take on some level of responsibility of property maintenance and management. The interested community members have experience with trail construction and maintenance, invasive plant control, plant and animal identification, and trash and litter management. Mobilization of this Friends group is all but guaranteed and will also be interested in providing guided educational hikes, trail maintenance, invasive plant removal, and other work-day like events that would be open to the public.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

Yes, the Weaverville Public Works Department will be the official land manager responsible for the maintenance and management of the property. However, as departmental resources are sometimes difficult to assign outside of Town corporate limits, the Town of Weaverville may determine that it is the most effective and efficient use of Town resources by hiring a maintenance firm to assist with long-term maintenance of the project. The Weaverville Public Works Department currently consists of 18 employees and is responsible for providing a number of essential services to the citizens of the Town in 3 divisions: Sanitation, Streets Maintenance and Parks Maintenance. Public Works has managed the Weaverville Watershed property for the entire time the Town has owned the property. In addition to the watershed, the Park maintenance Division currently manages two additional parks: Lake Louise Park and the Main Street Nature Park.

## Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The Weaverville Town Manager will oversee the financial management of this project, supported by the Town's Finance Director, also a CPA, and a three-person Finance Department. As the Governing Body of the Town, Town Council also pays close attention to the financial expenditures, capital projects, and financial management of the Town.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

The Town of Weaverville will provide staffing or funding for outsourcing of the long-term maintenance and management of the project. If grant funding is not provided, Town Council may need to allocate Town revenue for the long-term maintenance and management of the project.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Yes, there is strong community support to develop an official friends group that would take on some level of responsibility of property maintenance and management. The community members have experience with trail construction and maintenance, invasive plant control, plant and animal identification, and trash and litter management. Mobilization of this friends group is all but guaranteed and could provide guided educational hikes, trail maintenance, invasive plant removal, and other work-day like events that would be open to the public. Furthermore, the Town is in communications with some established hiking and biking groups in the area and have their full support. The Carolina Mountain Club and Pisgah Area Sorba have both written letters of support for the project. Once the trails are installed there is the possibility of having their direct involvement in trail maintenance.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

Draft Management Plan Weaverville Watershed.pdf

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

**Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.**

How were these costs estimated?

The Town of Weaverville proposes to use the Open Space Bond funds in four different ways: 1.) trails construction, 2.) parking area creation, 3.) fencing, 4.) future management and maintenance. The cost of trails, parking area creation and future management and maintenance costs were estimated by Elevated Trail Designs, a professional trail design and construction firm who the Town contracted with to develop the trail master plan for the property.

### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

The Town of Weaverville has invested significant effort and funding for the Weaverville Watershed Trails project to date. The Town has managed the property for the last century as a normal component of its Public Works responsibilities. This includes mowing, trash and litter clean up, invasive plant removal, and installing fencing to secure the property. The Town authorized the funding to have a professional trail design and construction firm develop a trails master plan. In 2023 the Town submitted a grant proposal with the Land and Water Fund, the conservation easement holders for the property, to conduct management activities on the property that would help protect the integrity of the conservation easement. The Town has also leveraged public interest in the project and has collaborated with private citizens to develop the draft Watershed management plan as well as assistance with developing this grant proposal. Moving forward, the Town is fully invested in the trails concept and working to see it open to the public.

### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

The Town of Weaverville could work with any amount provided, but may need to adjust the plans and fund the project incrementally over a number of years.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

Where can you go for a hike or mountain biking in North Buncombe County? There is significant need for publicly available nature-based passive recreation in North Buncombe County. In 2020 the Alexander Mountain Bike Park was closed to expand the landfill and no new trails were developed as a replacement. This was a significant loss for residents interested in passive recreation in North Buncombe County. As a

result, for residents of North Buncombe County the nearest opportunity to mountain bike and hike all but requires driving to other more distant destinations in the County. The Weaverville watershed trail project will fill a void and provide trails in North Buncombe County. Even better is that for residents of Weaverville, Woodfin, and North Asheville this destination can be easily reached by bicycle alone, reducing the dependency of cars for passive recreation in Buncombe County.

The Weaverville Watershed is located adjacent to Buzzard Rock, which is already a popular tourism destination in Buncombe County. If the trails are completed it would provide additional recreation opportunities to an already popular tourist locale.

The Weaverville Watershed trails would greatly benefit recreation and public health, and potentially reduce the need to take a car to recreate. The Town of Weaverville also feels the trails could be a significant driver for tourism and economic development in the area.

### **Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?**

If yes, which goals are impacted?

The Buncombe County Strategic Plan vision calls for a community in harmony with its environment. The Weaverville Watershed trails project will provide a pristine location where residents can explore nature in the County. If implemented, the project would benefit the Environmental & Energy Stewardship, Resident Well-Being, and Vibrant Economy focus areas by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving environmentally sensitive tracts, expanding cultural and recreational assets, and being a stimulus to the local economy.

The project would positively impact the Equity, Sustainability, Livability, Conservation, and Community vision themes outlined in the 2043 Comprehensive plan. Equity by providing a public use locale in an underserved location, sustainability by protecting a natural resource, livability by providing a unique public-use natural area, conservation by providing a nature-based recreation economic opportunity, and community by being a partner in a community-led trail building effort.

The project is also perfectly aligned with the Open Space Bond Passive Recreation Lands initiative. The initiative calls for adding conservation benefits by providing a destination for hiking, biking, birding, wildlife viewing, educational activities, and low-impact outdoor recreation that is constructed out of onsite natural materials. This is exactly aligned with the Town of Weaverville's vision for the Watershed trail project.

### **Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?**

Yes

### **If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.**

Jill Carter, Open Space Bond Project Manager, [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) and James Eller, Planning Director for Town of Weaverville, [jeller@weavervillenc.org](mailto:jeller@weavervillenc.org)

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

The Town of Weaverville has done much planning and preparation with the Weaverville Watershed Trails project to address the issue of safety. The Town of Weaverville has reached out to law enforcement, the local fire department, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation to make everyone aware of the project and to allow ample time for planning and preparation. Another safety concern is users attempting to access the property off of Eller Cove Rd. The right of way access goes through private property and ends at the Town's water supply equipment and reservoir. The Town does not want to create issues for the landowners or the public accessing the water supply equipment area. The Town plans to install exclusion fencing to surround the reservoir and water supply equipment to keep visitors from these areas. Additionally, ample signage and communication with the public is planned for all aspects of the property to adequately inform visitors on allowable uses of the property and how to navigate the trail system.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

Once the trails are opened to the public the Town of Weaverville plans to have skilled trail maintenance staff and Weaverville law enforcement presence in the area to protect from deterioration and vandalism. Additionally, the Town would like to leverage the strong community support of the project to potentially mobilize an official friends group and/or established hiking and biking groups to serve as trail ambassadors to further assist with preventing deterioration and vandalism.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

The Weaverville Watershed Trails master plan has identified bike only and hike only trails to better serve each user group and also to reduce potential conflicts between the groups. Additionally, ample signage and communication with the public is planned for all aspects of the property to adequately inform visitors on allowable uses of the property, how to navigate the trail system, and provide strategies for minimizing potential conflicts between user groups.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

As the manager of multiple parks within the Town of Weaverville, the Town has the knowledge and expertise to know what signage is needed for the Weaverville Watershed Trails. The Town will contract with a professional signage company to create all signs. For Trail navigation the Town will closely coordinate with the professional trail construction firm to identify and create all needed navigation signs. The Town does not foresee any issues developing and installing all needed signage for the property.

## ***Applicant Experience***

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### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service

- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

The Town has, for a number of years, maintained two very active parks, including the Lake Louise Park and the Main Street Nature Park. While Lake Louise Park boasts a number of amenities including the Weaverville Community Center, fishing, trails, outdoor fitness equipment, accessible playground equipment, and the most recently-added recreation complex (including pickleball courts and a multi-purpose sport court), the Main Street Nature Park is reserved for passive recreation including birding, picnicking, trail walking/running, and special events sponsored by the Town.

The Town's Public Works Recreation Maintenance Department, managed by the Town's Public Works Director and Engineer, provides maintenance and upkeep for the aforementioned parks and our experienced Recreation Coordinator provides work on programming for the parks.

The Town maintains both parks using tax dollars and grant funding when available and awarded, in addition to assistance from community clubs, such as the Weaverville Garden Club and local boy scouts who raise funds to help beautify the parks.

### **Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

The Town has, for a number of years, maintained two very active parks, including the Lake Louise Park and the Main Street Nature Park. While Lake Louise Park boasts a number of amenities including the Weaverville Community Center, fishing, trails, outdoor fitness equipment, accessible playground equipment, and the most recently-added recreation complex (including pickleball courts and a multi-purpose sport court), the Main Street Nature Park is reserved for passive recreation including birding, picnicking, trail walking/running, and special events sponsored by the Town.

### **Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.**

Elevated Trail Designs - Trail Master Plan

Established in 2011, Elevated Trail Design is located in Buncombe County but have built trails and bike parks here and also in CO, NM, WV, MD, TN, NY, VA, and SC. ETD has the expertise to assist with any phase of a trail project, from vision and design to construction and maintenance, pride themselves in adapting to each unique environment. Owner Peter Mills serves on the Connect Buncombe Board to advocate for greenway accessibility in his community.

Mark Endries and Byron Hamstead – Project Proponents, Draft Management Plan writing, grant writing, technical assistance

Mark Endries is an avid advocate for outdoor recreation in Buncombe County, and a Geographic Information Systems specialist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Mark puts his planning and map making skills to use by identifying opportunities for enhancing passive recreation opportunities in the area. Mark sketched the initial trail concept for the Watershed trails, wrote the draft management plan, and helped put together this grant application. Byron is an experienced wildlife biologist with the USFWS focussing on aquatic ecology, impact minimization, environmental regulation, and instilling environmental conservation values through public outdoor recreation.

## **Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)**

IRS Letter - 4076C - Tax Exempt Status for Town of Weaverville.pdf

## **Resumes of Key Staff**

Key staff resumes - County open space grant.pdf

## ***Budget***

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### **Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.**

The budget includes cost estimates for four project components: 1.) trails construction, 2.) parking area creation, 3.) Fencing, 4.) future management and maintenance. Each of the components listed are needed to see the trail system developed to its full potential. The cost of trails, parking area creation and future management and maintenance costs were estimated by Elevated Trail Designs, a professional trail design and construction firm who the Town contracted with to develop the trail master plan for the property.

## **Project Budget**

Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve Project Budget.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

2024-2-26 Resolution of Support for Passive Recreation Lands FY2024 Grant Application.pdf

## **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

Weaverville Watershed Project Maps.pdf

## **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Photos of Weaverville Watershed Project-Property.pdf

## Letters of Support

Weaverville Watershed Project Letters of Support.pdf

## Other Documentation

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Scope of Work - Weaverville Watershed Trails.pdf
- Project Budget and Timeline.pdf
- Draft Management Plan Weaverville Watershed.pdf
- IRS Letter - 4076C - Tax Exempt Status for Town of Weaverville.pdf
- Key staff resumes - County open space grant.pdf
- Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve Project Budget.pdf
- 2024-2-26 Resolution of Support for Passive Recreation Lands FY2024 Grant Application.pdf
- Weaverville Watershed Project Maps.pdf
- Photos of Weaverville Watershed Project-Property.pdf
- Weaverville Watershed Project Letters of Support.pdf

# WEAVERVILLE WATERSHED TRAILS

## SCOPE OF WORK

3/21/2024

### OVERVIEW

#### 1. Project Background and Description

Weaverville owns a 309-acre watershed under a conservation easement with the North Carolina Land and Water Fund. The watershed was formerly used as the Town's water supply, but stopped this in the late 1970's. The property is forested with mature hardwood-dominant forest types providing long-range views and backcountry-like quiet forest space.

The Town of Weaverville would like to protect and correctly manage resources while allowing public passive recreational, scientific, educational, cultural, and aesthetic uses. The town has a professionally-designed trail master plan that identifies over 9 miles of potential trails. The trail design utilizes the existing network of old logging roads and adds additional trails throughout the property with a minimal impact approach.

Access will be from cyclist-friendly Elk Mountain Scenic Highway where a small parking area will be created, as well as other access points exclusively for biking and hiking that would not provide parking. The water supply equipment and reservoir will be fenced off to both protect the Town's equipment and ensure public safety. This document identifies the costs required for trail installation, parking area creation, installation of the reservoir fencing, and property maintenance.

The Town of Weaverville would like to provide as much accessibility as is practical for a property at steep and rugged as it is. The town has identified portions of two trails as entry level that combined would provide an out and back route of approximately 3 miles along a ridgeline and watershed that will be quite approachable to those with special physical needs and to new and young hikers and bikers. Additionally, the town anticipates that most of the trail system will be accessible for adaptive mountain biking.

The project would be a tremendous asset to Buncombe County residents. It will help protect the watershed while giving Buncombe County citizens access to a unique multiuse trail system unlike any other in Buncombe County, improving residents quality of life and access to outdoor recreation.

## 2. Project Scope

Prior to allowing public use of the property, the Town of Weaverville has identified 4 project needs:

1. Trails. A sustainable trail system needs to be constructed. Trail construction will utilize the existing resources and add new trails. Trail construction will be executed utilizing the highest industry standards, allow ADA accessibility as much as is possible, and include clear signage and maps to help visitors navigate the property. Use of natural materials will be greatly prioritized over any other non-natural materials. Trail installation is divided into three distinct phases (see Phase Map in the Map section of this document):

Phase 1: Convert existing roads on the property to sustainable trails, a portion of which will be entry level accessible

Phase 2: Add trails to connect Phase 1 trails to right-of-way access to enter and exit watershed from Eller Cove Rd.

Phase 3: Add additional trails to provide full capacity of hiking trails on the property. A portion of these trail will expand the entry level accessible trails on the property.

Phase 4: Add observation/viewing platforms or covered pavilions in two locations.

2. Parking. A small parking area of 14-18 spots needs to be established to accommodate visitors who would drive to use the property. The parking area will be constructed utilizing natural materials, have a porous surface, and have as minimal impact as possible on vegetation and water quality.
3. Fencing. Fencing needs to be erected to protect the reservoir and water supply equipment, as well as ensure public safety. The Town will contract this out to a local, reputable fencing company that has experience constructing fencing in wooded terrain.
4. Management and Maintenance. Once the trails, parking and fencing has been installed, proper management and maintenance of all elements will be needed to ensure the new trails, parking, and fencing will be sustainable in

the long term. The proposed maintenance strategy and budget will contract two professional trail builders (80 person-hours/month) to accomplish routine site evaluations and maintenance for at least the first four years post-construction (i.e. until 2029).

### 3. Property History

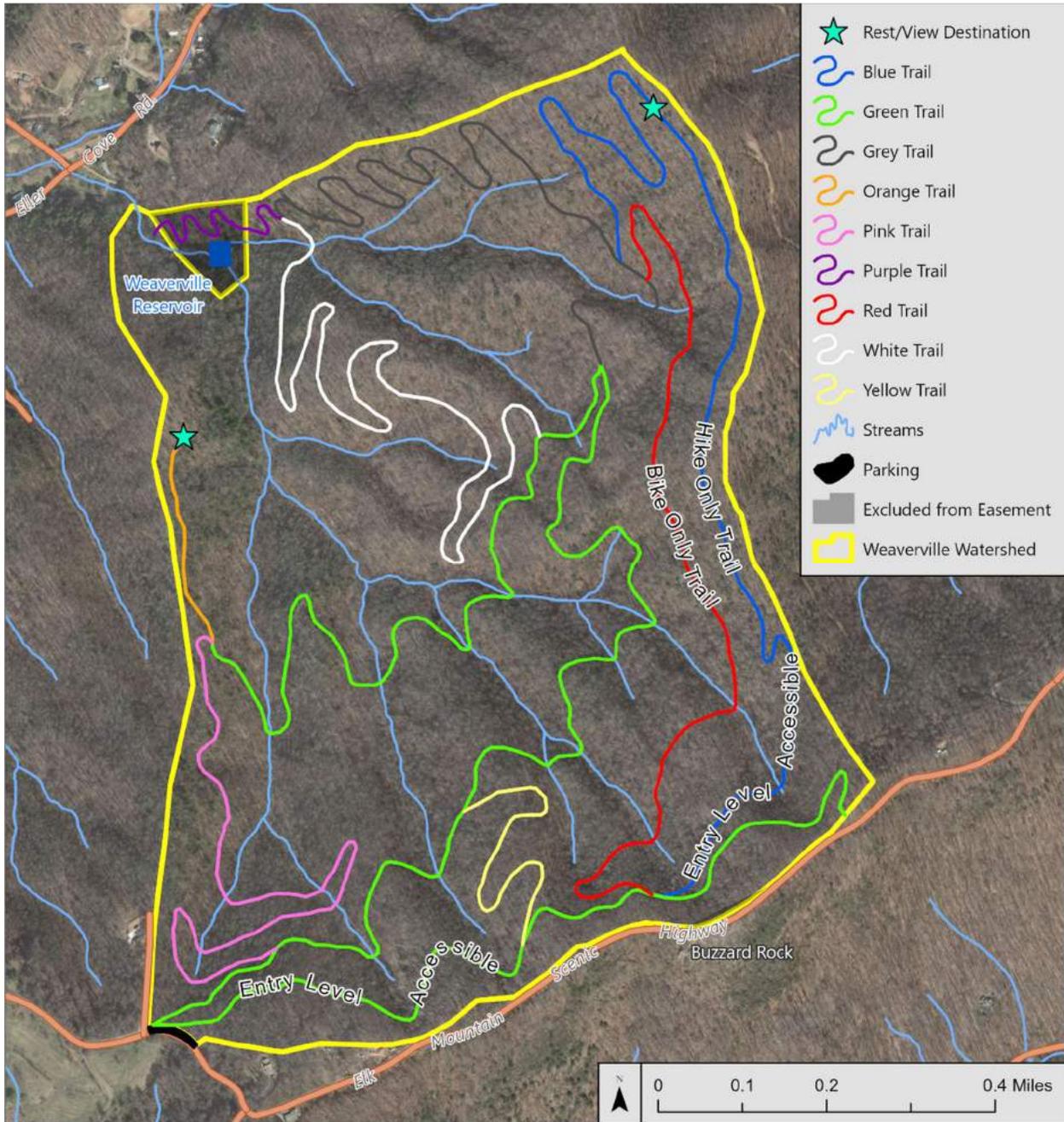
1913:	Town of Weaverville purchases property.
1913 – late 1970's:	Town uses property for municipal water supply.
Late 1970's – current:	Land lays fallow, no significant use by the Town.
2017:	North Carolina Land and Water Fund Conservation Easement granted by the Town to the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy to preserve the property for future generations.
2023:	Town of Weaverville contracts with Elevated Trail Designs to develop a trail master plan to provide public use of the property.
2024:	Town working to see the trail master plan installed.

## PROJECT BUDGET AND INSTALLATION TIME ESTIMATES

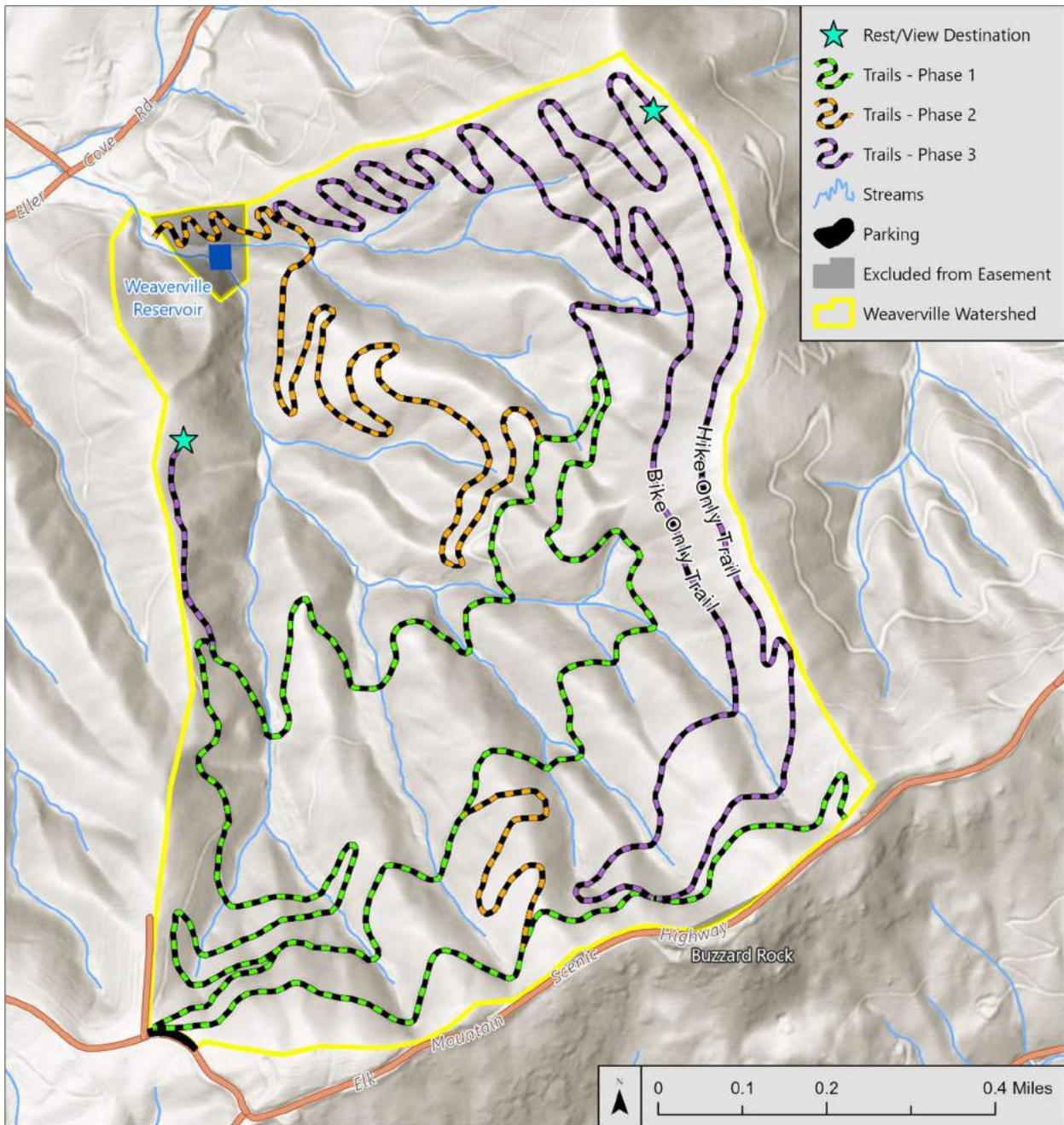
The total time estimated for project installation is under 2 years. Individual project components could be installed simultaneously. Parking area creation might be needed first to serve as a staging area for trail installation.

Item	Cost	Time estimate
Parking Area Improvements	\$100,000	3 Months
Water Equipment Exclusion Fencing	\$232,200	2 Months
Phase 1 Trail Installation	\$141,500	4 Months
Phase 2 Trail Installation	\$136,000	3 Months
Phase 3 Trail Installation	\$222,330	4 Months
Phase 4 Observation/Viewing Platforms	\$20,000	2 Months
2026 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
2027 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
2028 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
2029 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
	<b>Total Cost: \$1,072,030</b>	

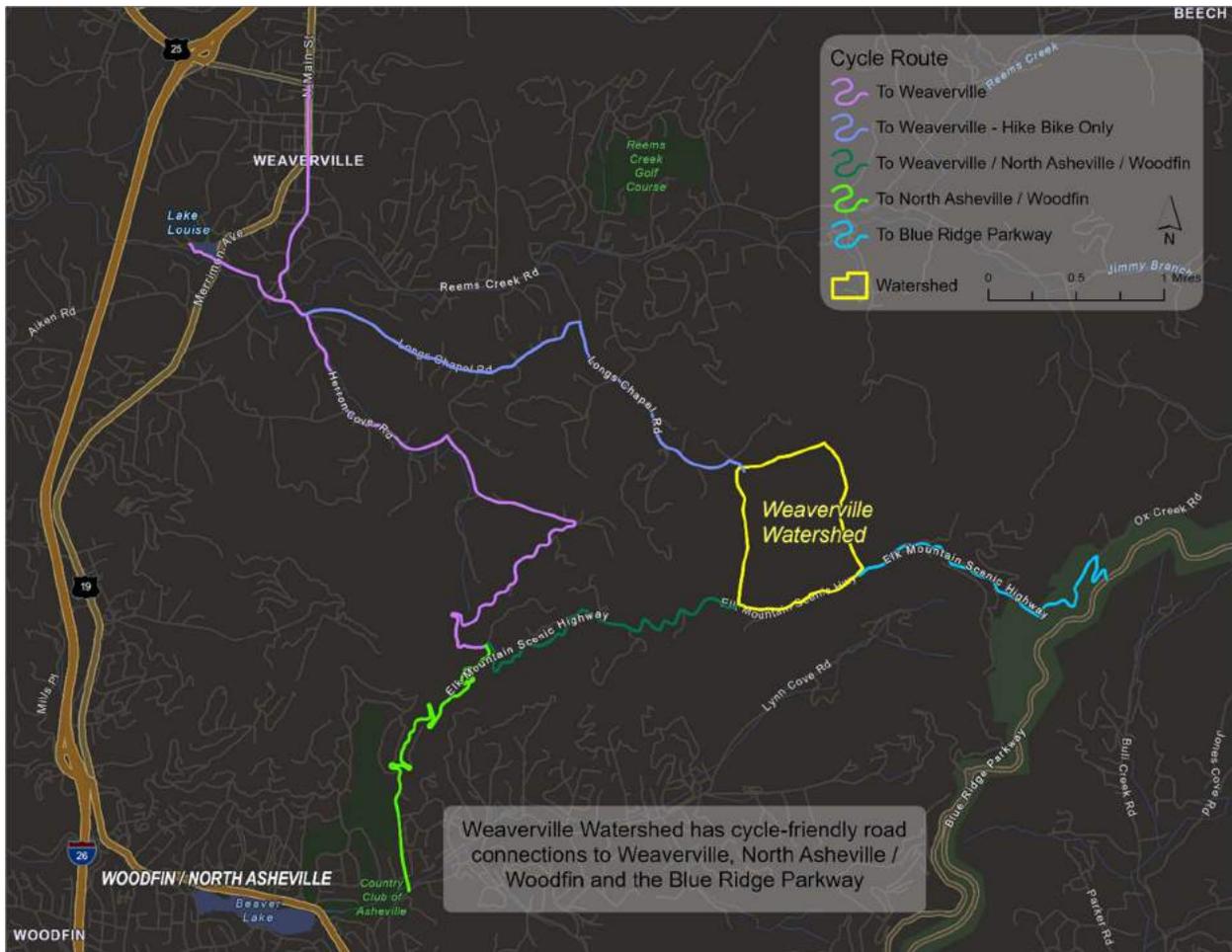
# MAPS



Trail map showing all individual trails



Trail map showing installation phases.

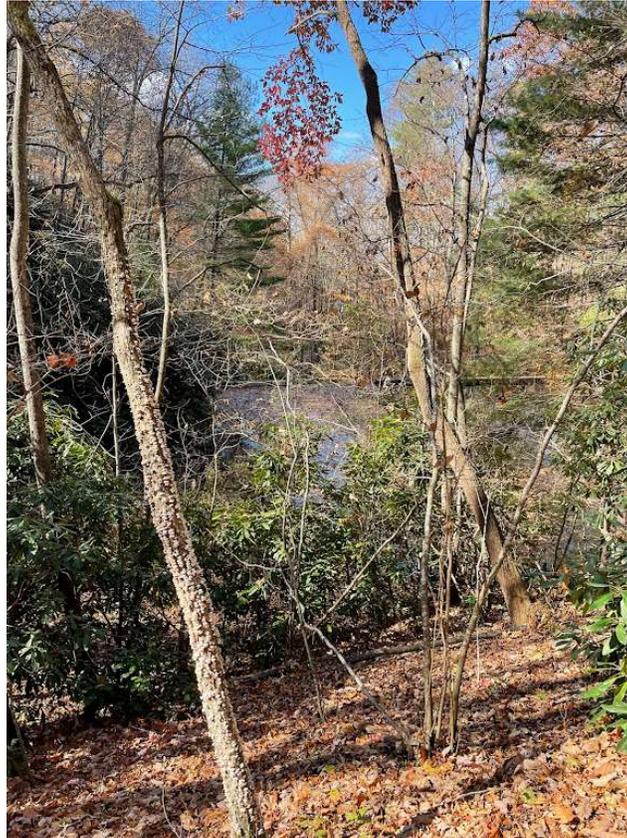


Access map showing major routes for access. All routes identified are cyclist friendly.

## Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve - Project Budget Timeline

Item	Cost	Time estimate
Parking Area Improvements	\$100,000	3 Months
Water Equipment Exclusion Fencing	\$232,200	2 Months
Phase 1 Trail Installation	\$141,500	4 Months
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2028 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
2029 Maintenance	\$55,000	1 year
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$1,072,030</b>	

# Weaverville Watershed Management Plan



Prepared for:  
Town of Weaverville  
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy  
NC Land and Water Fund

Prepared by:  
Mark Endries

# **Weaverville Watershed Management Plan**

## **Ancestral Lands Statement**

The Town of Weaverville recognizes that the entire town is situated on ancestral land of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation. Prior to European contact the Cherokee Nation was estimated to be around 25,000 people and covered as many as 135,000 square miles of the American Southeast, consisting of over sixty towns. The Town of Weaverville recognizes the Cherokee as the native people and original stewards of this land and understands that there is a need to listen and learn from the people of this land.

## **Vision Statement**

To provide Town of Weaverville residents a place for passive, nature-based outdoor recreation to promote healthy communities, increased volunteerism, and environmental sustainability and to provide the businesses of Weaverville a vibrant and sustainable outdoor recreation economy.

## **Introduction**

In July of 2017 the North Carolina Land and Water Fund (Fund), Town of Weaverville (Town), and Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) entered into a grant agreement to provide funds for the acquisition of a conservation easement on a roughly 309-acre former watershed Easement Area owned by the Town. Since that time, the Town has desired to open the Easement Area to passive recreational uses that comply with the requirements of the conservation easement. Passive recreational uses may include non-commercial hunting, fishing, hiking, walking, biking, scientific study, animal/plant observation, nature and environmental education, historic tours, photography, and any other purposes consistent with these accepted uses and the maintenance of the conservation values, subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. One stipulation to passive recreational public use of the watershed Easement Area is that a management plan be developed and formally adopted by the Town, subject to approval by the Fund and SAHC. The report and maps provided herein satisfy that management plan requirement.

## **A. Goal**

The goal of this Management Plan is to protect and correctly manage the Weaverville watershed Easement Area while accommodating public access and allowing appropriate use. Adoption of the specifications developed in this plan should accomplish this goal. This plan is not to be confused as or used as a management plan for the treatment and distribution of water resources. This plan is also broad and general in context, prescribing solutions in the manner of a master plan.

## **B. Excluded areas**

There are some areas of the Weaverville watershed parcel that are excluded from the conservation easement and therefore are excluded from the management plan.

Those areas are as follows:

- Along the Northern border there is a 3.36-acre area that is excluded from the easement (Figure 1 and Exhibit A). This area includes the gravel road, tanks, buildings, dam, and reservoir associated with the old water supply. Currently there is no fencing or other exclusion present in this area.
- Along the Southern border, 0.34 acres along Elk Mountain Scenic Highway are excluded (Figure 1 and Exhibit A).
- Along the Western border there are two small areas excluded from the easement. One is 0.05 acres and the other is 0.09 acres (Exhibit A).

## **C. Objectives**

This plan identifies 3 key objectives.

- Objective A: Identify and avoid sensitive resource areas
- Objective B: Assess and provide reasonable allowable uses of the Easement Area
- Objective C: Provide a phased approach to public access including trails, parking areas, and other infrastructure improvements

Management strategies were discussed with natural resource professionals from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NC Land and Water Conservation Fund, Town officials, and SAHC staff. This plan reflects recommendations from all agencies and entities involved.

### **Objective A: Prioritize, Delineate, and Buffer Critical Resource Areas**

Protection of the watershed's natural resources is the primary objective of this Management Plan. In addition to the conservation easement protections, greater protection of the water resources is highlighted here and provided with the management plan. Buffering the stream network using guidelines established by the US Environmental Protection Agency and North Carolina Division of Water Resources in other parts of the state strives to maintain the ecological integrity of the stream network. Allowable uses in the buffer zones are further restricted to only those less-intensive activities allowed in the conservation easement likely not to have adverse consequences on the critical resources.

The buffer zones are indicated on the Management Plan maps and will prove useful to Town officials as they manage the Easement Area for public use. The buffer zones are not surveyed and identified on-site, but merely serve as a guide as to areas to minimize

use. A spatially referenced digital dataset has been created and could be used with GPS enabled mapping software by the Town and stakeholders. The existing road/trail network does intrude the buffered areas at certain areas, but the majority of these buffer intrusions have established roadbeds that are currently in adequate condition and suggest no immediately measurable detrimental impact to the stream resources. Both the buffer delineation objective and the allowable uses objective are discussed simultaneously in this section of the Management Plan.

Streamside Buffers

The intent of this management plan is to protect the water quality of the stream network by maintaining the existing vegetative state surrounding the streams, or stabilizing the vegetative state surrounding the streams if erosion or instability of the buffered stream corridors is evident, and maintain vegetative stability into the future. A 300-foot buffer is standard width for NC Land and Water Fund projects. Buffering the streams with this width essentially encompasses the entire watershed parcel. Therefore, one could consider the entire parcel within a stream protection zone. To further reinforce and protect the streams on site, additional buffers of 30, 50, and 100 feet were created and mapped surrounding the streams (Figure 1). The distances were derived from the sources outlined in Table 1. The intent of these buffers is to highlight the sensitivity of these areas as you get closer to the streams. This plan recognizes that certain future needs may require management in the stream buffer zones. Such needs may include fire control, trail maintenance to minimize erosion, and invasive exotic plant management. The intent of the buffers is to highlight that greater care to not impact or disturb the buffered areas increases as the distance to the stream decreases.

Table 1. Buffer Distances applied to streams in the Weaverville watershed

Buffer Distance	Source	Definition
30 Feet	North Carolina Environmental Quality	Zone 1 of Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, and Catawba River Basin Buffer Rules
50 Feet	North Carolina Environmental Quality	Zone 2 of Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, and Catawba River Basin Buffer Rules
100 Feet	US Environmental Protection Agency	Wenger, S.J., and L. Fowler. 2000. Protecting stream and river corridors: creating effective local riparian buffer ordinances. Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

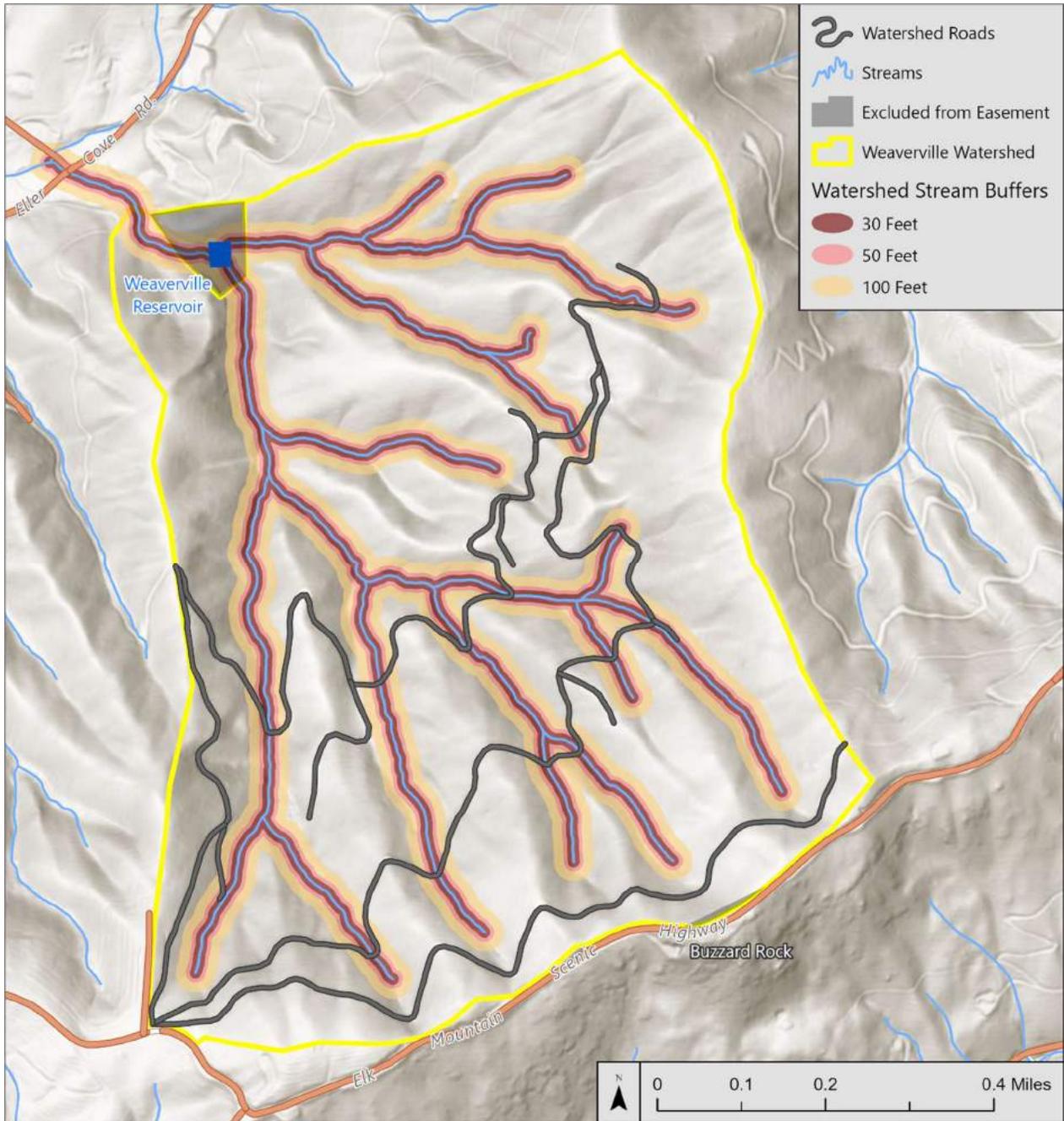


Figure 1. Weaverville watershed Easement Area showing buffered streams and existing roads.

**Objective B: Assess and Provide Reasonable Allowable Uses of the Easement Area**

Buffered Areas

*Allowable Uses*

Members of the general public may enter the stream buffer areas on established trails as

indicated on the Management Plan maps. Use of the trails is restricted solely to foot and non-motorized bicycle traffic. Trails follow established roadways currently on the Easement Area, and no other side trails will be constructed in the buffer areas.

Scientific study and research by credentialed individuals including fish, wildlife, and plant study and monitoring, water chemistry, hydrology, and other scientific monitoring is allowed under permission from the Town. Permission will normally be granted provided those activities occur under established academic or agency programs and associated protocols.

Maintenance of trails by the Town, an established friends group, or qualified contractor(s) is allowed to ensure adequate control of sediment and erosion should that ever become a problem from allowed trail use.

The Town and emergency responders will need to maintain the right to access the stream buffer areas through use of motorized equipment as deemed necessary in performance of management duties or under emergency conditions where safety of the public is of serious concern.

#### *Uses Not Allowed*

All other uses including camping, commercial logging or tree harvest, off trail hiking, hunting, horseback riding, foraging, fishing, use of motorized vehicles, and picnicking are prohibited.

#### Unbuffered Areas

The remainder of the Easement Area outside of the buffered areas is open for general public use and enjoyment consistent with the terms stated in the conservation easement. Camping is not allowed at any place within the watershed. With the exception of Town staff for land management and safety and emergency responders, there will be no public use of motorized vehicles, including automobiles, motorcycles, off-road vehicles, or all-terrain vehicles of any kind. Hunting, horseback riding, and livestock grazing are also prohibited in the watershed.

#### **Objective C: Provide a phased approach to public access including trails, parking areas, and other infrastructure improvements**

In an effort to correctly manage the watershed Easement Area for public use, a phased approach opening the Easement Area is outlined in this section. This phased approach allows for public use using existing resources with a long-term goal to fully develop the area as time and money allows.

## Phase 1

The first phase converts the existing roads on the property to sustainable trails and adds a parking area at the Southwest corner of the property to accommodate visitors (Figure 2). A small connector trail in the Southeast corner of the Easement Area is needed to reroute the existing trail to Elk Mountain Scenic Highway to create an entry/exit to the trail rather than continue onto private property (Sourwood Inn) to the East. The portion of this loop along the Western edge is shown as a reroute of the existing logging road. The current logging road is very steep. Rerouting this section of trail will help to reduce water runoff and make the trail much more sustainable in the long term.

A parking area is needed to better service hikers and others who would need to drive to the watershed to access it. The area for parking is identified in the Southwest corner of the property where the watershed boundary abuts Elk Mountain Scenic Highway.

Conceptually this is a simple pull-off style parking area. The area will need to be cleared of vegetation and some improvements and reinforcements of this area such as levelling and addition of gravel might be required to maintain stability and protect water quality. During installation it will be important to not impact water resources. Natural materials and will be used as much as possible.

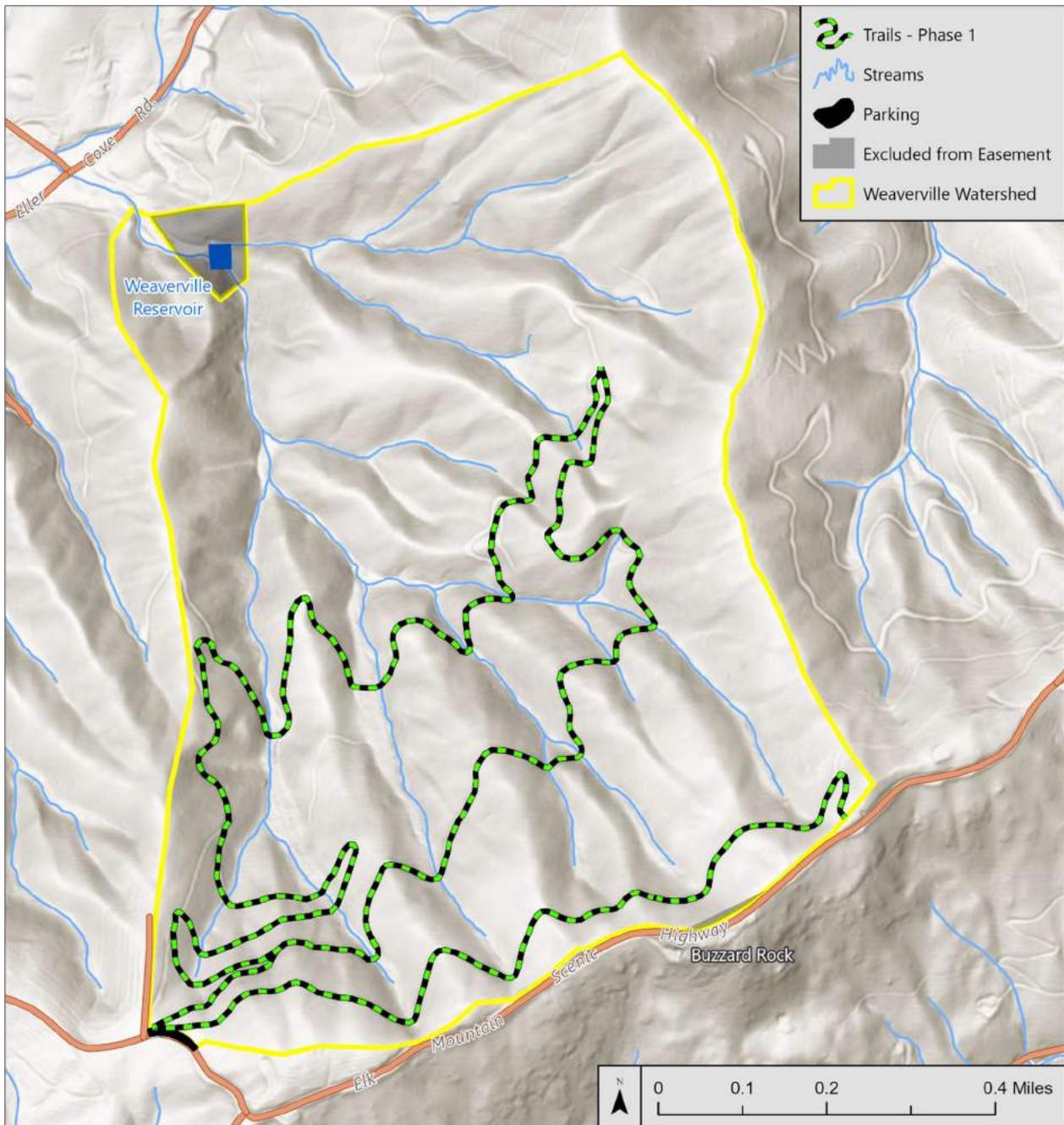


Figure 2. Phase 1 trail network predominantly created using existing road network.

### Phase 2

Phase 2 includes all elements of Phase 1, but also adds a trail to connect the existing road/trail network to the right-of-way access to enter and exit the watershed Easement Area from Eller Cove Rd and adds a connector trail to allow users route options when using the trail system (Figure 3). The trail from the right-of-way access off Eller Cove is needed for two reasons. First, having an access trail here will allow better access for trail maintenance and emergencies. Any vehicle access to this area will only be allowed by

staff authorized by the town and Emergency responders. Second, this travel corridor would add the possibility of hiking or biking through the Easement Area rather than only entering and exiting the watershed off Elk Mountain Scenic Highway.

Through travel of the watershed is a critical component to public use. It would provide a connection from Elk Mountain Scenic Highway to Eller Cove Rd. which currently does not exist to the public. With this connection in place, it opens up various biking loops in the area such as the one shown in Figure 4 that would connect the watershed with the Town of Weaverville.

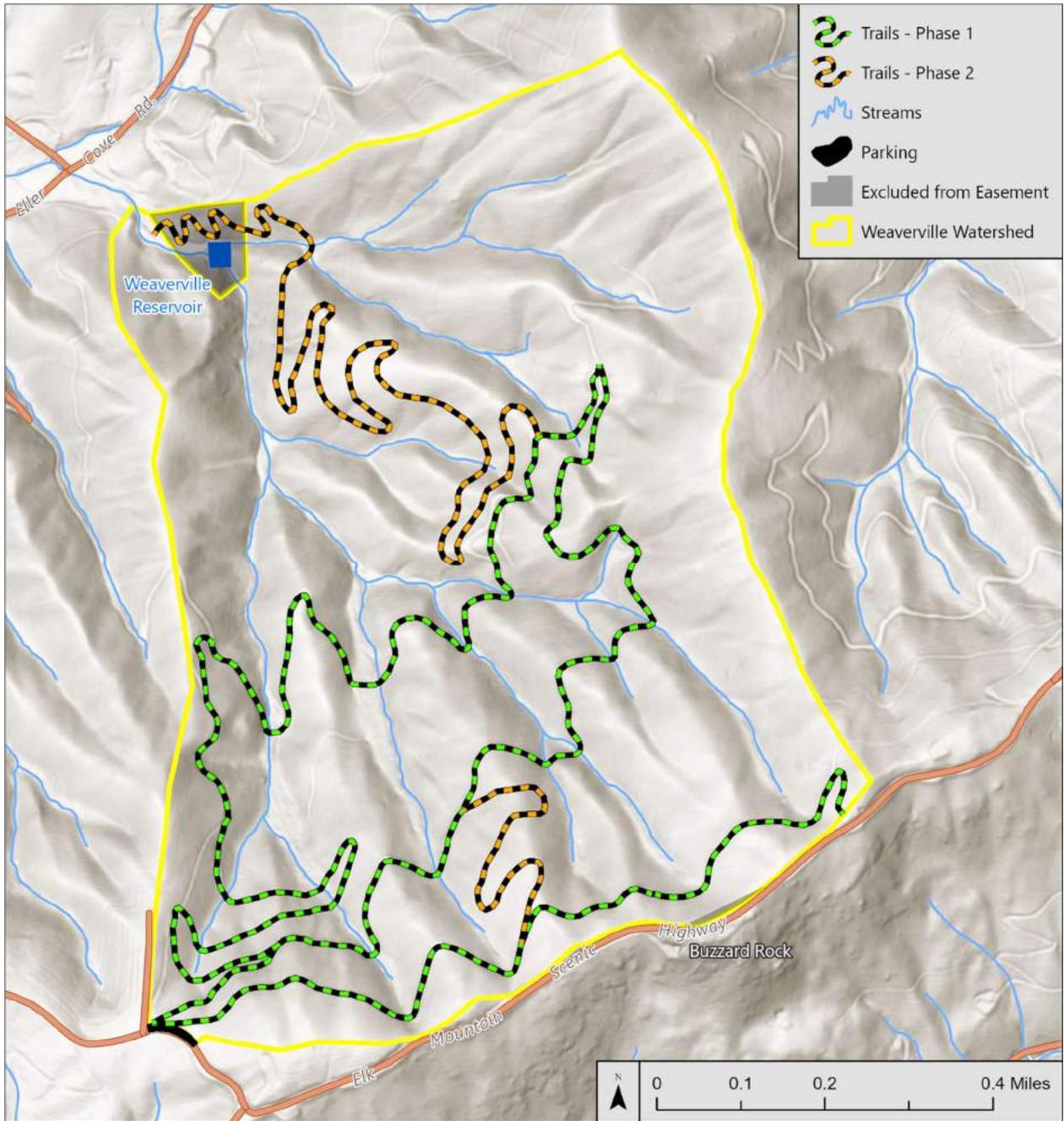


Figure 3. Phase two trail network showing the creation of an Eller Cove Rd. connector trail

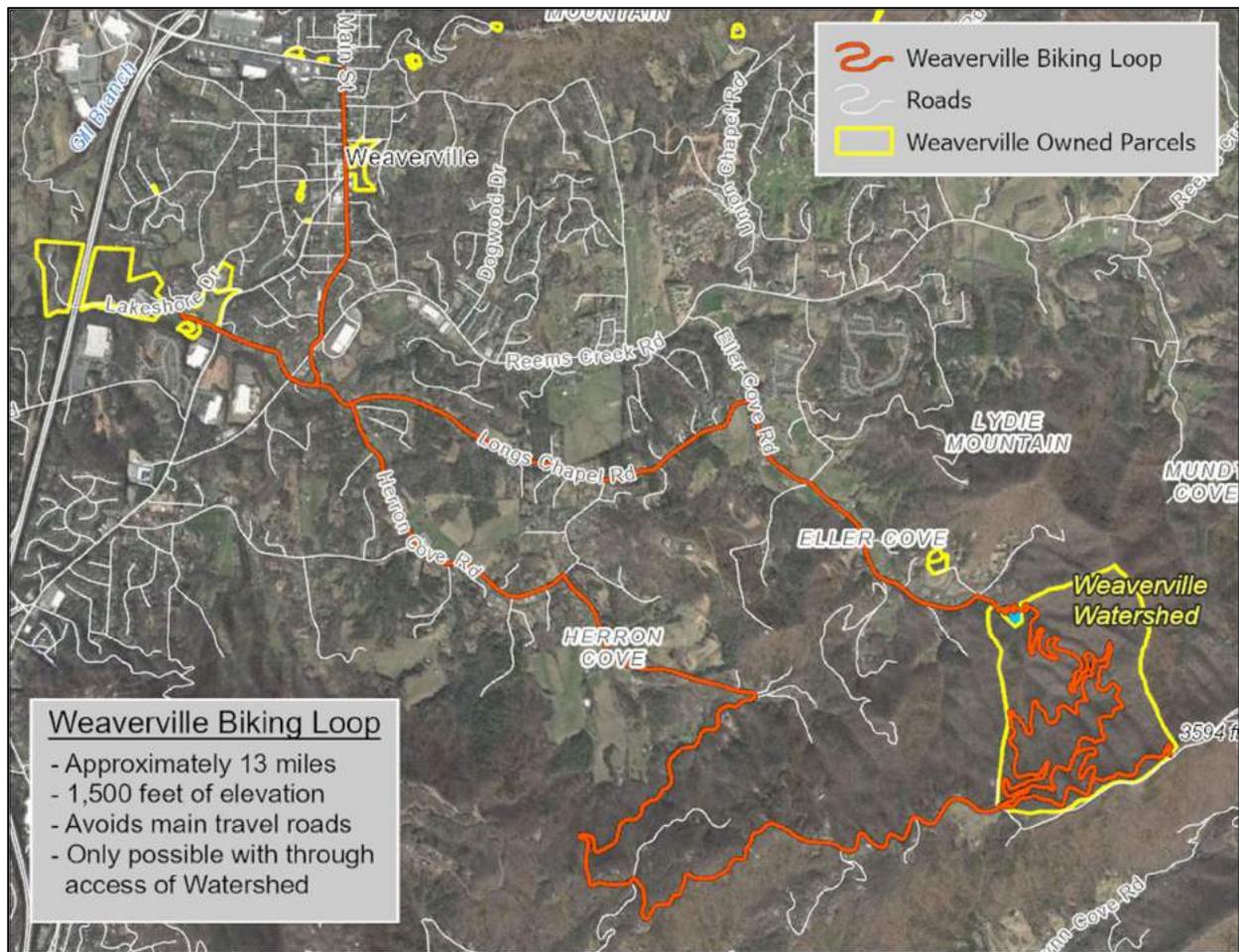


Figure 4. Cycling loop possible only if through travel of the watershed is created. The watershed property is the larger yellow rectangle in the Southeast portion of the map. No public parking is planned for the around the Eller Cove right of way access point and water reservoir. From a safety and security perspective it is necessary to keep visitors away from the reservoir and water system equipment as much as possible.

### Phase 3

Phase 3 includes all components of Phase 2 and adds the full capacity of hiking trails proposed on the property (Figure 5). This is the fully realized vision for the property. All trails are multi-use except for the trails marked bike and hike only. We propose a hike only trail and a bike only trail to give both users trails specific to their mode of transportation. The hike only trail takes advantage of the long distance views and skirts just below a protected ridge. Hikers will be able to take full advantage of the views offered from this trail. The bike only trail provides an opportunity just for bikers with the thought that it might allow less bike traffic on the other trails and focus their use in a more controlled way.

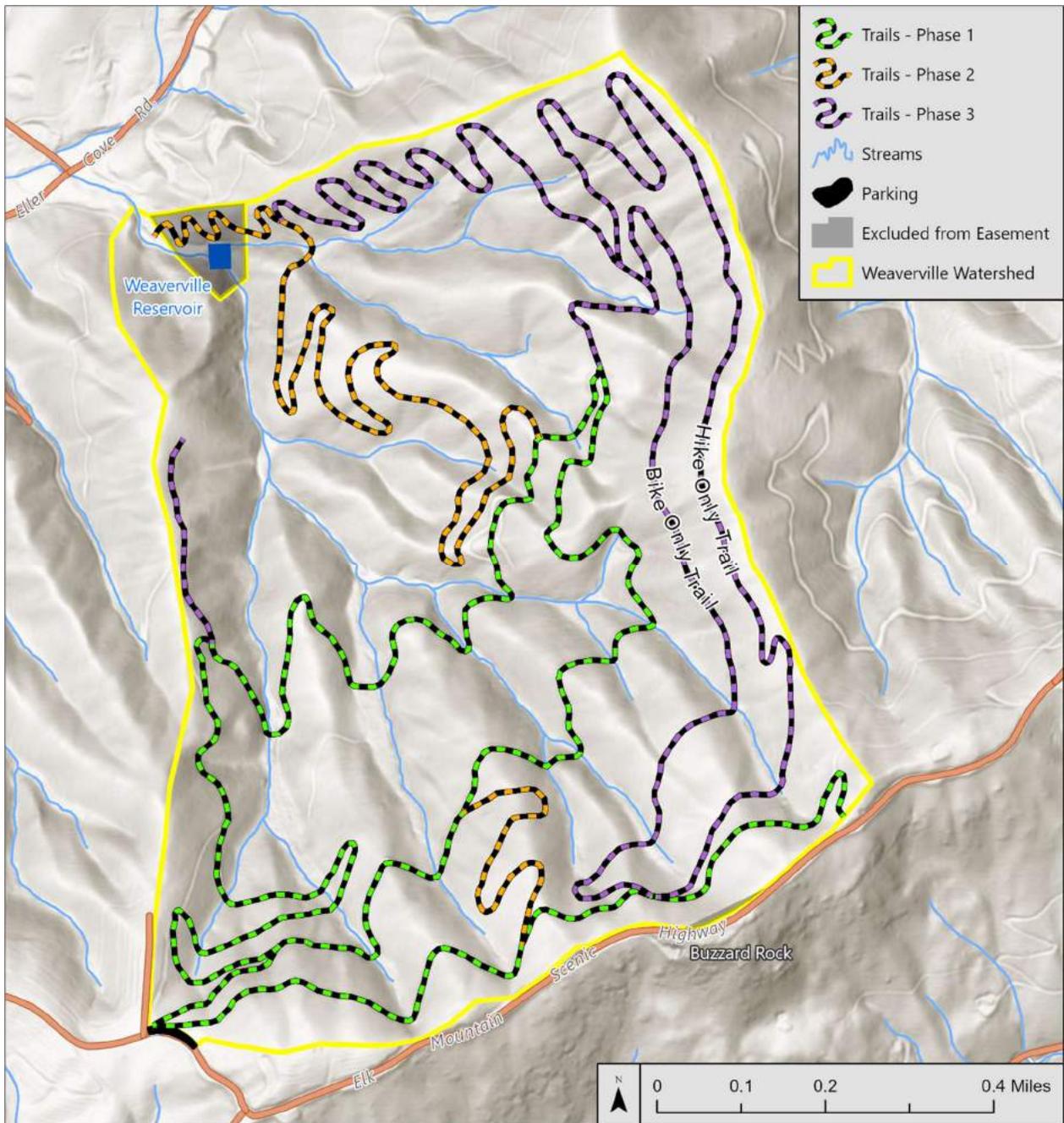


Figure 5. Phase three trail network showing all trails to be built on the property.

#### Phase 4

Phase 4 adds benches, observation/viewing platform, or covered pavilion would provide a nice destination for visitors. Two areas have been identified. One location is at the end of the spur trail on the Western side of the property that would provide access to a lovely location to rest and enjoy the view. The second area is located at a high point of the hike-only trail in the Northeast corner of the property.

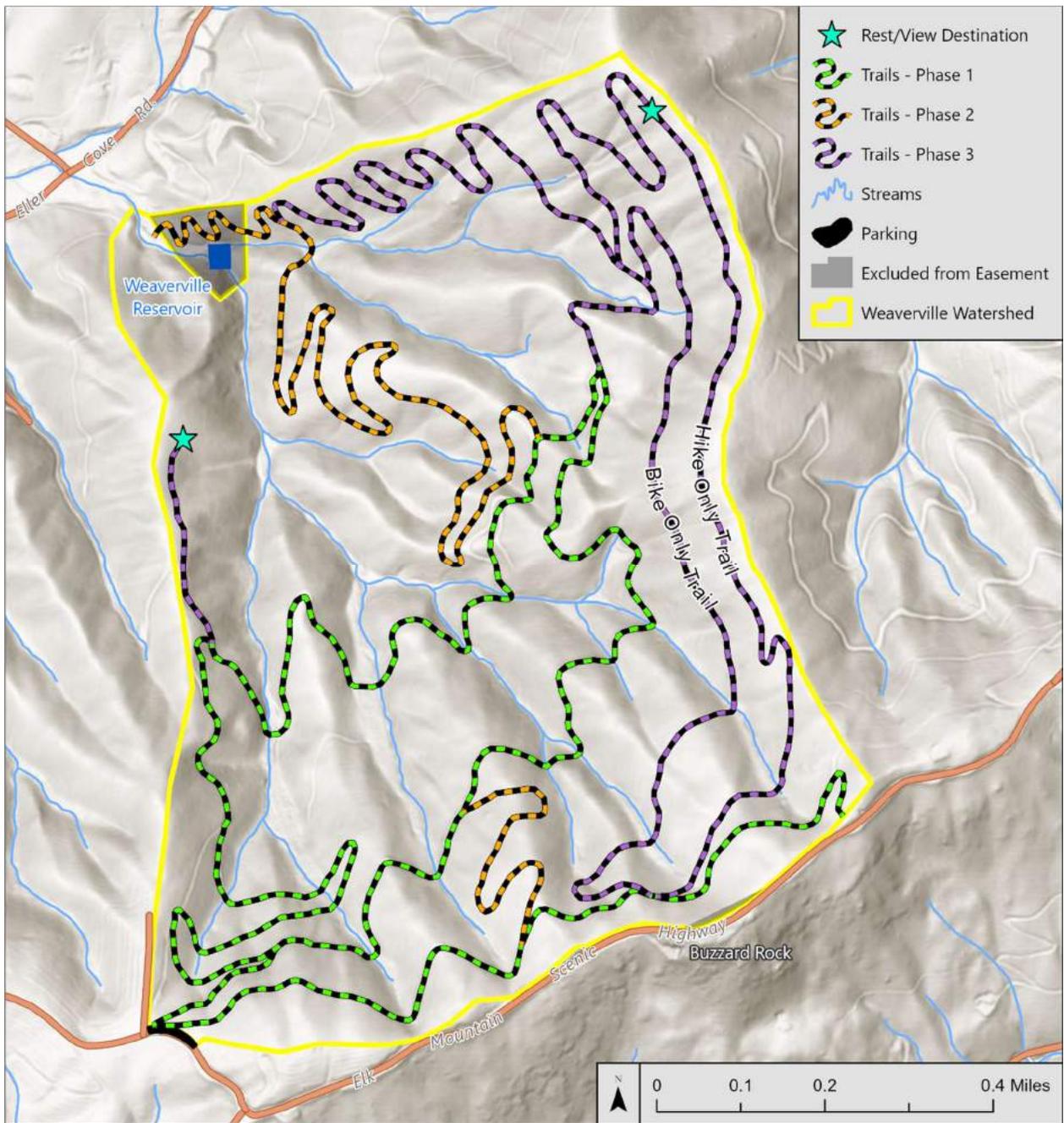


Figure 6. Map showing the locations of the rest/view destination.

### Trails

Trails are meant for bicycle or pedestrian use only with one trail designated as bike only and one trail designated as hike only. The full trail plan would include over 9 miles of trails. All of the trails are relatively easy to moderate for hiking and biking. The existing roads that would be converted to trails are in excellent condition. The roads

predominantly follow the gentler contours of the Easement Area. Numerous saplings and trees are growing up in the roadbed but not dense enough to prohibit hiking or biking travel. The goal of converting the roads to trails would be to narrow the roadbed, correct any erosion issues caused by water, enhance stream crossings with rocks or bridges where needed to ensure long-term stability and water quality of the property. Currently, only minimal erosion hazards are evident in a few places and the trails mostly have stable stream crossings. Any existing issues regarding erosion and stability would be address when the trails are improved and created prior to public use.

### Campsites

No camping is currently being proposed.

### Other Infrastructure

This management plan specifies only limited infrastructure improvements in order to remain consistent with the original intent of the management plan, which is to maintain the Easement Area's character primarily as a wilderness preserve. The Town will explore further the feasibility and usefulness of the following design elements.

- Benches
- Viewing platform
- Covered pavilion
- Signage - instructions on trail and infrastructure location and allowable uses and uses that are not permitted are necessary before the general public is allowed into the watershed. Information stations should be located at each trail access point as well as the information made available on the Town of Weaverville Website. Signage will require maintenance. Specifications are available from the Appalachian Trail Conference and NC Division of Parks and Recreation.

## **C. Other Issues**

### 1. Enforcement of Rules and Regulations

Visitors must be instructed about allowed and unacceptable uses of the Easement Area. Visitors do not necessarily need to be instructed about the stream buffer zones. If people stay on the trails as instructed, the critical resources should remain viable. Instruction should be provided in the form of literature that the Town provides to the public and through ample and well-maintained signage on the Easement Area as well as on the Town website.

The Town must aggressively enforce its rules regulating the use of the Easement Area from the opening day forward. Elevated law enforcement presence is suggested

upon opening, including periodic access of the trails to check for inappropriate public use, vandalism, and other unlawful uses.

## 2. Gated Access

Investment in high quality and well-designed gated access systems is paramount for keeping motorized vehicles off of the watershed. Thankfully the numerous saplings and trees make automobile travel impossible. However, illegal ATV use is still a possibility. Though the road systems were well constructed and are generally well maintained, nothing will erode these trail systems worse than motorized vehicle use. People will attempt to access the interior of the Easement Area and its peripheral trails by circumventing the gates.

## 3. Invasive Exotic Plants

A number of invasive exotic plants are spreading onto the watershed Easement Area, principally from Elk Mountain Scenic Highway as well as from bird-dispersal. Principal species noted include garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), Japanese spiraea (*Spiraea japonica*), and occasional multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*). It is suggested that a monitoring program be established to identify and control invasive plant populations before they become severe and threaten to overwhelm the very natural heritage this plan is attempting to protect. A monitoring program could be volunteer based with very little capital expenditures from the Town.

## 4. Trail Maintenance

The trail design has been carefully developed by professional trail builders to minimize maintenance requirements. This Project will exemplify a sustainably built trail system, showcase modern industry standards, and implement wildlife-friendly management practices for the life of the Project.

Most of the existing abandoned logging roads are in relatively stable condition and will require little maintenance in the short term for intended recreational uses. However, all converted roads, new trails, and parking areas will require some degree of maintenance over the life of the Project. Annual investments of staff time and materials (as needed) are anticipated to ensure that all recreational infrastructure is maintained at a high environmental standard.

The primary focus of routine trail maintenance is to reduce erosion, minimize impacts to hydrology and wildlife habitats, and provide a safe user experience. Typical

maintenance activities include: trail washout repairs due to storm events, rock/gravel amendments to trail beds and parking area, minor trail tread regrading to reduce erosion, removing trail impediments (e.g. fallen trees), repairing navigational and educational signage, and vegetation control (including invasive species management).

Few existing spur roads are unsuitable or unnecessary for recreational use and will be closed. These areas are revegetating naturally and require no foreseeable erosion potential if closed for recreational use.

Where barren ground occurs or becomes problematic on or adjacent to trails, native seed mixes will be sown to prevent erosion. Only native seed mixtures of the appropriate ecotype will be used, with consideration for providing wildlife forage and pollinator habitat. Wildlife management partners have pledged technical assistance for identifying appropriate seed mixes. If erosion control matting is required for Project improvements, only biodegradable matting made from natural fibers will be used.

The proposed trail design intentionally minimizes stream crossings to reduce impacts to aquatic wildlife in accordance with the Conservation Easement. As needed, improvements to stream crossings will be carefully designed and constructed by professional trail builders in coordination with the Town, SAHC, and wildlife management partners.

All trails (especially multi-use trails) will be maintained at appropriately-sized widths to provide safe passage between both bicycle and pedestrian users. Appropriate trail dimensions will reduce user conflict, maintain safety, and reduce erosion potential.

All trail improvements will be developed by professional trail builders in consultation with the Town and SAHC. Maintenance of the trails would be accomplished by Town personnel and its partners (designated friends groups, authorized volunteers, or hired field crews). The proposed maintenance strategy and budget will contract two professional trail builders (80 person-hours/month) to accomplish routine site evaluations and maintenance for at least the first four years post-construction (i.e. until 2030). Contracted trail builders will also help train Town personnel and partners to ensure that trails are maintained according to industry standards. Guided maintenance events with partners will also serve as valuable opportunities to engage with the community and impart conservation values.

ATLANTA GA 39901-0001

In reply refer to:  
Feb. 22, 2021 LTR 4076C 0  
56-6001368 000000 00

00042315  
BODC: TE

TOWN OF WEAVERVILLE

30 S MAIN ST  
WEAVERVILLE NC 28787-8463

010185

Taxpayer identification number: 56-6001368  
Person to contact: CUSTOMER SERVICE  
Toll-free telephone number: 877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

We received your request dated Feb. 10, 2021, asking about your federal tax status. Our records don't specify your federal tax status. The following information about the tax treatment of state and local governments and affiliated organizations may help you.

#### GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

Governmental units, such as states and their political subdivisions, generally are not subject to federal income tax. Political subdivisions of a state are entities with the authority to exercise one or more of the sovereign powers of the state: taxation, police powers, or eminent domain. They typically include counties or municipalities and their agencies or departments. Charitable contributions to governmental units may be tax-deductible under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 170(c)(1) if made for an exclusively public purpose. Generally, grantors and contributors may rely on the status of governmental units based on state or local law in determining the deductibility of their contributions.

#### AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

##### \* INSTRUMENTALITIES

In general, an instrumentality is an entity separate from, but affiliated with, a state or local government, and lacking any sovereign powers. Instrumentalities generally are subject to federal income tax. However, they may be recognized as tax-exempt under IRC Section 501(a) as organizations described in IRC Section 501(c), including IRC Section 501(c)(3). In addition, the income of a state or local government instrumentality may be excluded from gross income if it meets the requirements of IRC Section 115(1).

##### \* ENTITIES MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF IRC SECTION 115(1)

An entity that is not a governmental unit but that performs an essential governmental function may qualify for an income exclusion under IRC Section 115(1). If the entity's income (1) is derived from a

TOWN OF WEAVERVILLE

30 S MAIN ST  
WEAVERVILLE NC 28787-8463

public utility or the exercise of an essential governmental function, and (2) accrues to a state, a political subdivision of a state, or the District of Columbia, it may be excluded from gross income. Charitable contributions to these entities may not be tax deductible to the donors.

RULING LETTERS

To receive a ruling on its status as a political subdivision or instrumentality of a government, or on whether its income is excluded from gross income under IRC Section 115(1), a governmental unit or affiliated organization may request a letter ruling by following the procedures in Revenue Procedure (Rev. Proc.) 2019-1 or its annual successor. There is a fee associated with obtaining a letter ruling.

TAX-EXEMPT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

An organization affiliated with a state, county, or municipal government may qualify for exemption from federal income tax under IRC Section 501(c)(3), if (1) it is not an integral part of the government, and (2) it does not have governmental powers inconsistent with exemption (such as the power to tax or to exercise enforcement or regulatory powers). Note that an affiliated organization may meet the requirements of both IRC Sections 501(c)(3) and 115(1) under certain circumstances. See Rev. Proc. 2003-12, 2003-1 C.B. 316, for more information.

Most entities must file a Form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or Form 1023-EZ, Streamlined Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, to be recognized as exempt from federal income tax under IRC Section 501(c)(3), and to ensure that any charitable contributions they receive are tax-deductible to contributors under IRC Section 170(c)(2).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This letter does not determine that you have a particular tax status. If you're unsure of your status, you can:

- Visit [www.irs.gov/government-entities/federal-state-local-governments](http://www.irs.gov/government-entities/federal-state-local-governments) for government entity information.
- Visit [www.stayexempt.irs.gov](http://www.stayexempt.irs.gov), an IRS site created especially for 501(c)(3) organizations.
- Read Publication 4220, Applying for 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status.
- Seek a private letter ruling, following the procedures in Rev. Proc. 2019-1, 2019-1 I.R.B. 1 (updated annually).

# SELENA D. COFFEY

130 Wiltshire Circle • Fletcher • North Carolina • Phone: (828) 775-1261 • Email: cup.of.coffey@hotmail.com

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## CAREER PUBLIC SERVANT

ICMA Credentialed Local Government Manager • 24 years of Municipal and County Public Service Experience

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Experienced and committed leader with 24 years of public administration experience and 3 years of nonprofit executive experience. Extensive background in local government administration, public and employee relations, budget development, human resources, strategic planning, capital project management, and policy development and implementation.

### Core Competencies

- Leadership & Management
  - Program & Project Evaluation
  - Budgeting & Financial Management
  - Employee & Public Relations
  - Policy Administration
  - Strategic Planning
  - Community Development
  - Organizational Development
  - Research & Analysis
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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### ***Town Manager***

Town of Weaverville, Weaverville, NC

***2015 – Present***

#### *Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Include:*

- Serve as the chief administrative officer (CAO) of the town and responsible to the Mayor and Town Council for administering all municipal affairs.
- Provide leadership and oversight to Town departments to include Finance, Planning & Zoning, Water Services, Town Clerk, Community Center and Recreation, Public Works Divisions: Sanitation, Grounds Maintenance, Streets, and Water Maintenance, Fire and Police functions.
- Analyze and provide recommendations to Town Council regarding new programs, services, and initiatives, plans future development, growth maintenance and expansion of public services.
- Serve as chief budget officer for the Town, preparing and submitting annual operational and capital budgets to Town Council for review, revision, and adoption.
- Ensures that the Town's annual audit is completed and reported to Town Council for each fiscal year.
- Administer and direct implementation of the Town's personnel program, recommending rules and revisions to the personnel system to Town Council for consideration, and hiring, training, performance, retention, and separation of Town employees.
- Provide oversight and leadership for all Town planning efforts, including strategic planning, land use planning, etc.
- Function as public information liaison for all public relations and community outreach programming and issues.

**Executive Director**

Foothills Humane Society, Inc., Columbus, NC

**2011 - 2015**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Include:*

- Serve as the first Executive Director for the nonprofit, reporting to a 15-member Board of Directors.
- Provide overall leadership for strategy, organizational development, financial oversight, and fundraising activities to move the organization forward to achieve its goals and mission.
- Developed and implemented the entire human resource program for the organization, including the development and implementation of personnel policies and procedures, job descriptions, classification and compensation structure, legal compliance policies, safety procedures, training and development, recruitment and selection, individual staff development plans and employee relations.
- Developed and implemented the organization's first strategic plan.
- Develop and implement the organization's annual budget.

**Assistant County Manager**

Henderson County Government, Hendersonville, NC

**2006 - 2011**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Included:*

- Served as second-in command to the County Manager carrying out the administrative and operational functions for the County.
- Performed highly responsible professional administrative leadership for County government.
- Awarded the International City-County Managers Association Credentialed Manager designation.
- Supervised assigned departments and functions.
- Developed and implemented the County's operational budget and capital improvements budget.
- Served on various internal and Commissioner-appointed committees.
- Awarded the Edwin M. McGill Award for Most Distinguished Service, 2006.

**Director of Budget & Management**

Henderson County Government, Hendersonville, NC

**2002 - 2006**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Included:*

- Directed, planned, and implemented budget procedures and guidelines to facilitate the County's annual budget process, aiding department managers in personnel and operational budget development.
- Assisted the Human Resources Director in compensation and benefits planning and personnel policy and procedure updates.
- Supervised budget and research staff and department managers as assigned.
- Served as Interim Assistant County Manager from December 2005 - April 2006.
- Served as Interim Planning Director from August - September 2005.
- Analyzed and provided recommendations for fiscal, programmatic and performance measurements for County departments.
- Facilitated the development of the County's first Strategic Plan.

**Assistant to the County Manager**  
Henderson County Government, Hendersonville, NC

**2000 – 2002**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Included:*

- Served as the Interim Human Resources Director from October 2000 – August 2001.
- Supervised department managers as assigned by the County Manager.
- Coordinated budget development with department manager and external agencies, assisting with performance and program measurement, fund allocation and budgetary reporting.
- Provided project management, development and coordination and performed special studies.
- Researched and formulated long-range plans for the County in personnel, operational and budgetary areas.

**Budget Analyst**  
Henderson County Government, Hendersonville, NC

**1995 – 2000**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Included:*

- Served as the County’s first Budget Analyst, introducing performance-based budgeting.
- Developed and assisted in the implementation of the County’s annual personnel, operational and capital budgets.
- Analyzed operational and capital budget proposals, making recommendations to the County Manager to facilitate the development of the annual budget.
- Evaluated and implemented internal control policies and procedures.
- Conducted performance audits and special studies as assigned.
- Awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Award, 1997, 1998, 1999.

**Director of Social Services**  
Autumn Care of Waynesville, Waynesville, NC

**1993 – 1995**

*Key Responsibilities & Accomplishments Included:*

- Performed public relations functions for the long-term care facility.
- Planned, organized, and implemented the social services program to meet organizational needs.
- Coordinated admissions and discharge planning.
- Advocated for and taught resident rights and related laws to clients, staff, and clients’ family members.

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## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

**Master of Public Affairs (MPA)** **1995**  
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC

**Bachelor of Science (BS), Social Work Degree** **1993**  
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC

**Municipal & County Administration Certificate** **2006**  
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, School of Government

***Additional Certificates and Training***

University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, School of Government

- Essentials of Municipal Government, 2016
- Personnel Administration Seminar, 2000
- Effective Supervisory Management Program, 2000
- Developmental Supervision Program, 2000
- Budgeting and Financial Planning II, 1997
- New Finance Officers School, 1996
- Budgeting and Financial Planning I, 1995

***Certificate in Nonprofit Management***

**2013**

Duke University

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**PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC AFFILIATIONS**

- International City-County Managers Association, Credentialed Manager
- NC City-County Managers Association, member
- Society of Human Resource Management, member
- Government Finance Officers Association, member
- Western Carolina University MPA Alumni Advisory Committee, member
- NC Center for Nonprofits, member
- NC Local Government Budget Association, former member
- Hendersonville Rotary Club, former member
- Asheville Regional Housing Consortium, Commissioner appointed position, numerous years served.

# Dale E. Pennell, PE, PLS

4 Shadowbrook Lane  
Weaverville, NC 28787  
828.231.7050  
[dalepennell@gmail.com](mailto:dalepennell@gmail.com)

## Position of Interest: Public Works Director for the Town of Weaverville

### Professional Registration

- \*Professional Engineer, NC (2000)
- \*Professional Land Surveyor, NC (1983)

### Summary of Qualifications

- \*More than 40 years of engineering experience, all in western NC, with a diverse background in many areas of civil engineering design and construction, including pavement, sidewalks, greenways, storm water systems, erosion control measures, water and sewer lines, commercial and institutional facilities, and recreation parks
- \*Familiar with Town of Weaverville topography, streets, drainage, soil conditions and environmental issues
- \*Provided engineering services to Town of Weaverville for more than 30 years including road paving and repairs, new sidewalks, the first greenway within the town, Lake Louise improvements, drainage studies, water line extensions, etc.
- \*Prepared and sealed annual Powell Bill map since 1990
- \*Managed a staff of professional engineers and technicians including work assignments, annual evaluations, hiring, promotions, disciplinary actions, and terminations
- \*Experienced in budgeting, bidding, construction administration, project close-outs, and client billing for a variety of projects from \$50,000 to \$3,000,000 without any errors or omissions.
- \*Acquainted with town staff and elected officials as well as staff from the Public Works Department
- \*Communicated with the public during design workshops and construction projects, including coordination of public work with private interests
- \*Coordinated project-related activities and handling multiple-task design, permitting, scheduling, and construction oversight in complex public and private projects.
- \*Conducted plan reviews for complex private projects submitted by engineers and architects
- \*Developed relationships with local contractors who may bid on town projects and/or provide construction services to the town
- \*Provided a high quality level of service to clients and the public

**Resume of Dale E. Pennell**

**November 12, 2017**

**Page 2 of 2**

**Experience**            2015-Present    Consulting Civil Engineer in Private Practice  
                              1987-2015        McGill Associates, Asheville NC  
                              1980-1987        City of Asheville Engineering Department, Asheville NC  
                              1976-1980        Lyda Associates, Weaverville NC

**Education**            Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (1976)  
                              Asheville, NC  
                              Associated of Applied Science in Civil Engineering Technology (3.97 GPA)

**References**            \*Vic Workman, Owner - Montrealla Farms LLC - Ka-Sar Enterprises, Inc.  
                              (828.230.6058)

                              \*Danny Clark, Director of Facilities - Watauga County Schools  
                              (828.387.1580)

                              \*John Young, PLS, Owner - NC Survey PC  
                              (828.776.0052)

                              \*Tony Laughter, Public Works Director - Town of Weaverville  
                              (828.230.4542)

                              \*Michael Morgan, former Town Manager – Town of Weaverville  
                              (828.231.8288)

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# SARAH MYERS

413.244.2698 · SMyers789@gmail.com · Weaverville, NC

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Town of Weaverville, NC** Weaverville, NC 8/2023 - Present  
*Recreation Coordinator/Community Center Manager*
- Oversee Community Center operations for a mix of paid rentals and community programs
  - Support all Recreation programming, including the structure of a new Recreation Complex
  - Act as staff liaison for the Active Weaverville Committee
  - Work closely with Town Staff to coordinate annual events, including July 4th, Music in the Park, and the Holiday Parade
  - Create communications for platforms, including social media, newsletter, and blog
- Weaverville Business Association** Weaverville, NC 7/2021 - 9/2023  
*Administrator*
- Managed every aspect of member engagement, events, and financial management
  - Partnered with the membership committee as part of a strategic plan to improve member recruitment, engagement, and value
  - Developed and distributed monthly membership newsletter using Mailchimp
  - Recordkeeper and database manager for the organization
  - Developed and upheld standard operating procedures, policies, and systems
- Vivian** Asheville, NC 1/2020 – 3/13/2020  
*Assistant Manager*
- Provided kind, personalized, and informed service and management
  - Resolved any guest issues promptly and positively
- Bartender / Shift Manager* 11/2017 – 5/2019
- Foothills Local Meats** Black Mountain, NC 3/2019 – 1/2020  
*Director of Hospitality*
- Managed the daily front of house operations in multiple locations
- Mountain BizWorks** Asheville, NC 12/2017 – 6/2019  
*Business Coach (Contract)*
- Offered coaching and support to a regional network of small businesses and entrepreneurs
- The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS)** Asheville, NC 8/2014 – 11/2017  
*NABI Marketing Program Manager (1/2017 – 11/2017)*
- Cultivated and strengthened relationships with key partners for a 5-year, multi-million dollar marketing initiative aimed at improving the financial sustainability of member schools
  - Managed all departmental administrative functions, including budgeting, invoicing, scheduling, and contractor relations
- Marketing Program Manager (7/2015 – 12/2016)*
- Created and coordinated email and social media campaigns for events and admission trips
  - Partnered with contractors and colleagues to develop communications and marketing
- Ongoing Occasional Administrative Support and Contract Research Projects* (8/2014 – 10/2020)

# SARAH MYERS

413.244.2698 · SMyers789@gmail.com · Weaverville, NC

**Community Foundation of Western North Carolina** Asheville, NC 4/2015 – 7/2015  
*Independent Contractor*

- Completed a prospect research and data management project

**Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture** Boone, NC 7/2012 – 7/2014  
*Executive Director*

- Directed the daily administration and operations of a small, member-focused nonprofit
- Oversaw the planning and implementation of a two-day, annual Farm Tour
- Supported the development, execution, and evaluation of all programs and communications

**The Independent Restaurant** Somerville, MA 2006 – 2012  
*Management Duties, Bartender, Server*

**Tufts Health Plan** Watertown, MA 2009 – 2010  
*Mental Health Service Coordinator*

- Collaborated with colleagues and providers to synthesize and communicate sensitive medical data, expedite solutions to complicated problems, and provide integrated services and benefits

**North Charles Community Career Links** Somerville, MA 2007 – 2008  
*Education & Employment Specialist (3/2008 – 12/2008); Job Support Specialist (8/2007 – 3/2008)*

- Successfully transitioned Department of Mental Health clients to employment/higher education readiness through consistent, supportive counseling, and the development of accountability processes for job searches

**Career Collaborative, Inc.** Boston, MA 2006 – 2007  
*Employment Assistant*

- Provided consistent, compassionate support to clients on their paths to self-sufficiency

**Judie's Restaurant** Amherst, MA 2000 – 2006  
*Server, Host, Busser, Cashier*

## EDUCATION

**Brandeis University** Waltham, MA 2012  
*Heller School for Social Policy and Management Master's in Business Administration*

- Concentration in Social Impact Management

**University of Massachusetts** Amherst, MA 2006  
*Bachelor of Arts, Sociology Major with a concentration in Social Inequality and Diversity*

# Byron A. Hamstead

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Asheville Ecological Services Field Office  
160 Zillicoa Street  
Asheville, NC 28801  
[byron\\_hamstead@fws.gov](mailto:byron_hamstead@fws.gov)

## Professional Experience:

**Fish and Wildlife Biologist; GS-11, Step 7; 40hrs/wk; \$87,062**

**October 2015 - Present**

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Asheville Ecological Services Field Office, 160 Zillicoa Street, Asheville, NC 28801

Supervisor: Gary Peeples 828.258.3939

- Work independently and in teams to review federal actions authorized and/or administered by various USDA agencies, USACE, FEMA, HUD, FHWA, FAA, FCC, USFWS, etc. pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Clean Water Act (CWA), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and other legal authorities
  - Evaluate, implement, and occasionally develop regulations, rulemakings, policies, guidelines, standards, agreements, and/or plans to conserve federal trust resources pursuant to the ESA (specifically Sections 4, 6, 7, 9, and 10)
    - Review office consultation products written by teammates
  - Coordinate and maintain partnerships with diverse audiences including federal and state agencies, municipalities, NGO's, agricultural producers, consultants, engineers, developers, construction contractors
  - Evaluate and implement conservation strategies for diverse activities types (e.g. habitat restoration, recreation developments, utility improvements, agricultural developments, residential/commercial developments, politically controversial activities, etc.)
  - Pursuant to Sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the ESA, develop and administer conservation programs with action agencies to protect listed species and streamline administrative processes
  - Manage a high workload and adhere to procedural deadlines
    - Work independently and in teams to execute proactive and reactive project review processes within statutory response deadlines
    - Manage 45-85% of office ESA consultations each fiscal year
  - Deliver effective written responses to diverse and occasionally antagonistic audiences and maintain a cogent administrative record
    - Routinely coordinate with supervisors and teammates to ensure that written products are effective and consistent
- Review and assist the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, (NCWRC, state wildlife agency) to administer recurring Wildlife Restoration and Sport Fish Restoration grants
  - Review/complete intra-service Section 7 consultation for proposed Federal Aid activities
  - Coordinate with NCWRC to implement reasonable measures to avoid/minimize project-mediated impacts to federal trust species
  - Coordinate with NCWRC to implement reasonable measures to maximize project-mediated benefits to *wildlife* (50CFR 80.2) and other federal trust species
- Assist with the implementation of USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW) projects to restore and protect wildlife resources
  - Provide regulatory, biological, and technical assistance to USFWS PFW staff and Partners to implement feasible and effective construction designs and methods to minimize impacts to natural resources
  - Ensure that office PFW projects are consistent with pertinent regulations, policies, and standards pursuant to the ESA
  - Conduct project monitoring during construction and implement adaptive strategies to avoid and minimize impacts to natural resources (e.g. impromptu design modifications, animal rescue/relocation, etc.)
  - Complete post-construction monitoring to ensure that objectives have been met
- Support teammates and partners
  - Identify and support the strengths of teammates to foster an effective workplace
  - Review and edit written office products and conservation strategies developed by teammates
  - Coordinate with teammates across all office programs to ensure my work is supportive, aligned with office priorities, and not duplicative

- Conduct biological surveys and animal rescues for federal and state-protected species to reduce impacts to natural resources, inform ESA consultation, assess species status, and/or aid species recovery
- Coordinate with state agencies and NGO's to develop and implement species conservation, equitable community engagement, sustainable outdoor recreation developments, outdoor education, and citizen science programs
  - Participate in annual "Kids in the Creek" outreach events for elementary and middle school students to showcase overlooked biodiversity in local communities and teach ecological principles
  - Co-chair the Outreach and Communications Working Group within the Little Tennessee River Native Fish Conservation Partnership to support community-based conservation and awareness of threats to aquatic and riparian wildlife in the Little Tennessee River Basin
- Implement recurring species inventory and habitat management activities within the USFWS Mountain Bog National Wildlife Refuge and NC State-managed lands
- Co-lead the development of an Office Strategic Plan to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of all office programs
  - Developed innovative short- and long-term office strategies to address conservation challenges
  - Fostered a holistically supportive workplace environment that acknowledges skills, needs, and aspirations of teammates
- Completed competitive interagency work details with USDA-NRCS Caribbean Area State Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 2018, 2019, and 2023 following major hurricanes
  - Reviewed >850 individual emergency activities that threaten life and property to ensure impacts to natural resources were avoided or minimized
  - Documented compliance with numerous regulatory requirements (ESA, NEPA, CWA, NHPA, etc.)
  - Coordinated with NRCS Caribbean Area state biologist to develop a programmatic consultation framework with the USFWS Caribbean Area Ecological Services Field Office to streamline ESA consultation for emergency responses
  - Assisted with the development of site-specific conservation plans at key agricultural developments
  - In addition to temporary duties to USDA-NRCS, maintained core work duties to USFWS duty station throughout detail assignments resulting in high workload for each detail duration (120-day each)
  - Volunteered with locally-led outdoor recreation user groups to develop trail advocacy resources and a GIS suitability model for sustainable trail development in Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands

**Fish and Wildlife Biologist (Regulatory: Hydropower, FERC); GS-9, Step 2; 40hrs/wk; \$50,016 July 2013 - January 2016**

USFWS South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office, 176 Croghan Spur Road #100, Charleston, SC 29407

Supervisor: Tom McCoy 843.727.4707

- Reviewed hydropower project licensing pursuant to ESA, FWCA, CWA, NEPA, Federal Power Act, Electric Consumers Protection Act, Energy Policy Act, and the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Coordinated with federal and state agencies, NGO's, electric and water utility companies to ensure project license terms satisfy agency objectives, and are equitable according to the law
- Designed and implemented studies to identify potential impacts to fish and wildlife resources resulting from hydropower projects with particular regard for federally-listed species, migratory fishes, freshwater mussels, crayfishes, snails, aquatic insects, and riparian plants
- Coordinated with National Marine Fisheries Service and fish passage engineers to evaluate, design, and/or prescribe fishways to ensure safe, timely and effective upstream and downstream passage of fish and wildlife
- Forecast long-term agency goals and natural resource issues regarding the longevity of a license term (often >30 years), climate change, saltwater intrusion, and invasive species
- Monitor compliance of flow delivery, lake elevation, fish passage, water chemistry, shoreline development, and recreational use according to the articles of existing project licenses

**USFWS Pathways Intern; GS-4, Step 1; 24-40hrs/wk; \$27,990**

**June 2012 - July 2013**

USFWS Asheville Ecological Services Field Office, 160 Zillicoa Street, Asheville, NC 28801

Supervisor: Gary Peoples 828.258.3939

- Constructed a community trail and outdoor classroom at a public high school in Burnsville, NC through partnerships between the FWS, teachers, students, clubs, NGO's, and businesses
- Assisted with biotic surveys (mussels, snails, hellbenders, fish, bog turtle, white irisette, bats, etc.) with FWS

- biologists, state agencies and NGO partners
- Managed temperature loggers in 30+ streams throughout NC and SC to monitor and measure the effects of flow regulation on fish and mussel communities and habitats
  - Led outreach events that promote environmental education and awareness to students ranging from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the adult public, and media
  - Designed and installed a bear and weather-proof system to monitor Spruce Fir Moss Spidermicrohabitats in remote, high elevation, locations in western NC

**Aquatic Fauna Consultant; 24-50hrs/wk; \$13-25/hr**

**January 2009 - May 2012**

Southeastern Aquatic Research Co., 1081 Hopewell Church Road, Boone, NC 28607

Supervisor: Dr. Michael Gangloff 334.332.1533

- Surveyed streams and rivers for freshwater mollusks where riparian construction, dam removal, or dam flow regime changes were proposed for: private land-owners throughout the southeastern US, USFWS, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the departments of transportation of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina

**Lab Manager/Technician; 24-50hrs/wk; \$13-15/hr**

**January 2009 - August 2011**

Department of Biology, 208 Rankin Science South, 572 Rivers Street Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608

Supervisor: Dr. Michael Gangloff 828.262.3025

- Inventoried rare, endangered, and presumed extinct mussel fauna in the East Fork Tombigbee River of Mississippi to assess changes in mussel and host fish community structure, and habitat following the construction of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway (*Grantor: USFWS Jackson, MS Paul Hartfield*)
- Surveyed 40+ streams across three drainages in Florida and Alabama for federally threatened and endangered mussels to update their occupied range and federal listing status (*Grantor: USFWS Panama City, FL Sandy Pursifull*)
- Evaluated ex-urban riparian land-use effects to water quality in the New River (South Fork-Watauga and Ashe counties, NC) using benthic macroinvertebrates as biological indicators (*Appalachian State University*)
- Sampled 20+ North Carolina streams across 3 eco-regions to assess low-head dam effects on the morphology and community structure of freshwater mussels and fish (*Grantor: NCWRC SWG grant*)
- Sampled, identified, and cataloged 2,500+ crayfish and 1,100+ mussels from 210 sites across 11 Alabama state managed lands to update and facilitate responsible wildlife management strategies (*Grantors: Auburn University/ALDCNR*)
- In a lab shared by seven graduate and many undergraduate students, duties included:
  - Managing aquatic fieldwork crews throughout the Southeast U.S. and maintaining appropriate collection permits
  - Drafting/revising project reports for supervisors and grantors
  - Teaching aquatic sampling protocols to new employees
  - Collecting, organizing, digitizing, analyzing extensive data sets

**Wildlife Research Technician; 24-32hrs/wk; \$13/hr**

**November 2010 - January 2011**

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, 645 Fish Hatchery Rd, Marion, NC 28752

Supervisor: 828.652.7802

- Identified crayfish collected from North Carolina's Broad, Catawba, French Broad, Hiwassee, Little Tennessee, New, Savannah, and Watauga River drainages
- Prepared over 1000 crayfish, mussel, and snail specimens for long-term storage and digitized the data.
- Assisted with mussel propagation facility maintenance and inventory

**Intern/Lab Technician; 24hrs/wk; Volunteer-expenses reimbursed**

**January 2008 - May 2008**

Department of Biology, 208 Rankin Science South, 572 Rivers Street Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608

Supervisor: Dr. John Walker 828.262.6906

- Sampled *Rhododendron maximum* for eracid mycorrhizal fungi to reveal a possible mutualism
- Administered laboratory techniques to culture and identify fungi

**Intern/Research Technician; 24hrs/wk; Volunteer-expenses reimbursed**

**April 2007 - December 2007**

Symbiont-Biological Pest Management Co., 194 Shull's Hollar, Sugar Grove, NC 28679

Supervisor: Dr. Richard McDonald 828.297.2884

- With the USFS, released predator beetles (*Scymnus sinuanodulus*) to control invasive insect populations, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*)
- Measured predation of three beetle species (*Scymnus sinuanodulus*, *Scymnus ningshenensis*, *Sasajiscymnus tsugae*) on *A. tsugae* to predict effectiveness of future biological control beetle releases
- Sampled large areas for infestation while monitoring the dispersal behavior of the biological control beetle *Laricobius nigrinus*.

## Education

### **Master of Science: Biology**

Appalachian State University (August, 2013)

**Thesis:** ([Changes in the Freshwater Mussel Assemblage in the East Fork Tombigbee River, Mississippi: 1988- 2011.pdf](#))

### **Bachelor of Science: Biology, concentration: Sustainable Development**

Appalachian State University (Graduated December 2008)

(Earned Dean's List: Fall 2004, Spring 2006, Fall 2006, Fall 2007)

## Presentations/Publications

Hamstead B.A., Hartfield P.D., Jones R.L., Gangloff M.M. (2019). *Changes to freshwater mussel assemblages after 25 years of impoundment and river habitat fragmentation*. Journal of Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems.

Gangloff M., Hamstead B.A., Abernethy E.F., Hartfield P.D. (2013) *Genetic distinctiveness of *Ligumia recta*, the black sandshell, in the Mobile River Basin and implications for its conservation*. Conservation Genetics.

Hamstead B.A., Gangloff M., Hartfield, P. (2013, March 11) *Habitat-mediated change in mussel community structure following the construction of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway*. Presented at Freshwater Mollusks Conservation Society, Guntersville, AL.

Hamstead B.A., Gangloff M., Hartfield, P. (2012, May 21) *Effects of flow modifications on freshwater mussel assemblages in the East Fork Tombigbee River*. Presented at Society for Freshwater Science, Louisville, KY.

Hamstead B.A., Hartfield P., Gangloff M.M. (2011, April 12) *Hydrogeomorphic Legacy of a Mass-extinction Event: Habitat Ecology of Mussels in the East Fork Tombigbee River*. Presented at Freshwater Mollusks Conservation Society, Louisville, KY.

Hamstead B.A., White K., Gangloff M.M. (2010, April 8) *Effects of Riparian Landuse on Stream Habitats and Macroinvertebrate Communities in the South Fork of the New River, Ashe and Watauga Counties, North Carolina*. Presented at the Association of Southeastern Biologists, Asheville, NC.

Hoch R.A., Gangloff M.M., Hamstead B.A., Silvano A.L., Grand J.B. (2010, April 8 & 2010, June 6) *Inventory of Crayfish and Mollusk Resources on Alabama State- Managed Lands*. Presented at the Association of Southeastern Biologists, Asheville, NC & North American Benthological Society, Santa Fe, NM.

Hoch R.A., Gangloff M.M., Hamstead B.A., Silvano A.L., Grand J.B. (2010, June 6) *Freshwater Mussel Microhabitat Use in the Sipsey River, Alabama*. Presented at the North American Benthological Society/American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, Santa Fe, NM.

McDonald, R.; Mausel, D.; Salom, S.; Kok, L.; Montgomery, M.; Luker, G.; Steury, S.; Spears, G.; Skeate, S.; Graham, J.; Hamstead, B. 2008. Recovery of hemlock woolly adelgid predators in the high country of northwestern North Carolina 2004-2008. In Fourth symposium on hemlock woolly adelgid in the eastern United States, Onken, B.; Reardon, R., eds. WV: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service: 53-60.

## Selected Skills and Training

- Communicating Science, NCTC
- Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, NCTC
- Electrofishing Safety, NCTC
- Chainsaw Safety, USFS
- Wilderness First Aid and CPR
- Ecology and Conservation of North American Crayfishes
- Freshwater Mussel Identification; NCTC
- Wetland Plant Identification; NCTC
- Interagency Consultation for Endangered Species; NCTC
- Macroinvertebrate Ecology and Identification; NCTC
- GIS Training: Cookeville, TN
- FERC/Hydropower/Fishways Training: Hadley, MA
- USFWS Crayfish Workshop; Georgia College
- Work Detail (6-wks): status assessment, threats analysis, and 12-month finding for the Suwannee Moccasinshell (*Medionidus walkeri*); USFWS Panama City and South Carolina Field Offices
- Habitat Conservation Planning for Endangered Species; NCTC
- Wetland Plant ID; Hobcaw Barony, SC
- River Morphology and Applications; NCTC
- Applied Fluvial Geomorphology; NCTC
- Stream Habitat Measurement Techniques; NCTC
- Employee Foundations; NCTC
- FERC Training; SCFO
- Listing Training; SCFO
- SCUBA/PADI open water certified with experience diving in high-flow, low visibility freshwater rivers and creeks throughout the southeastern US
- Proficiency with MS Excel and Sigmaplot, SPSS analytical software, ArcMap version 10.8.1 and ArcGIS Pro version 3.1

## References

Gary Peebles – Direct supervisor

Deputy Field Office Supervisor USFWS Asheville Field Office  
Asheville, North Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 828-258-3939, [gary\\_peekles@fws.gov](mailto:gary_peekles@fws.gov)

Janet Mizzi

Field Office Supervisor USFWS Asheville Field Office  
Asheville, North Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 828-258-3939, [janet\\_mizzi@fws.gov](mailto:janet_mizzi@fws.gov)

Rebekah Reid

Regulatory Team Lead USFWS Asheville Field Office  
Asheville, North Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 828-258-3939, [rebekah\\_reid@fws.gov](mailto:rebekah_reid@fws.gov)

Andrew Henderson

Fish and Wildlife Biologist USFWS Asheville Field Office  
Asheville, North Carolina Ecological Services Field Office  
828-216-4969, [andrew\\_henderson@fws.gov](mailto:andrew_henderson@fws.gov)

Jonathan Wardell

Recovery Planning Team Leader USFWS Division of Recovery  
Atlanta Southeast Regional Office  
404-679-4127, [jonathan\\_wardell@fws.gov](mailto:jonathan_wardell@fws.gov)

# Mark Endries

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## Education:

Master of Science Degree in Biology – May 2000  
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh  
Thesis: Modeling Spacing Patterns of a Tropical Forest Rodent Using Radiotelemetry and GIS.

Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology, Minor in Chemistry – May 1995  
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

## Work and Volunteer Experiences:

August 15<sup>th</sup> 2010 - Present: *Fish and Wildlife Biologist*  
*US Fish and Wildlife Service*  
*Asheville Ecological Services Office, Asheville NC*

GIS Analyst/IT Specialist. I am responsible for the development and maintenance of Service geospatial data systems, plan and conduct GIS-based spatially explicit investigations to determine impacts upon fish and wildlife resources, support staff with development and use of GIS technology, and serve as an information technology representative for the agency.

July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004 – August 1<sup>st</sup> 2010: *Biological Scientist*  
*Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*  
*Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Tallahassee, FL*

GIS Analyst/Program Coordinator. An agency wide restructure placed me back into the Biodiversity Conservation Planner position while still retaining many of my former GIS Program Coordinator responsibilities (read below).

July 15<sup>th</sup> 2002 – July 1<sup>st</sup> 2004: *Biological Scientist*  
*Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*  
*Division of Wildlife, Tallahassee, FL*

GIS Program Coordinator. I was responsible for the development and maintenance of Agency geospatial data systems, protocols, and procedures. In addition, I assisted Division biologists, other agencies, and the general public with the development and use of GIS technology, provided GIS technical assistance, maintained GIS data sets, and created new GIS data sets for agency and non-agency use.

January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2001 – July 12<sup>th</sup> 2002: *Biological Scientist*  
*Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*  
*Office of Environmental Services, Tallahassee, FL*

Biodiversity Conservation Planner. A conservation biology position responsible for assisting in the application of GIS technology to regional and statewide biodiversity conservation planning in Florida. Using GIS data layers (e.g., species occurrence records, vegetation, soils, public lands) and multivariate statistics, I identified critical habitats for biodiversity conservation and conducted environmental impact assessments of proposed land use changes.

August 17<sup>th</sup> 2000 - December 15<sup>th</sup> 2000: *Teaching Assistant*  
*University of Georgia, Athens, GA*

I was responsible for the instruction of the laboratory portion of an upper level digital cartography class. Duties included preparation, presentation, and grading of laboratory lectures and assignments, and other duties as needed. Software taught included ArcView, ArcInfo Workstation, IDRISI, and ERDAS Imagine.

January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1999 - June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2000: *Teaching Assistant*  
*University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI*

I was responsible for assisting professors with lecture and lab courses in general ecology, and introductory biology. Duties included assisting with lectures, tutoring students, grading assignments, and other duties as needed.

- March 16<sup>th</sup> - July 30<sup>th</sup> 1998: *Biological Science Technician GS-5  
Point Reyes National Seashore, Point Reyes, CA*  
Part of a crew involved in the construction of a detailed digital land cover map of the park and exotic plant control. Skills acquired include aerial photo and topographic map interpretation, orienteering, plant and habitat survey techniques, plant identification, and plant removal techniques.
- January 15<sup>th</sup> 1997 - March 9<sup>th</sup> 1998: *Americorps Volunteer/Laboratory Technician  
USDA Agriculture Research, Ft. Lauderdale, FL*  
Exotic plant biocontrol. I performed independent research on potential biocontrol candidates to benefit everglades restoration efforts and help curb invasive species infestation throughout Florida. Part of the Americorps National Service program.
- March 1<sup>st</sup> - December 10<sup>th</sup> 1996: *Corpsmember/Youth Mentor/Americorps Volunteer  
Montana Conservation Corps, Boulder, MT*  
Conservation corpsmember conducting trail construction and maintenance, stream restoration, abandoned mine inventories and restoration, general construction, and community service. Additionally, served as youth-at-risk mentors on work projects. Part of the Americorps National Service program.
- May 15<sup>th</sup> - December 13<sup>th</sup> 1995: *Field Research Technician  
Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute of Panama*  
Population dynamics of the spiny rat (*Proechimys semispinosus*) on small islands in the Panama Canal. I conducted live capture and release of small mammals, animal banding and tagging, plant identification, plant phenology interpretation, powerboat operation, data entry, project management and maintenance.

## **Publications, Grants, Honors, and Accomplishments:**

- Successfully graduated from CSP3116 Interagency Consultation for Endangered Species.
- Successfully graduated from CLM7173 Environmental Due Diligence: The Transaction Screen Process
- Successfully graduated from CSP3129 Inland Oil Spill Planning Preparedness
- Was the instructor of an Introduction to Maxent course at the 2022, 2020, 2018, and 2014 FWS Geospatial Workshops
- 2019 US Fish and Wildlife Service GIS Training Champion
- USFWS detailee (GS-12) as the Species Range Communications Lead- January 2020
- USFWS detailee (GS-12) as a Data Manager for the Peninsular Florida LCC – September 2017
- USFWS detailee (GS-12) as the USFWS NWRS GIS Coordinator August – December 2016
- Second Place Poster: “Using GIS to Assess Bog Turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*) Metapopulation Dynamics Across the Southern Appalachian Mountain Region”, 2019 NC GIS Conference
- Special Achievement in GIS Award: US Fish and Wildlife Service Oil Spill Responder, 2011 ESRI User Conference
- Honorable Mention Poster: “Using GIS to Develop a Priority Work Area Map in Western North Carolina”, 2011 SCGIS/ESRI/SCB International Conservation Mapping Competition, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011
- Best in Show Poster: “Assessing Natural Lands Spatial Heterogeneity in a Landcover Map”, Seven Hills Regional Users Group for GIS Workshop, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- Served as an GIS expert witness in a land development dispute (FL Case No. 07-003267GM)
- Received Geographic Information Systems Professional (GISP) certification, August 2006,
- Second Place Poster: “Mapping Wildlife Needs in Florida: The Integrated Wildlife Habitat Ranking System”, Best Data Integration Category, 2005 ESRI International User Conference
- Author “Spacing Patterns of a Tropical Forest Rodent, the Spiny Rat (*Proechimys semispinosus*), in Panama”. *Journal of Zoology*, London, February 2005
- Invited Speaker: Arizona Game and Fish Department Missing Linkages Workshop, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Phoenix, AZ
- Invited Speaker: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Deer-Vehicle Crash Information Clearinghouse Symposium, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004, University of Wisconsin Madison
- Best in Show Poster: “A Model for Predicting Black Bear Habitat for the Western Panhandle of Florida”, Seven Hills Regional Users Group for GIS Workshop, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003
- Best in Show Poster: “Mapping Wildlife Needs in Florida: The Integrated Wildlife Habitat Ranking System”, Seven Hills Regional Users Group for GIS Workshop, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Outstanding Performance Award recipient, 2002.
- Co-author “The Brazilian Peppertree Drupe Feeder *Megastigmus transvaalensis* (Hymenoptera: Torymidae): Florida Distribution and Impact”. *Biological Control*, 2001
- Co-author “Colonization and Extinction Dynamics of Possums on Small Islands in Panama”. *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, November 2000
- Co-author “Spacing Patterns Within Populations of a Tropical Forest Rodent, *Proechimys semispinosus*, on Five Panamanian Islands”. *Journal of Zoology*, London, January 1997

## Weaverville Watershed Trails and Wildlife Preserve - Project Budget

Item	Cost
Parking Area Improvements	\$100,000
Water Equipment Exclusion Fencing	\$232,200
Phase 1 Trail Installation	\$141,500
Phase 2 Trail Installation	\$136,000
Phase 3 Trail Installation	\$222,330
Phase 4 Observation/Viewing Platforms	\$20,000
2026 Maintenance	\$55,000
2027 Maintenance	\$55,000
2028 Maintenance	\$55,000
2029 Maintenance	\$55,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$1,072,030</b>

<b>Time estimate</b>
3 Months
2 Months
4 Months
3 Months
4 Months
2 Months
1 year
1 year
1 year
1 year

**TOWN OF WEAVERVILLE  
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION FOR  
BUNCOMBE COUNTY PASSIVE RECREATION LANDS  
GRANT APPLICATION FOR FY2024**

**WHEREAS**, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million general obligation bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities in Buncombe County (“Open Space Bond”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Passive Recreation Lands component of the bond aims to fund projects that provide publicly accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreation activities, such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing can occur while also preserving and protecting important ecosystems and natural resources; and

**WHEREAS**, a portion of the Open Space Bond is being made available for eligible Passive Recreation Land and Buncombe County has established project eligibility criteria and a timeline for a FY2024 grant cycle; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Weaverville is considering the installation and operation of a publicly accessible trail system for hiking, biking, and other passive recreation, on approximately 300 acres within the Weaverville Watershed [a/k/a the Eller Cove Watershed] located within the unincorporated area of Buncombe County and owned by the Town of Weaverville (“Weaverville Watershed Trails Project”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Weaverville believes its Weaverville Watershed Trails Project may be eligible for funding under the Passive Recreation Lands component of the Open Space Bond and wishes to submit an application for consideration;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Council for the Town of Weaverville hereby endorses the application for grant funding under the FY2024 Passive Recreation Lands component of the Open Space Bond for its Weaverville Watershed Trails Project.

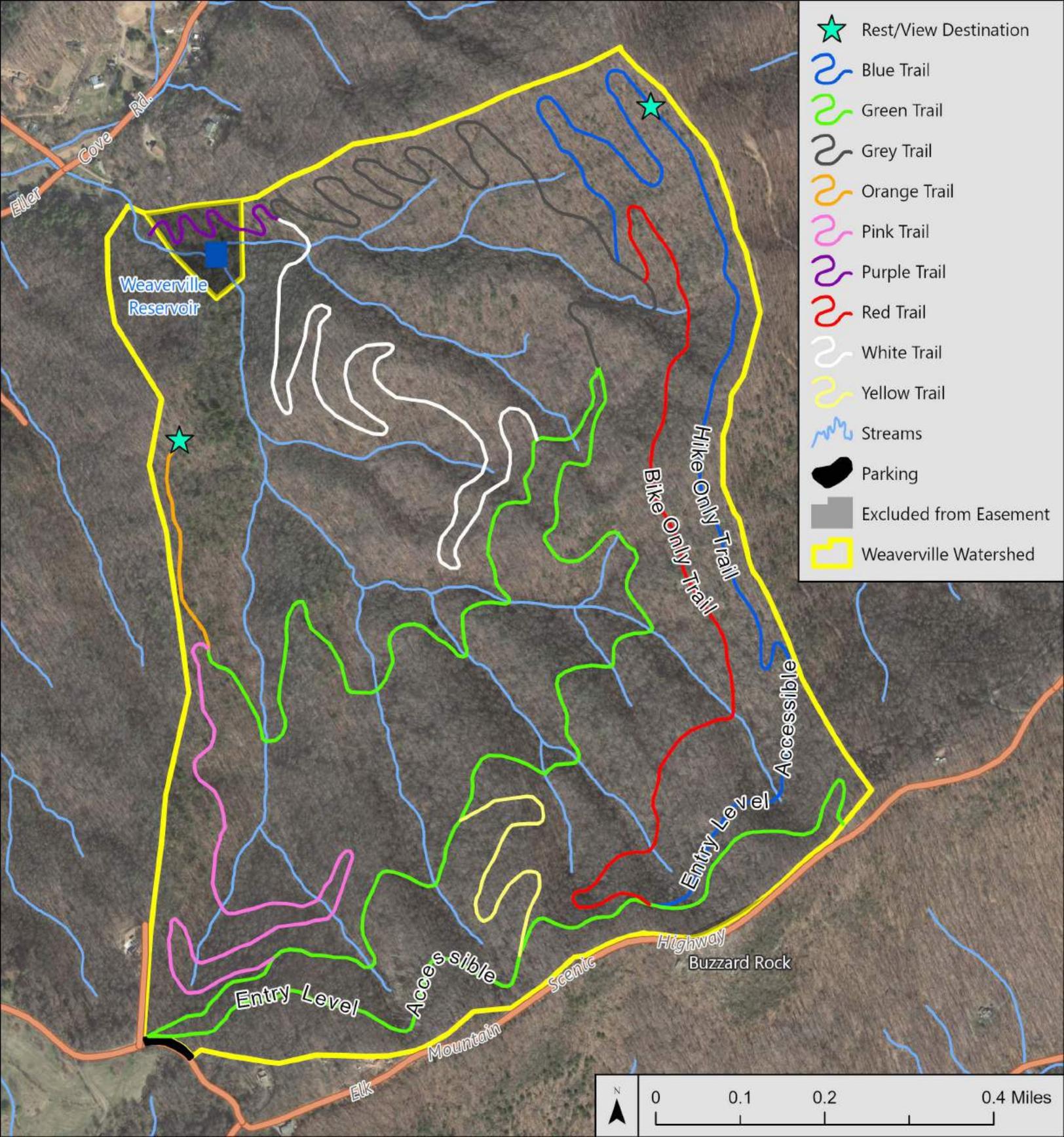
**THIS** the 26<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2024.

**TOWN OF WEAVERVILLE**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick Fitzsimmons, Mayor

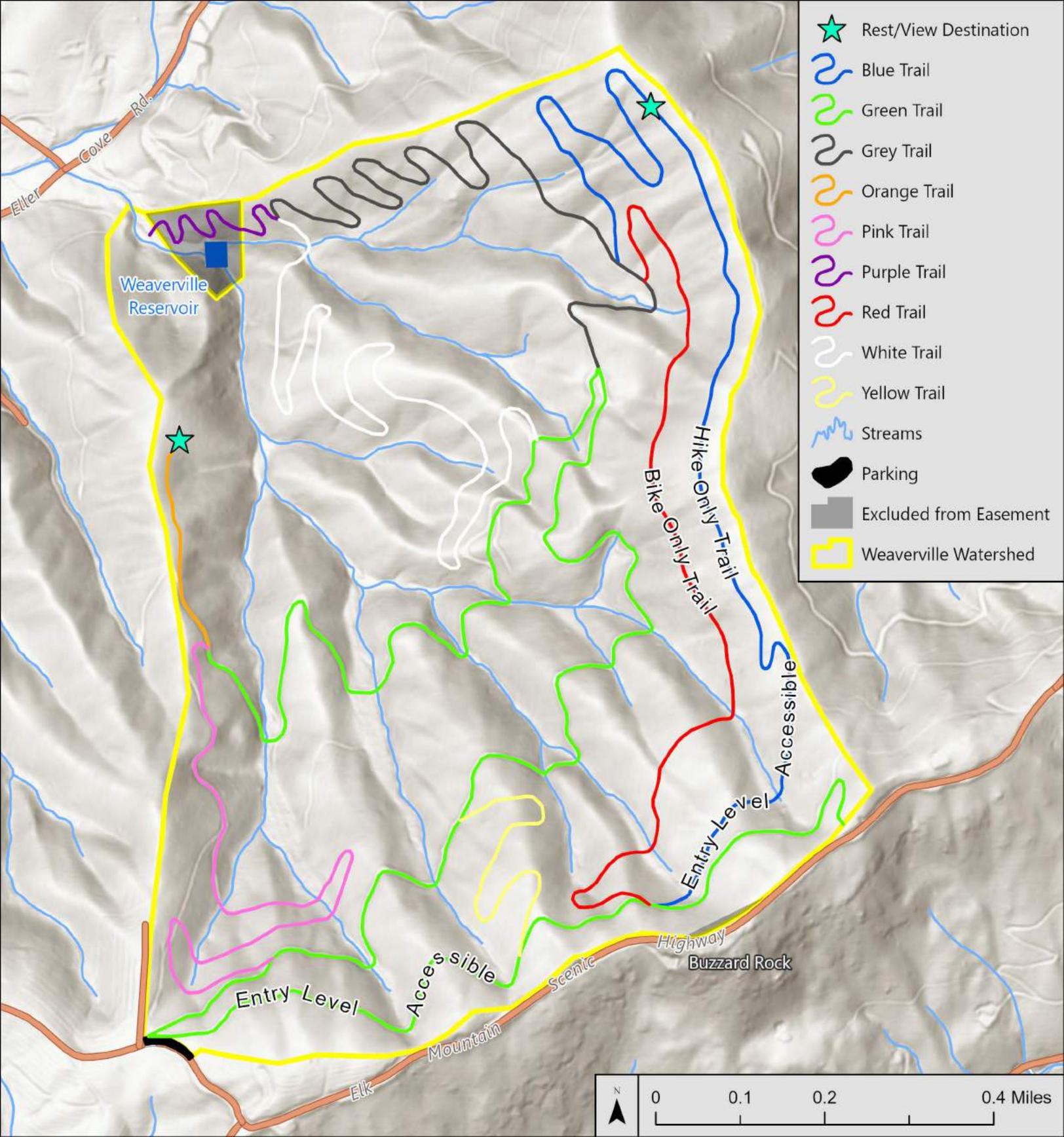
**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk



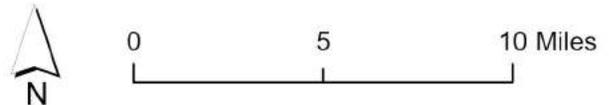
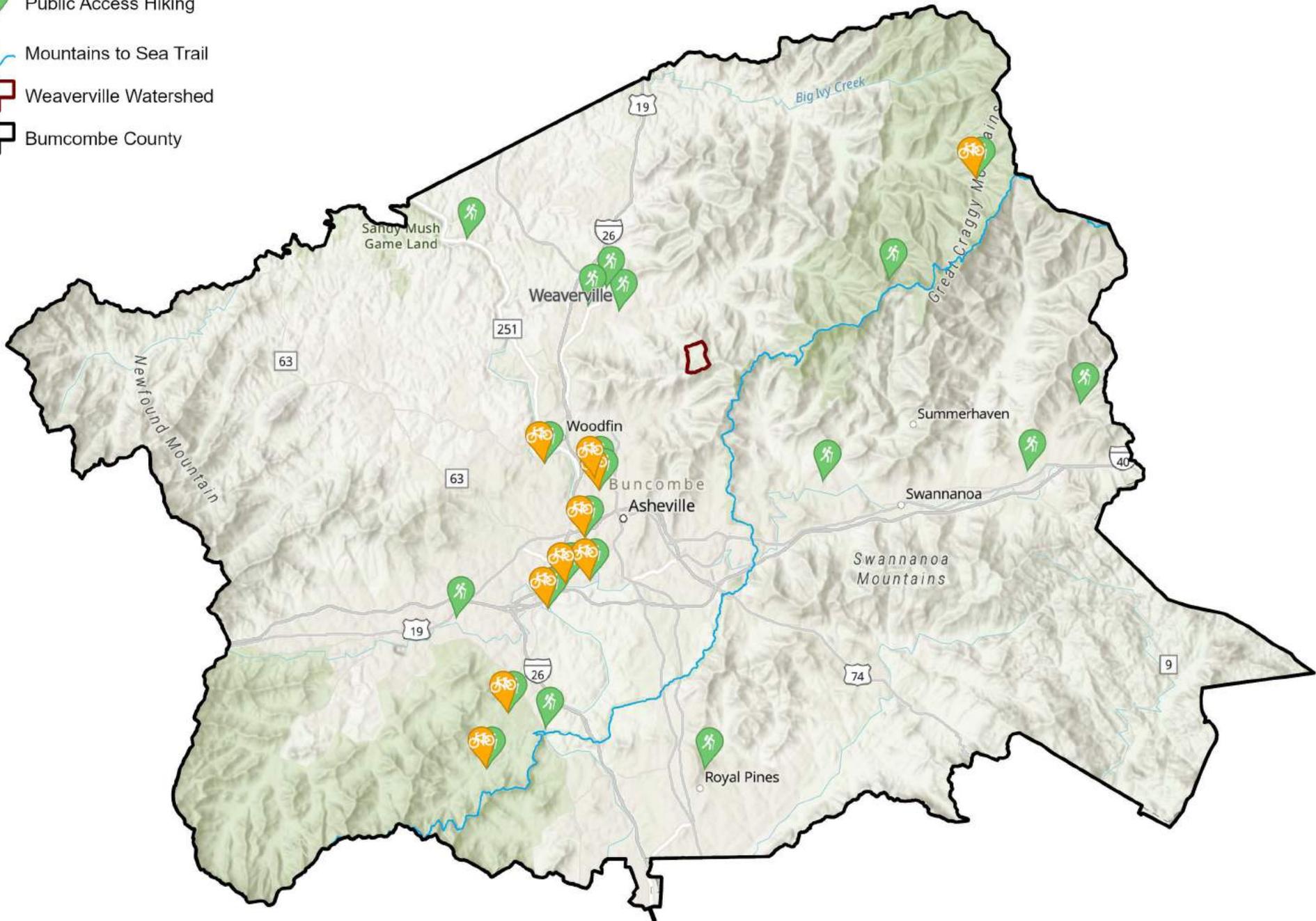
- ★ Rest/View Destination
- Blue Trail
- Green Trail
- Grey Trail
- Orange Trail
- Pink Trail
- Purple Trail
- Red Trail
- White Trail
- Yellow Trail
- Streams
- Parking
- Excluded from Easement
- Weaverville Watershed

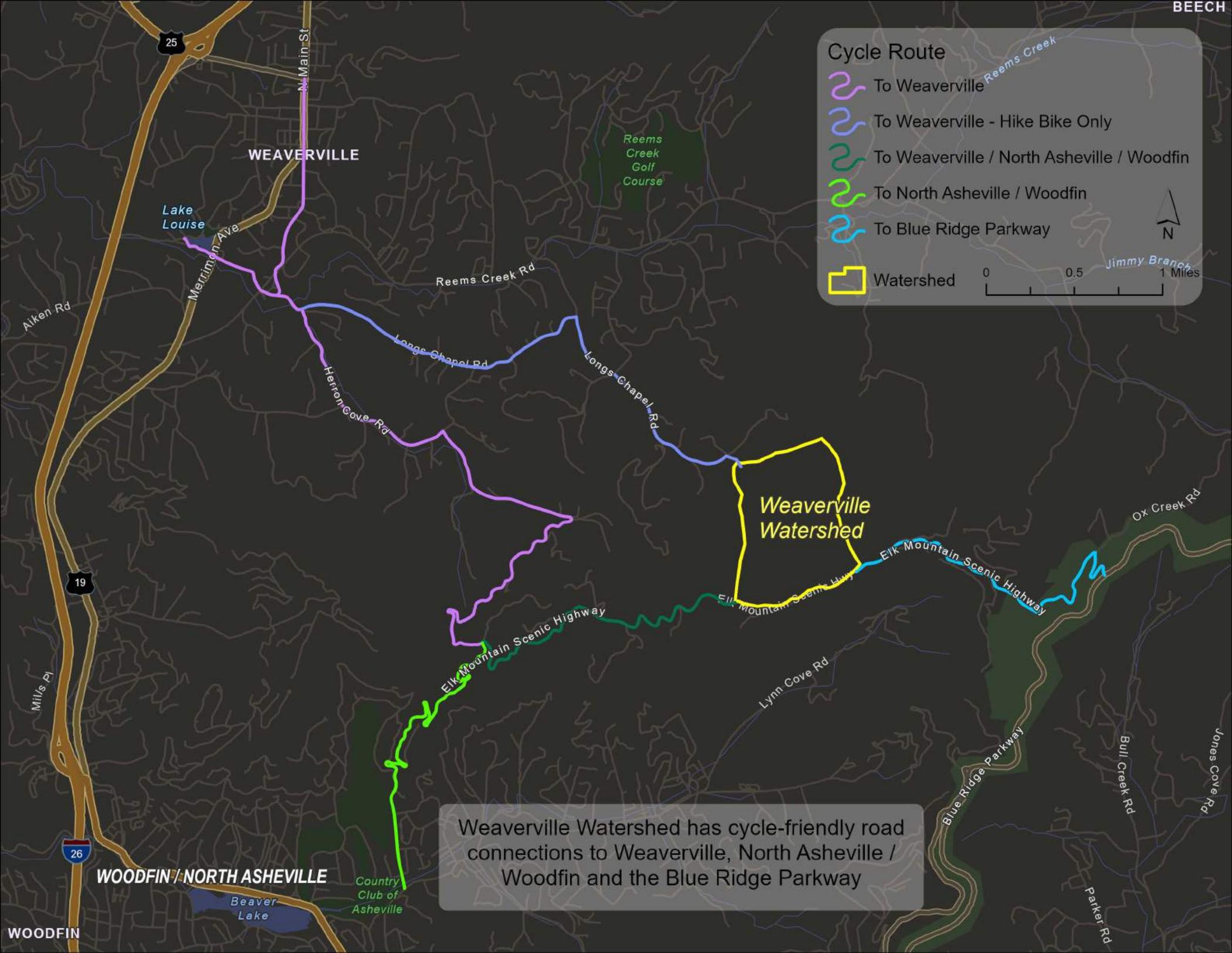




# Buncombe County Public Access Hiking and Biking

-  Public Access Biking
-  Public Access Hiking
-  Mountains to Sea Trail
-  Weaverville Watershed
-  Buncombe County





**Cycle Route**

-  To Weaverville
-  To Weaverville - Hike Bike Only
-  To Weaverville / North Asheville / Woodfin
-  To North Asheville / Woodfin
-  To Blue Ridge Parkway

 Watershed

0 0.5 1 Miles

Jimmy Branch

N

Weaverville Watershed has cycle-friendly road connections to Weaverville, North Asheville / Woodfin and the Blue Ridge Parkway



 Weaverville Biking Loop

 Roads

 Weaverville Owned Parcels

**Weaverville Biking Loop**

- Approximately 13 miles
- 1,500 feet of elevation
- Avoids main travel roads
- Only possible with through access of Watershed

3594 ft

# Weaverville Watershed



**etd**  
Elevated Trail Design

Professional  
Geospatial  
Solutions









Town of Woodfin    ♦    90 Elk Mountain Rd., Woodfin, NC 28804    ♦    828-253-4887

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Jill Carter, Open Space Bond Project Manager  
Buncombe County Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee  
200 College Street  
Asheville, NC 28801

March 22, 2024

Dear Ms. Carter and Members of the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee,

I am writing on behalf of the Town of Woodfin to express our enthusiastic support for the Town of Weaverville Watershed Trails & Wildlife Sanctuary project proposed for the Eller Cove watershed property. We believe this project holds immense environmental, social, and economic value for our community and the surrounding region.

The Eller Cove property, which adjoins our jurisdiction, encompasses 310 acres of pristine forest in an ecologically sensitive area of the county. This open space preservation effort promises significant public benefits for both local residents and the numerous visitors who frequent the Blue Ridge Parkway, located less than a mile from the Eller Cove property.

The development of miles of low-impact trails will create invaluable opportunities for hiking, birding, picnicking, and biking. These activities will allow residents and visitors to experience the therapeutic benefits of the Western North Carolina mountains firsthand. Beyond the undeniable health benefits of outdoor recreation, this project carries substantial environmental and economic impacts. Protecting steep slopes from overdevelopment helps mitigate the risks of landslides and erosion, while also contributing to the thriving outdoor economy of Western North Carolina.

As neighbors to the Town of Weaverville and partners in promoting tourism in our county and region, the Town of Woodfin strongly advocates for funding the trail system project at the Eller Cove watershed. Our longstanding partnership with Weaverville, including recent collaborations on a greenway feasibility study, gives us confidence in their ability to serve as responsible stewards of the new park, balancing environmental conservation with public use.

Thank you for considering our request to support this important initiative. We believe that together, we can create a lasting impact on our community's well-being and environmental sustainability.

Warmest regards,

Shannon Tuch, Woodfin Town Manager

March 25, 2024

Passive Recreation Lands Program  
Buncombe County

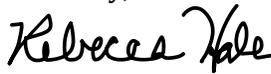
To Whom It May Concern:

As faculty members at the University of North Carolina Asheville, we personally and professionally appreciate the value of outdoor learning as part of the university's academic programs in Biology, Environmental Studies, and Sustainability. A critical part of these programs is identifying nearby, accessible natural areas where we can take our student groups. Among those often visited in Buncombe County are Bent Creek Experimental Forest, Sandy Bottom Preserve, and the Blue Ridge Parkway because they offer a diversity of terrestrial habitats with varying levels of human activity.

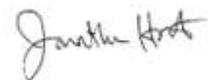
Much like these other natural areas, the Weaverville Watershed offers an intact forest community just 15 min from campus. The proposed trail system would provide valuable access for undergraduate learning opportunities. Although the Town of Weaverville might provide UNC Asheville faculty and students access to the property in its current form, the property lacks safe parking and navigable access to the forest, making it a risk for student groups. The proposed trail system and modest parking area outlined in the proposal will render the site an ideal field trip destination. The forest, with its diverse plant community, will be the perfect outdoor classroom for courses such as our Vertebrate Zoology, Forest Ecology, Avian Ecology, Hydrology, and Soils classes. The site will also demonstrate well how a site can be protected through transitions in its function: from the Town's water supply to a recreational area.

The undersigned faculty members recognize that the Weaverville Watershed trails project will provide a valuable educational resource to the community.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Hale  
Professor of Biology  
15 years in Asheville



Jonathan Horton  
Professor and Chair of Biology  
22 years in Asheville



Andrew Laughlin  
Associate Professor of Environmental Studies  
14 years in Asheville



H. David Clarke  
Professor of Biology



Irene Rossell  
Professor of Environmental Studies  
30 years in Weaverville



# Pisgah Area SORBA

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Pisgah Area SORBA  
PO Box 61  
Skyland, NC 28776

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Pisgah Area SORBA to offer our full support for the Weaverville Watershed grant application submitted through the Buncombe County Passive Lands grant. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving mountain biking opportunities and enhancing trail systems in the region, we recognize the immense value this project would bring to our community.

Pisgah Area SORBA has a proud history of adopting and maintaining over 100 miles of trails, collaborating with municipalities and federal agencies, and advocating for trail access and improvement. Through our extensive experience, we understand the critical role that well-designed and maintained trails play in fostering outdoor recreation, promoting active lifestyles, and preserving natural landscapes.

The Weaverville Watershed project holds significant promise for the town of Weaverville and Buncombe County as a whole. The addition of the proposed multi-use trails will undoubtedly contribute to increased health and wellness among residents while also generating economic value for the area.

Pisgah SORBA has worked closely with Elevated Trail Design, who is responsible for crafting the plans for the Weaverville Watershed trail project. We can attest to their expertise and commitment to excellence. Their dedication to creating sustainable, accessible, and enjoyable trails ensures that this project will be a resounding success, benefitting both current and future generations.

In conclusion, I urge you to consider this grant application. With your support, the Weaverville Watershed trail project can create lasting positive impacts for our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Natalie Narburgh  
Executive Director, Pisgah Area SORBA

To: Town of Weaverville

27 March 2024

From: Boy Scout Troop 15, Weaverville

Subject: Support for Watershed Trail Plan

I am the Scoutmaster for Weaverville's Boy Scout Troop 15. After discussion with the Troop Committee, we want to offer our support to the creation of a trail system in Weaverville.

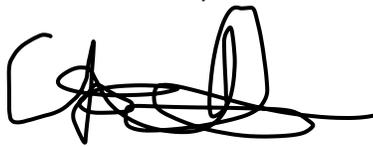
There are several merit badges and rank advancement tasks that require trails to hike, bike, and observe nature. Currently the closest "good" trail is Rattlesnake Lodge, and beyond that, the Lake Powhatan/Arboretum area. If we don't want to operate around Lake Louise and the College St-Church St neighborhood, we have to drive farther than we'd like. While we definitely enjoy hiking through town and around the lake, there's a bit too much traffic for safety, and it's a little too inhabited for a significant outdoor-nature experience.

A series of medium-distance trails within 2-3 miles of downtown Weaverville would offer the scouts some closer, and better, opportunities for learning new skills and practicing old ones.

The committee was very positive in support of the watershed trail plan. We would hope there will be parking for a half-dozen or more vehicles nearby, and some signs or other control measures to alert bikers to the possible presence of hikers.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CPA', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Chris Papaioannou  
Scoutmaster, Troop 15  
Weaverville, NC



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Asheville Field Office  
160 Zillicoa Street  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

March 11, 2024

Selena D. Coffey  
Town Manager  
Town of Weaverville  
30 South Main Street  
Weaverville, North Carolina 28787

Dear Selena Coffey:

Subject: Support for Proposed Eller Cove Watershed Trail System; Buncombe County, North Carolina

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) supports the conservation objectives for the proposed public trail system in Weaverville, North Carolina. The site contains a healthy rich cove forest natural community and provides high quality habitat for rare wildlife including federally listed bat species. The Service appreciates that the Town of Weaverville currently protects these habitats under conservation easement and is committed to maintain the site for wildlife and passive recreation uses.

In addition to easement protections, the proposed public trail system would provide opportunities to connect diverse audiences with natural resources. The Service acknowledges that providing safe, public access to natural spaces promotes appreciation for wildlife and instills conservation values to young people and other potential stewards.

The Service appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Gary Peeples  
Deputy Field Office Supervisor



# Carolina Mountain Club

PO Box 68  
Asheville, North Carolina 28802  
[www.carolinamtnclub.org](http://www.carolinamtnclub.org)

March 8, 2024

On behalf of the Carolina Mountain Club, I would like to show support for the trail plan that has been prepared by Elevated Trail Design for the Weaverville Watershed off of Elk Mountain Scenic Highway.

Our club is based in Asheville and has over 1100 members, many of whom live in the Weaverville area, so this would become another valuable location for hikers to get outside, in the woods, without having to drive long distances.

I visited this site 2 years ago with Jeff McKenna and saw then what benefits adding trails could have for a town-owned property not currently being used.

Again, I want to give CMC's full support for this project and hope the grant comes through for the benefit of the town of Weaverville.

Sincerely

Les Love

President, Carolina Mountain Club  
Friends of MST Board Member  
CMC Secondary Trails Supervisor  
828-230-1861

*Carolina Mountain Club, the oldest hiking and trail maintenance club in the southeast, celebrated 100 years in 2023!*

[www.cmc100th.org](http://www.cmc100th.org)

To whom it may concern;

As the North Buncombe District teacher of the year, who represents seven public schools in and around Weaverville, I am a strong proponent of creating a local trail network for students to access outdoor learning opportunities. Speaking on behalf of the teachers in our district, I can say unequivocally that any trail network would be accessed by students and their teachers for educational and recreational opportunities.

As a Biology and Earth science teacher, a local trail network would afford my students the opportunity to do field investigations on biodiversity related to the specific flora and fauna of our region in the southern Appalachians. A location like the site proposed would also allow students to study aquatic ecosystems and study such things as macroinvertebrates, salamander biodiversity, dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, as well as other metrics to measure stream health. Students could also establish long term research projects to monitor the health of the forest. Trails similar to the ones proposed enable teachers to take their classrooms into the forest to experience learning first hand and in nature. These trails would not only benefit secondary students but lower grades as well as they begin to study topics such as photosynthesis, ecosystems, weather patterns and biomes to name just a few. With the close proximity to 5 schools (all within 10 miles) and the trail network this would make transportation by bus quick and easy.

Aside from the abundant educational opportunities for students, this site would provide numerous recreational options as well. For example, this property would allow access to a local ecosystem with trails that provide students options to hike, trail run, bike or walk. As the advisor to our schools Adventure club, this area would allow me to take my club on mountain bike rides and hikes that are close to school. Ultimately, these recreational activities keep kids moving, active, and healthy.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thanks,

Mike Rowe  
North Buncombe High School  
828 645 4221

# PISGAH RAGE

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3/21/2024

To whom it may concern,

The National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA, <https://nationalmtb.org>) is an American non-profit organization that promotes youth mountain biking programs in the United States. NICA provides governance, leadership, and program support to regional interscholastic mountain biking organizations. NICA's mission is to build "strong minds, bodies, character, and communities through cycling, where every youth is empowered to be part of a thriving and engaged cycling community."

Pisgah Rage ([www.pisgahrage.com](http://www.pisgahrage.com)) is a NICA composite team made up of student-athletes in grades 6-12 from schools throughout Asheville and Buncombe County. Our goal is to provide a fun, safe and high-quality mountain bike experience for all athletes. Currently in our 6th year Pisgah Rage has over 80 student athletes and over 40 volunteer coaches.

As the Pisgah Rage Head Coach, I feel the Weaverville Watershed Trail project would be a great resource for our team. As a Buncombe County mountain bike team, we are huge proponents to adding trails in the County. We are also very active in providing our student athletes with opportunities to get involved in trail maintenance efforts through our Teen Trail Corps program (<https://nationalmtb.org/teen-trail-corps/>) and could potentially coordinate trail maintenance work days at the Weaverville Watershed trails.

Thank you,

Abby Walker

Head Coach Pisgah Rage & Asheville High NICA Mtn Bike Team

# Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa***

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Megan McCreary  
PO box 697  
Swannanoa, North Carolina 28778

mccreary.megan@gmail.com  
O: 13146231798

## ***Megan McCreary***

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263 bee tree road  
swannanoa, North Carolina 28778

mmccreary@siteworkstudios.com  
O: 13146231798

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

**Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

**Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County’s County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

**Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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**Project Name\***

Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park

**Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa

**Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

We are project partners with Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail (F3ST) and Black Mountain Greenways & Trails Committee (BMTGT). For the purpose of this application, FANS is the sole applicant.

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

Combination

## Scope of Work

Maps and SOW FINAL.pdf

## Project Schedule

Project Schedule FINAL.pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

460 Old US 70, Swannanoa NC 29778

### Parcel Number

969911397300000

### Acreage

3

### Zoning Designation

CS

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$1,638,950.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$1,638,950.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

\$0.00

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

No additional fund sources have been pursued at this time.

## Project Summary

### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond’s goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

The purpose of this project is to provide access for the future Fonta Flora State Trail (FFST), and to build a riverside pocket park for the residents of Swannanoa and users of the FFST.

The bond funds would be used to purchase land that is located along the proposed future route of the FFST, and could serve as part of the official greenway alignment.

Much attention has been focused on the French Broad River in recent years, while the Swannanoa River — particularly the section that runs through the Swannanoa community — has been largely ignored. An investment of bond funding in this project will increase awareness and appreciation of this overlooked but critically important water resource.

These properties are within close proximity to Swannanoa’s business center, Grovemont Park and the surrounding Grovemont neighborhood, and the newly-announced Beacon Village project, which will feature a 1.5-mile walking path, world class bike park, and other outdoor recreation amenities.

Although Swannanoa is home to beautiful mountains, significant tracts of undeveloped land, and a river that bears its name, there have been very few conservation efforts to protect, preserve and enhance these assets. Using bond funds for the purposes outlined in this application will demonstrate a commitment to the eastern part of the county, as well as a recognition of the importance of these natural assets, not only to Swannanoa, but to all residents of Buncombe County and the surrounding region.

## Eligibility

### Eligibility Summary\*

Please attest to the project’s eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project’s timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

This project is located in eastern Buncombe County, in the unincorporated and relatively underserved Swannanoa community. The funds would be used for acquisition of property and an easement (Funding Request Tier 1) and for improvements to transform the acquired property and existing county-owned properties into a publicly-accessible park with river access, walking trails, and educational opportunities (Funding Request Tier 2). Additional improvements that provide connectivity to other parcels for the future Fonta Flora Trail are also listed (Funding Request Tier 3).

The timeline for this project would allow for completion of the acquisition phase within several months of the funding award. The schedule for completion of the improvements to the land would depend on the approved design, but could feasibly be completed within approximately 2 years of the funding award.

Maintenance of the property would be provided by Buncombe County. Our team has listed important considerations for this maintenance plan, but the ultimate plan will be determined by county staff. The portion of the land that will serve the Fonta Flora trail will also likely be maintained by Buncombe County. Fonta Flora coordinates maintenance of the trail with the local jurisdiction, but Fonta Flora does not employ staff for maintenance purposes.

The project will be fully accessible to the public. The existing building on the Woodmen property will be open to the public, if Buncombe County so chooses.

## *Acquisition Narrative*

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### **Acquisition Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for the acquisition of land for future passive recreation development. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The bond funds will be used for the County's fee simple purchase of either 3 or 5 acres at 460 Old US 70. This parcel (referred to as the Woodmen property) is currently on the market. Our team had been working with a buyer, but that sale fell through in the last few days. The 3 acre boundary was determined by the buyer, and included all land in the floodway, as well as an existing building and land located downriver of the existing building. The county could purchase the 5 acres directly from Woodmen, or a portion of the land from a future buyer.

Immediately upriver of the Woodmen property is a self-storage facility, at 500 Old US 70. The owner of this property has signed a letter of intent, indicating their willingness to sell to the county an easement along the river. This easement would connect the Woodmen property to two county-owned properties that sit immediately upriver, at 504 and 550 Old US 70. These county-owned properties total 3.3 acres, and are currently undeveloped. Buncombe County would hold this easement.

Across the river from the Woodmen property is a 2.3 acre property owned by Mike Stewart. Mr. Stewart recently expressed a willingness to negotiate the sale of all or a portion of that property to the county. The proposed terms of that sale are currently unknown, and will have to be negotiated. The above acquisitions are categorized as Tier One in our application. Tier Two includes all proposed improvements to the properties.

## *Improvements Narrative*

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### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

Please see attached Master Plan for a graphic of the proposed pocket park and Fonta Flora State Trail alignment, as well as case study photographs of the proposed improvements.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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### Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

By preserving 3 acres of the Woodmen tract and enhancing the county-owned 5.3 acres, we will create and protect habitat that has been known to support up to ten of the plant and animal species currently listed as threatened or endangered in Buncombe County. These species include Appalachian Elktoe, Bunched Arrowhead, Dwarf-flowered Heart Leaf, Indiana bat, Monarch Butterfly, Rock gnome Lichen, Small Whorled Pogonia, Swamp Pink, Mountain sweet pitcher-plant, and Virginia Spiraea.

There are several distinct habitats within the project area, including: woodlands, wetlands, a riparian zone, and the disturbed area where successional species take hold. These areas will be removed from the threat of development under the public ownership and management by the county.

The pond on Woodmen was filled in the early 2020's, but the hydrology could be restored by removal of fill material. Existing and enhanced wetlands could manage stormwater runoff from properties to the north- helping to capture, retain, and polish flood waters- improving the Swannanoa River water quality.

Building of natural surface trails and a raised boardwalk for access to the wetland would allow the public to experience these wildlife habitats, with limited on-going disturbance. Management of non-native and invasive plants will allow for native species to take hold and thrive. A wooded riparian corridor could be preserved as part of a stream-side trail segment.

### Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

This project would acquire up to 7 acres of privately-owned land, and make it available for public use. It would also take 3.3 acres of county-owned land that are not currently accessible to the public, and convert it

to a publicly accessible open space. Additionally, it would provide for public access between all of those properties, via a greenway easement.

This project would serve as an initial step in the development of the Fonta Flora State Trail, in Swannanoa. This trail eventually will connect Buncombe, McDowell, and Burke counties. The Fonta Flora trail is also a part of the regional Hellbender trail network, which will further link the above counties to Henderson, Haywood, Madison, and Transylvania counties. This proposed project would not only provide local passive recreation access to Swannanoa residents, but would provide for regional connectivity, transportation equity, and pedestrian safety, allowing for the general public to access all open space located along the seven-county regional trail corridor.

Other current and planned public spaces within walking distance of the proposed project site include the Grovemont Park and Playground, the Swannanoa Library, and the newly-announced Beacon Village outdoor recreation area. In addition, there are four schools within one mile of the project site — WD Williams Elementary School, Community High School, Asheville Christian Academy, and Owen Middle School.

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

This project would be developed as an educational pocket park. The improvements that we propose are all designed to provide access to natural resources and restored ecosystems. The entire park would be designed to put a focus on water by educating the public on stormwater management, wetland ecosystems, riparian ecosystems, water quality, and the process of restoration and conservation. Educational signs could be used to inform the public as the old pond is restored to a wetland. Riparian ecosystems are some of the most sensitive and impactful ecosystems; highlighting their importance is a keystone of this proposal.

The project would feature natural surface trails, a wetland and observation boardwalk, Swannanoa River access, informational signage, and native plantings. There are currently invasive plants on all three properties. Educational signage would encourage the public to become familiar with invasive and native species of plants and animals, and the process required to remove invasives.

The Swannanoa River is largely cut off from view, located behind businesses or housing, and has become littered with trash. Locating a prominent public park and educational resource in this area would serve to inform the public and bring to light the need for environmental stewardship. By focusing on this important water resource and its value to our ecological system, we will lay the groundwork for a healthier Swannanoa River, now and in the future.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

There will be two major measures of success of the conservation and environmental benefits of this project.

One measure will include the successful filtering (polishing) and temporary storage of stormwater on property; the removal of invasive plants; the restoration of the infilled pond to a sustainable wetland ecosystem; the presence of native animals on-site; the growth of native plants; and the maintenance of a litter-free river bank.

The second measure will be the public usage of this pocket park. Because the park will provide access to natural resources and educate the public about the importance of environmental stewardship, increased public use of this space will be directly tied to increased awareness of conservation practices. The larger goal

is that the public applies these practices at their own homes, and in other public places. As a visible public environmental educational resource in Swannanoa, this project could have a widespread impact on local residents, the surrounding community, and ultimately, the health of the Swannanoa River.

If Buncombe County chooses, the existing building on the Woodmen property could potentially be repurposed as an educational nature center, further extending the environmental and conservation benefits of the project. (Note that the building development would be funded separately from this application.)

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

FANS will provide assistance during the acquisition phase of the project by gathering information and facilitating communications between Buncombe County and the landowners.

FANS can be involved in the design process of the pocket park improvements by participating in stakeholder meetings with Buncombe County and the consulting firm, and giving input on the design and community needs.

In addition, FANS has partnered with Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail (F3ST), and will continue to advocate for the funding and development of this greenway corridor, of which this project is a part. FANS is in the process of raising money for an update to a greenway feasibility study, which would focus on an approximately 4-mile corridor between Grovestone Road and Owen Park in Swannanoa (and which would include this property and segment of trail). This study would be an update to the 2010 US 70 & Swannanoa River Greenway Feasibility Study, which was authored by Equinox Environmental. Upon raising the necessary funds (\$28,000 of which has already been committed), FANS will hire a qualified environmental consultant to complete this updated study. Ultimately, this new study will be used to seek funding for the design and construction of the Fonta Flora State Trail and associated greenway or sidewalk spurs in Swannanoa. One potential funding source for this greenway is the Buncombe County Open Space Bond money.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

The biggest impediment to completion is a lack of funding. Because we are proposing that Buncombe County take ownership of these properties, we are not currently seeking funding from any other parties. However, we have structured our funding request in separate tiers, with the intention that the acquisition phase be funded now under Tier 1, with trail construction and other site improvements listed under Tier 2. If there is insufficient funding in this grant for all tiers, we will pursue development of the remaining items as funding becomes available.

Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail (F3ST) will be an important partner for FANS and Buncombe County. F3ST will be able to seek additional funding for the greenway alignment through dedicated NC State Trails funds, in addition to possibly providing funding for aspects of the pocket park improvements.

Another factor that may affect the project's timeline is the successful purchase of the Woodmen property. This property has gone under contract a few times, with the sale falling through before closing. Our proposal to purchase 3 of the 5 acres was informed by the most recent buyer's intentions for the property. At the time of this application, it is not under contract, but a buyer is in negotiation with the seller. At the time of the grant award, the status of the property will have to be assessed to determine the type of sale that will be possible.

## Please describe the readiness of the project.

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

At the time of this application, the Woodmen property is on the market. It was recently under contract; that sale fell through in the last week. If the property is still on the market at the time of the grant award, the county could negotiate a purchase of the 5 acre property. If the property is under contract with a new buyer or if it has sold, we propose that the county negotiate the purchase of the 3 acres that are in the floodway and are more difficult to develop.

The easement on the neighboring property could be negotiated by the County at any time. The approximately 2 acre Stewart tract on the south side of the river is currently on the market (listed as part of a larger parcel). To our best knowledge, FANS believes that all acquisitions could occur within months, after the grant is awarded.

The design and construction of the improvements would require significantly more time. A consulting firm would need to be selected, and design and construction documents completed. A minimum of six to nine months would likely need to be allocated for that process. Upon completion of the documents, the project would need to go out to bid. The selected bidder could then begin construction. All components of the pocket park improvements could likely be built in under a year. The Fonta Flora State Trail natural surface path could either be completed at the same time as the other improvements, or could be provided for in the design, with construction to occur at a later date.

## Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) is the applying organization. FANS is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, and is acting as project manager for this application. The mission of FANS is "to work for a strong and vibrant Swannanoa by encouraging active involvement, fostering community spirit, and honoring our unique history and natural heritage."

FANS is working in partnership with Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail (F3ST). F3ST is a 501c3 with a mission "to connect mountain communities in western North Carolina through the FFST to promote physical health, mental wellness, economic development, and outdoor recreation with trail partners for the enjoyment and education of all people." F3ST has provided invaluable guidance and support in this process, bringing their knowledge of fundraising, trail building, and coordination between all relevant jurisdictions, stakeholders, and advocates.

The Black Mountain Greenways & Trails Committee (BMTGT) is also an active participant in this project. BMTGT is a strong advocate for trail building in the Swannanoa Valley, and has actively pursued funding,

feasibility studies, and government support for construction of trails and greenways in Black Mountain. They have lent their expertise during all phases of this project, provided connections to important players, and offered guidance and support on the project and this application. BMTGT is also a vocal advocate for increased pedestrian infrastructure in Swannanoa.

### **Please describe the historical uses of the land.**

The Woodmen property was acquired by “Trustees of Swannanoa Camp 970 Woodmen of the World” in 1962. The purpose of this acquisition was “to use the property for fraternal & recreational purposes.” Woodmen of the World is a not-for-profit life insurance company, founded in 1890. With a focus on giving back to communities that it serves, Woodmen operated the lodge on this parcel to host social gatherings for the benefit of Swannanoa-based members.

The county-owned and Old US 70 Storage tracts were originally designated as part of an annex area of Beacon Village in the 1940’s. To the best of our knowledge, these properties were never developed by Beacon, but were purchased to provide for potential future development.

The properties at 504 and 550 Old US 70 were acquired by the County in 2006 and 2007 under a federally-assisted disaster relief project for the acquisition and relocation of structures in the floodplain. The 504 tract had a small stone building, and the 550 tract contained a mobile home and two sheds. All structures were demolished by the county under the project.

The property at 500 Old US 70 was acquired in 2015 with the purpose of building storage units.

The Stewart parcels between the Swannanoa River and US 70 were a part of the Beacon Village, but were not developed until the previous owner acquired them for commercial sales facilities. The portion of land tracts included in this land acquisition initiative have never been developed.

### **Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.**

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The Woodmen property originally contained a 0.7-acre open water pond which was filled recently by the owners. The western and stream-side portions of the tract are wooded. A 2,888 square foot building sits within the floodway on the property. The entire acreage of the tract is mapped within Zone AE of the Floodplain, and 40 to 100 feet of the river frontage is mapped within the Floodway zone.

The county-owned tracts at 504 and 550 Old US 70 are mapped within Zone AE of the Floodplain, and 100 to 140 feet of the river frontage is mapped within the Floodway zone. The eastern tract is grassed, and the western tract is mostly wooded. No buildings or other structures remain. Some wetland areas are mapped near the river on the western tract. These zones include wet depressional areas that developed between piles of fill dirt and old construction debris. A tributary is located along the eastern boundary of these tracts and a smaller drainage-way crosses the western tract. An MSD stormwater pipe is located along the highway. Two Dominion Energy natural gas lines run along the south side of Old US 70 and across the western county tract to the river. There are overhead power lines near the river, but due to their condition, we question whether or not they are active.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)***

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### **Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.**

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

The Woodmen tract and the county-owned tracts within this project are accessible from Old US 70, and parking areas will be available for public access to the proposed greenway and trails. Asheville Rides Transit (ART) route 170 has two bus stops in close proximity to this project. The first is on US 70 at the Whitson Ave. bridge; the second is a quarter mile east on US 70. Future water access from the Swannanoa River is also possible.

There is currently very limited safe pedestrian access to this project. However, the project will help address that lack of access by providing for future pedestrian connectivity via the Fonta Flora State Trail.

FANS is spearheading two additional projects — a “Sidewalks for Swannanoa” campaign and a greenways effort — that are also aimed at increasing investment in pedestrian and recreational infrastructure in Swannanoa. FANS is working with Buncombe County’s planning department, NCDOT, the MPO, and others to prioritize these investments. Connections to the neighborhoods, public spaces and schools in close proximity to this proposed project will be a key component of our greenways and sidewalk initiatives. The central location of this project within the Swannanoa community makes it an ideal location for an accessible pocket park that will eventually connect to nearby public spaces, businesses, and residential neighborhoods on both sides of the river.

### **How does the project address public access and use?**

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

The building on the Woodmen property will be used for whatever purpose Buncombe County deems appropriate. It is a single story structure built in 1968, and has historically hosted group events. It has a kitchen, four toilet stalls, two large meeting rooms, and unconditioned storage. It could be used for events, as a meeting space for local organizations, as a nature center and educational facility for the wetlands and outdoor conservation area, or any other purpose. It could also be demolished, if Buncombe County prefers to remove a structure from the floodway.

The tract also has an existing gravel and grass parking area. Proposed improvements include an expanded and permeable parking area to serve a future Fonta Flora trailhead, as well as seating. The restroom and kitchen facilities are only accessible from inside the building. Drinking fountains and a new restroom structure could be provided if the county wishes to fund those improvements, but they are not an absolutely necessary component of a pocket park.

## If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

This project is located near the center of Swannanoa, an unincorporated area with an estimated population of more than 12,000. With some of the more affordable housing options in the county, Swannanoa is home to many working families, lower-income individuals, and seniors on fixed incomes.

The neighborhoods in closest proximity to this proposed park are Grovemont, which contains a mix of old and newer homes, and Beacon Village, a community of small homes originally built to house workers at the former Beacon blanket mill. Both of these neighborhoods contain hundreds of homes, many of which are modest and serve populations that would otherwise struggle to find affordable housing in the county.

There are also a number of smaller neighborhoods, trailer parks, and apartments within a short distance from the project, as well as two affordable apartment complexes (155 apartment units total) located within 1.2 miles. A Mountain Housing Opportunities community and a Habitat for Humanity community are located one mile away.

The property will initially be accessed via parking provided on site. Many residents in close proximity to the park will technically be able to walk there, but may not choose to do so because of the lack of safe pedestrian routes. As this project is built out, and plans progress for sidewalks and greenways in Swannanoa, the neighborhoods around this park will be prioritized as part of an overall plan to create a safe and connected pedestrian-friendly community.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

The existing Woodmen Building could be located on an accessible route, with the addition of handicap parking and an appropriate connecting path. The widths of door openings inside the building are unknown, as are the specifics of the existing restrooms and kitchen. That said, there have not been any major updates to the building in many years, so it is likely that there are several components of the building that are not in compliance with current ADA standards.

The Woodmen site and county-owned parcels have an average slope of 2-3%, which would allow most of the future improvements to be made accessible. The boardwalk, natural surface trails, picnic areas, parking, trash containers, and viewing areas could all feasibly be made accessible. As this property sits in the floodway, all improvements should be designed to occasionally flood. As such, asphalt-paved trails are not recommended, from a maintenance standpoint. The future Fonta Flora greenway would likely be built of compacted crusher run along this segment for the same reasons. This type of surface is considered accessible, as long as it is kept free of debris, and is compacted until it is firm and stable.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

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### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

This project has a strong equity component. The lack of pedestrian infrastructure in Swannanoa disproportionately affects residents without means. This is the very definition of inequity. FANS envisions a

future Swannanoa with equitable transportation and recreation access for all residents. Although the FFST would provide benefits as a regional connector serving a large population area, it also would act as a local connector for underserved residential and business communities.

The proposed route of the greenway and associated spurs would connect residential areas to the Swannanoa business district, Owen Pool, Owen Middle School, Owen High School, WD Williams Elementary School, Asheville Christian Academy, Community High School, the Swannanoa Library, and Warren Wilson College. This would provide safe, equitable access to community resources in areas where safe pedestrian options are currently almost nonexistent.

There has also been a relative lack of local recreational access for Swannanoa's residents. Those without reliable transportation have less access to recreation than their neighbors in wealthier areas of the county. The greenway and pocket park would provide recreational opportunities and health benefits, in keeping with the county's goal to "improve the quality of life within our community by providing high quality recreational and cultural facilities, opportunities for social interaction, as well as programming and resources that encourage health and wellness."

### Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?

This project is located in one of the highest ranked census areas on the Community Index Map, in a County with one of the highest costs of living in the state.

Many folks in Swannanoa are without access to reliable transportation. There are currently no safe routes to bus stops, schools or places of business. Residents are often seen walking on "goat paths" on busy, dangerous roads without shoulders. The FFST and its connectors would allow our most vulnerable populations to reach their destinations without risking their lives, while at the same time providing health, recreational, and economic benefits to the community at large.

Swannanoa's Owen Elementary School is a Title 1 School. Out of the 418 students that attend Owen Middle School, 261 qualified for a free or reduced price lunch in the 2022-23 school year. Many of the students that attend these schools are lacking after school access to books and other resources, have parents who work multiple jobs, and are without reliable transportation. The County recently announced that they were closing the Swannanoa Library, and temporarily halted this course only after significant community outcry. This community is chronically underserved, with access to fewer and lower quality educational opportunities than other areas of the county. The conservation education offered at The Woodmen Trail and Educational Park would offer unique opportunities to the residents of Swannanoa, within walking distance.

### Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?

If yes, which projects?

There are several affordable housing units in Swannanoa, including a Habitat for Humanity community; several affordable homes and townhomes built by Mountain Housing Opportunities (MHO); a 95-unit MHO affordable apartment complex (East Haven); an 84-unit affordable apartment complex (Jasper); and a 60-unit affordable rental community for seniors (The Villas at Swannanoa). These housing units, along with numerous mobile home parks and modest residential communities (such as Beacon Village, with hundreds of homes built for workers at the now-defunct Beacon mill, and the Grovemont Community), are all within the area that would be served by the future Fonta Flora trail, with access to the proposed pocket park.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The Woodmen property was originally a homestead next to the Grovemont community, which was developed in 1924 by E.W. Grove as the first planned community in the US. Only 17 homes were completed before Grove's death, but the community has continued to grow since its founding. Today, the historic Grovemont Square in the center of the community is home to a park and playground, as well as the Swannanoa Library. It also hosts outdoor recreation, summer concerts and movies, and the annual Swannanoa Winterfest.

The county-owned tracts were a part of an annex area of the historic Beacon Village. The Beacon mill (once the largest blanket manufacturer in the world), workers' homes and a vibrant downtown area were located directly to the south, across the river. It was recently announced that the now-vacant Beacon site will be developed to include public recreation features and community gathering spaces, along with housing and businesses focused on the outdoor and recreation economy.

This project would provide connectivity to Grovemont and Beacon Village, thus tying the entire community to two of its most historic neighborhoods. There will be opportunities for signage to highlight this history and educate residents about Swannanoa's past. The FFST will provide for a Swannanoa River crossing (Tier 3), allowing residents to walk between the two communities. This area of Swannanoa could evolve into a walkable town center, with this project the nexus of connectivity.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

As part of our overall efforts to improve pedestrian infrastructure and outdoor recreation opportunities in Swannanoa, FANS launched a Sidewalks for Swannanoa campaign and formed a Sidewalks and Greenways Committee in 2023. We have held meetings, maintained a strong social media presence, and sought community input on potential locations and features of future pedestrian, greenway and recreation amenities.

FANS has also sought input and support on this project from other organizations, including Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail, the Black Mountain Greenways and Trails Committee, and the Swannanoa Community Council (SCC). SCC is a community nonprofit that owns the Swannanoa Library building and the historic Grovemont Square and surrounding park and playground. Members of SCC attended a site visit at Woodmen and have participated in our Sidewalks and Greenways Committee. SCC also provided a letter of support for this project.

The updated greenway feasibility study that FANS is in the process of funding will also include a significant public outreach phase that will include landowners and the community at large.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

Swannanoa is one of the most affordable areas of a county with one of the highest costs of living in the state. Many of its residents are working class families. Unfortunately, more and more long-term residents of Buncombe county are being forced to relocate to neighboring counties, because of the increased cost of living. Park and trail projects like this can make an area more desirable for development and bring in new residents, thus contributing to increased property values over time. The project team plans to explore partnership

opportunities with organizations that are implementing innovative affordable housing strategies to discern if there are viable options to safeguard existing residents from the outcomes of development.

This project includes plans for onsite parking, which will mitigate any traffic flow or roadside parking concerns. The overall plan offers increased walkability and safe alternative transportation routes for residents without cars.

Residents without means are those who suffer the most from a lack of pedestrian infrastructure. Without reliable transportation, they are forced to walk on major roadways in order to get to work, school, or public transportation. The provision of a local and regional greenway, with access on this property, would dramatically increase pedestrian infrastructure and safety for the most vulnerable residents.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)***

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### **What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?**

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

Long-term maintenance and management will be provided by Buncombe County as the proposed future landowner of the Woodmen Tract. The county already owns and maintains two of the project parcels to the east. Additional maintenance requirements will include trash pickup, grass mowing, tree pruning, seasonal or yearly monitoring of invasive plants and their removal as needed, and occasional compacting or re-surfacing of the natural surface trails and parking lot. Infrequently, repairs will be needed in order to maintain seating, lighting, signage, and picnic facilities. If the building is made available to the public, janitorial staff and the restocking of consumable materials will be required before and after events.

Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail (F3ST) works with local jurisdictions to determine maintenance solutions for the trail. However, F3ST does not employ any maintenance staff, and the ultimate maintenance responsibility will likely rest with the county. However, volunteer work days are a common solution to the basic maintenance tasks that are needed for a trail. More complex maintenance activities will need to be provided by a qualified trail management company.

### **Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?**

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

It is proposed that all land management and maintenance staff be provided by Buncombe County.

### **Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?**

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

It is proposed that financial management of the land be provided by Buncombe County.

## What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

Long-term management of the land will be provided by Buncombe County. Additional funding is possible, through coordination with Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail and the seeking of dedicated NC State Trails funds.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Volunteer work days are one potential way of including the community in the future maintenance of the project. FANS is a possible partner in organizing those work days.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

Property Management Plan FINAL.pdf

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

The acquisition costs for the Woodmen acreage were determined by the list price of the full 5 acre property, and, for the purchase of the 3 acre portion, in conjunction with the previous potential buyer. The acquisition cost of the easement was based on advice from a realtor. The acquisition cost of the Stewart property is based on the assessed value, and may or may not represent a fair market value. Closing and survey costs were based on advice from a realtor.

Site preparation costs are provided on an allowance basis, as the design is schematic in nature. We used project costs from a similar project to inform our allowances. Hardscaping, landscaping, and miscellaneous unit costs are based on current bids for other projects. The quantities used are based on takeoffs from the schematic master plan. Tier 3 bridge costs were determined by using a cost calculator provided by FFST.

## What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

At this point, no other efforts have been made to pursue additional sources of funding. However, Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail has access to a Complete The Trails Land Acquisition Grant. This funding would be of use if the county wishes to buy the 5 acre property directly from Woodmen of the World. Kat Deutsch (F3ST's Trail Coordinator with State Trails) could offer guidance on accessing this grant funding. Her email is [kat.deutsch@ncparks.gov](mailto:kat.deutsch@ncparks.gov).

Additional funding will likely be available for the development of the FFST through the county's Open Space Bond for greenways, and through the Great Trails State Program. FANS plans to apply for the GTSP grant in the fall of 2024. Additionally, there are funds available for riverside infrastructure and recreation through the Water Resources Development and Environmental Enhancement Grant Program.

## If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

The proposal is structured so that individual tiers of work can be performed as funds are made available. Tier 1 includes all acquisitions and could be undertaken with \$354,500 (Tier 1) or \$504,500 (Tier 1 Alternate). Tier 2 includes all improvements on the properties, and is estimated to cost \$784,450. Tier 3 would provide connectivity from the project parcels to other parcels that serve the Fonta Flora trail, and would include a pedestrian bridge across the Swannanoa River. Tier 3 is estimated to cost \$350,000.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)*

### How will this project fulfill community needs?

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

Swannanoa has struggled economically since the decline and eventual closure of the Beacon mill, which employed 2,500 people. An arsonist burned the vacant mill buildings to the ground in 2003, dealing a significant blow to the community. Although the once thriving business district that surrounded the mill is beginning to show signs of new life, the area continues to be depressed and neglected. The plans for the new Beacon Village development have given the community hope that something positive will rise from the mill's ashes.

The project proposed in this application is part of an overall vision that ultimately includes safe pedestrian connections to parks, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, bus routes, and other points of interest; a greenway that offers recreation and health benefits to all residents; and a revitalized business district in

Swannanoa. The Woodmen property and surrounding tracts are a key component of this vision. This project will be of great benefit as a standalone project, but it will also be a driver of additional improvements that will ultimately lead to health, recreation, tourism, transportation, and economic benefits not only for Swannanoa, but for all of the County.

Additionally, this project would help fill a gap in the Great Trails State Plan network, and would link two of the priority segments recently identified by the NCDOT IMD Implementation Plan: the Swannanoa River Greenway (Azalea) and McDowell County Line to Eastern Black Mountain.

### Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?

If yes, which goals are impacted?

This project falls within the scope of several County plans, including the 2043 Comprehensive Plan (CP); the Strategic Plan 2025; the Greenways Master Plan; and the Parks and Rec Master Plan & Multi-Modal Plan, both of which are currently under development.

The CP identifies “Distributional Equity” as one of the county’s key priorities. This involves supporting programs that “result in fair distributions of benefits and burdens across all segments of a community, prioritizing those with highest need.” Swannanoa has been the recipient of fewer public resources than many other areas of the county, and should be a priority area to achieve greater Distributional Equity. This project, and the larger plans of which it is a part, support the key planning goals of the CP. These include Health & Recreation, Environmental Conservation, Transportation & Connectivity, and Economic Development. This project also lies within the “Swannanoa Corridor,” one of seven areas identified for future development of a Small Area Plan.

This project is in alignment with the County’s goals of achieving equity in distribution of resources among communities; developing parks, greenways, and multi-modal transportation alternatives; and conserving land and green spaces that support clean water, provide habitat for wildlife, and offer nature-based recreation. Additionally, County Parks and Rec staff have formally indicated that this project aligns with the department’s needs and alignment for the FFST.

### Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?

Yes

### If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.

Jill Carter and Thomas Gull; Bond PM & Parks and Rec; jill.carter@buncombecounty.org  
thomas.gull@buncombecounty.org

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

The design of the FFST will adhere to industry standards, to allow for safe multi-modal and bi-directional use. Site lighting will be provided as part of the pocket park design, to ensure appropriate light levels are met along trails, parking lots, and at the building. All state and county zoning and building codes will be adhered to, as well as any NCDOT requirements for site access from Old US 70.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

Long-term maintenance will be provided by Buncombe County. Proper lighting, visibility, and frequent public use will help prevent vandalism. FANS can be a partner to the county, in reporting damage or vandalism on site.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

Final mitigation measures will be determined as part of the design phase for the pocket park. But, potential solutions will include maintaining appropriate visibility corridors and sight triangles at path intersections, offering parallel paths so that nature viewers or other slow-movers don't unduly slow movement on the primary greenway trail, posting trail etiquette signage (the design of which is currently being developed by Connect Buncombe and other local partners), and providing distinct congregating areas so that intended uses of spaces are clearly demarcated and separated when possible. Additionally, the gentle slope of the project properties will encourage lower speeds for potential bikers, resulting in a safer shared environment for bikers, hikers, and nature-viewers.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

The signage package will be determined after the design phase is complete. However, signage will be divided into two categories: directional, and educational.

Educational signs will include explanations of native and non-native plants; endangered animal species and their relationship to the property location; riparian, woodland, and wetland ecosystems; stormwater management practices; and environmental stewardship information, with ways for citizens to be stewards in their own backyards. Signage regarding the history of the site and the nearby Grovemont and Beacon Village communities could also be included.

Directional signage will address movement through the site, and will be based on the final site design.

## *Applicant Experience*

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### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service
- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

FANS was founded in 2007 out of a desire to make Swannanoa a better place to live, work and play for all of its residents. FANS was incorporated under the nonprofit laws of North Carolina in 2009, and was recognized as a tax exempt nonprofit organization under Section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code in 2010.

The FANS board is composed of 12-15 members, elected to 3-year terms. A Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are each elected to 1-year terms. All board members and officers are volunteers. FANS does not have any paid staff.

Our operating budget for fiscal year 2024 (January - December) is \$122,142. We retain an operational reserve of \$20,176, which represents 16.5% of the budget.

### **Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:**

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

FANS has planned and organized many successful projects, including: creating and managing the Swannanoa Community Garden; publishing a Swannanoa Community Newsletter that reaches thousands of residents; organizing roadside and river cleanups; sponsoring community meetings and events; organizing citizen-led initiatives, such as the Adopt-A-Highway and Sidewalks for Swannanoa campaigns; and successfully advocating for bus shelters, crosswalks and other community improvements. Additionally, FANS was integrally involved in the work from 2007-2010 that led to the original US 70/Swannanoa River Greenway Feasibility Study.

The creation of the Swannanoa Community Garden is an example of a successful property improvement and conservation effort undertaken by FANS. In 2013, FANS negotiated the right to use a parcel of state-owned property for creation of a community garden. A grant from Buncombe County Parks and Recreation allowed FANS to clear the land of invasives, and build a garden shed and raised beds. With the help of additional grants and a pool of volunteer labor, the garden has grown to include numerous planting beds, an outdoor classroom pavilion, an additional shed to house garden equipment, and a hoop house.

The Swannanoa Community Garden is a "Garden That Gives" — each year more than 1,000 pounds of fresh produce is donated to Bounty and Soul and other organizations serving our neighbors in need.

### **Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.**

FANS has demonstrated its overall organizational capacity by successfully managing many projects. In addition, our current board members have specific areas of expertise that are relevant to this project, including landscape architecture, greenways & trail development, urban planning, law, real estate, land conservation, watershed protection, stream restoration, invasive plant management, and environmental education.

Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail was established in 2019 as the nonprofit partner to the Fonta Flora State Trail, with a Board representing Burke, McDowell and Buncombe Counties; a full time Executive Director; and a part time Outreach and Development Coordinator. F3ST has thus far enabled 34.5 miles of designated Fonta Flora State Trail; raised 1.34 million dollars for trail on the ground; and coordinated events and outreach with nonprofits, community groups, and government entities in the three-county span of the trail.

The Black Mountain Greenways and Trails Committee (BMGTC) was established in 2021 as a nonprofit to promote greenways and trails in the Black Mountain area. Within its first year, BMGTC was awarded a National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program grant. BMGTC has hosted a Landowner Outreach Seminar, conducted the public input survey for the Town of Black Mountain for two donated properties, held an annual fundraising foot race, and spearheaded a lighting project for a greenway through a highway underpass.

### **Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)**

501c3 FINAL.pdf

### **Resumes of Key Staff**

## ***Budget***

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### **Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.**

The budget has been broken down into three tiers. Tier one includes all acquisitions, and includes an alternate. Tier two includes all on-site improvements. Tier three includes improvements that provide connectivity to adjacent parcels, for the future Fonta Flora State Trail.

### **Project Budget**

Budget Final.pdf

## ***Additional Documentation***

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### **Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board**

If applicable

FANS Board Resolution FINAL.pdf

## **Project Maps (location, site, parcel)**

### **Project Photos and Illustrations**

Photo Binder FINAL.pdf

### **Letters of Support**

Letters of Support FINAL.pdf

## **Other Documentation**

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Maps and SOW FINAL.pdf
- Project Schedule FINAL.pdf
- Property Management Plan FINAL.pdf
- 501c3 FINAL.pdf
- Budget Final.pdf
- FANS Board Resolution FINAL.pdf
- Photo Binder FINAL.pdf
- Letters of Support FINAL.pdf

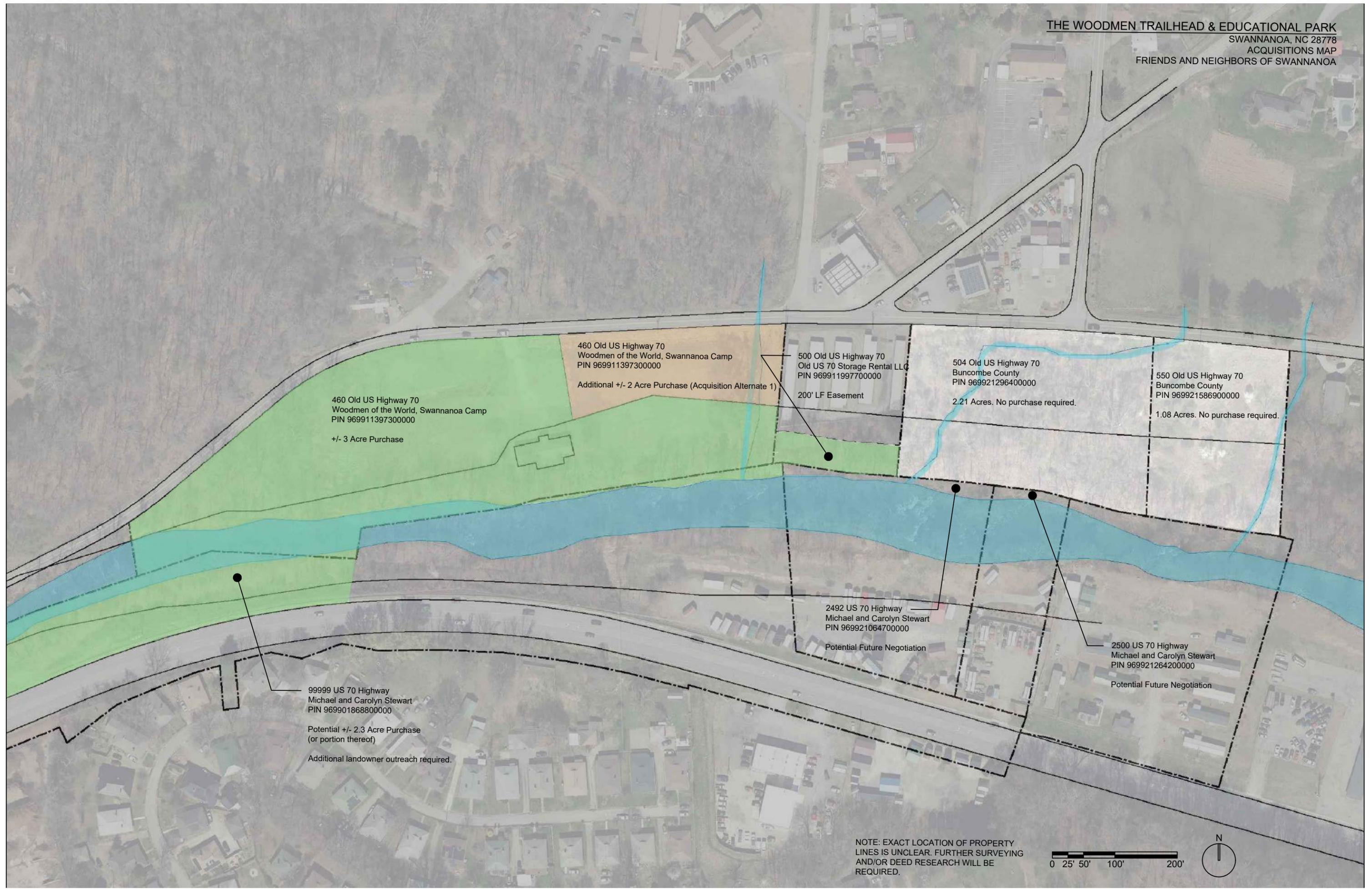
## **Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park**

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa  
Scope of Work Attachment

This project would be a combination of land acquisition and property improvements.

Acquisition would include the purchase by Buncombe County of an approximately 3-acre portion of the 5-acre property located at 460 Old US 70, or as an alternate- the purchase of the full 5 acre property. It would also include the county's purchase of an easement from the neighboring property: Old US 70 Storage at 500 Old US 70. Improvements are proposed for both of these properties, as well as at two adjacent properties that are already owned by Buncombe County. The addresses of the county-owned properties are 504 and 550 Old US 70.

Proposed improvements include, but are not limited to: natural surface trails, an observation boardwalk, parking, signage (both interpretive and directional), benches, fencing, lighting, planting of native species, removal of invasive species, and wetland restoration. Additionally, there is an opportunity to purchase approximately 2 acres of land at 99999 US 70, on the south side of the Swannanoa River, just east of the Whitson Ave bridge and directly across the river from the Woodmen property. The purchase of this land would allow for a multi-modal bridge to be built across the Swannanoa River.



460 Old US Highway 70  
Woodmen of the World, Swannanoa Camp  
PIN 969911397300000  
  
+/- 3 Acre Purchase

460 Old US Highway 70  
Woodmen of the World, Swannanoa Camp  
PIN 969911397300000  
  
Additional +/- 2 Acre Purchase (Acquisition Alternate 1)

500 Old US Highway 70  
Old US 70 Storage Rental LLC  
PIN 969911997700000  
  
200' LF Easement

504 Old US Highway 70  
Buncombe County  
PIN 969921296400000  
  
2.21 Acres. No purchase required.

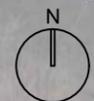
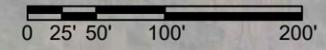
550 Old US Highway 70  
Buncombe County  
PIN 969921586900000  
  
1.08 Acres. No purchase required.

99999 US 70 Highway  
Michael and Carolyn Stewart  
PIN 969901868800000  
  
Potential +/- 2.3 Acre Purchase  
(or portion thereof)  
  
Additional landowner outreach required.

2492 US 70 Highway  
Michael and Carolyn Stewart  
PIN 969921064700000  
  
Potential Future Negotiation

2500 US 70 Highway  
Michael and Carolyn Stewart  
PIN 969921264200000  
  
Potential Future Negotiation

NOTE: EXACT LOCATION OF PROPERTY  
LINES IS UNCLEAR. FURTHER SURVEYING  
AND/OR DEED RESEARCH WILL BE  
REQUIRED.



WETLAND BOARDWALK



OBSERVATIONAL DOCK



NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL



WETLAND



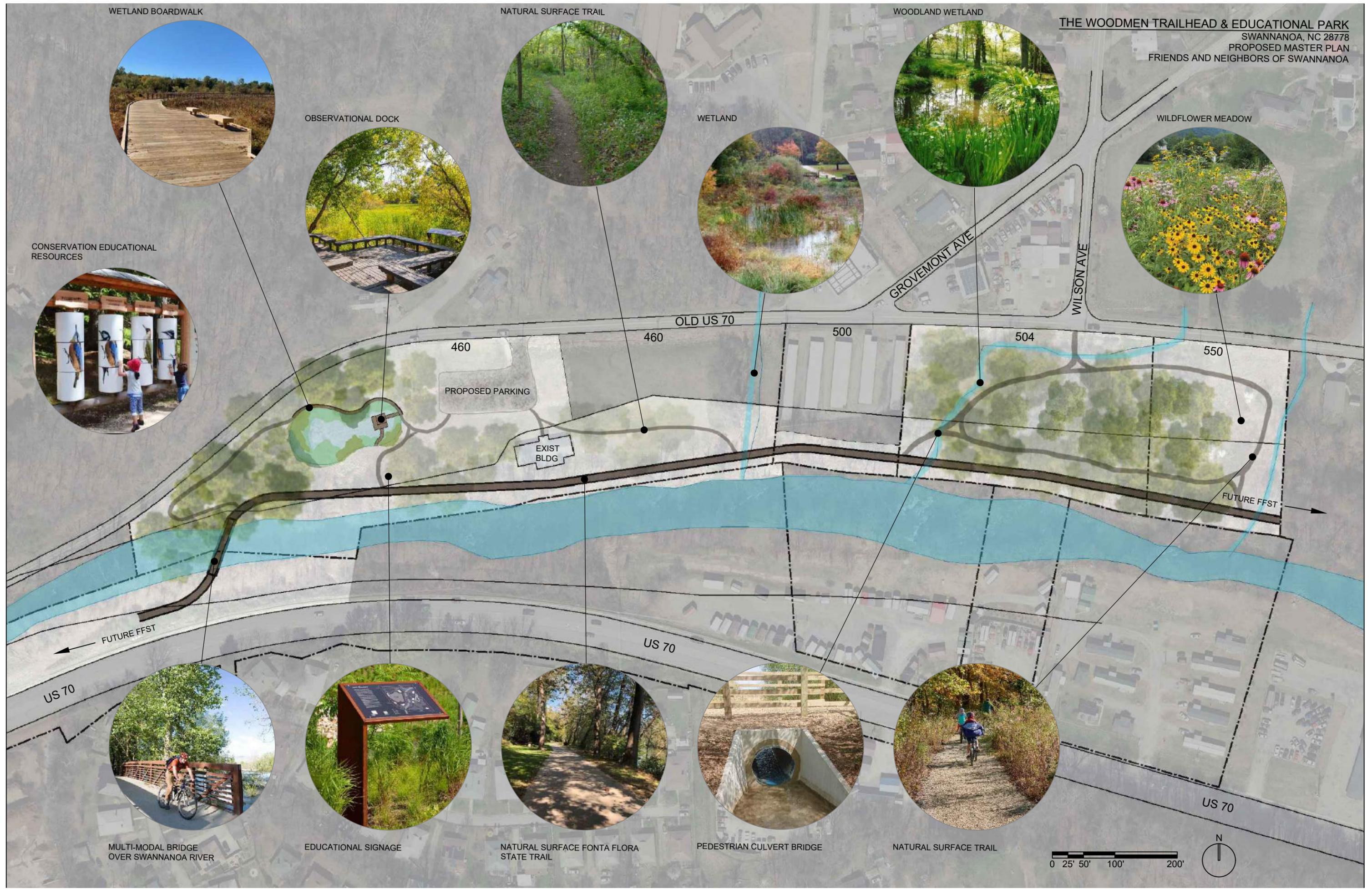
WOODLAND WETLAND



WILDFLOWER MEADOW



CONSERVATION EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



FUTURE FFST

FUTURE FFST

OLD US 70

US 70

US 70

MULTI-MODAL BRIDGE OVER SWANNANOVA RIVER



EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE



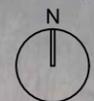
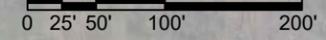
NATURAL SURFACE FONTA FLORA STATE TRAIL

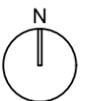


PEDESTRIAN CULVERT BRIDGE



NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL





## **Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park**

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa  
Schedule Attachment

Award announcement of recipients of Passive Recreation Land bond money  
(July 2024)

Purchase of designated parcels of land from respective landowners  
(Fall-Winter 2024)

Purchase of designated greenway easements from respective landowners  
(Fall-Winter 2024)

Design and permitting for proposed trails and site improvements on subject tracts  
(2025)

Natural surface trail building and site improvements within subject passive park area  
(by Fall 2026)

Related project: apply for greenway funding under Buncombe County Open Space Bond  
(2026)

Build bridge for Fonta Flora Trail greenway across Swannanoa River from Woodmen Tract to  
southern tracts  
(after 2026)

Build Fonta Flora Trail greenway alignment on subject tracts and other properties along corridor  
(before 2030)

## **Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park**

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa  
Longterm Maintenance & Management Plan, Attachment

All maintenance and management activities will be determined by Buncombe County. However, they will likely include the following items:

Property management tasks are divided between trail maintenance and general property maintenance.

Natural surface trail surfaces will be managed by Buncombe County as part of their park management responsibilities. This will include at least one pass mowing the edges of the trails and adaptive management to reduce standing water areas on the trails and rough surfaces.

Culvert crossing will be maintained to prevent the accumulation of trees and debris that might impede stormwater flow.

Open space grassy areas of the project site will be mowed on the appropriate frequency by Buncombe County Parks staff. Trash receptacles will also be emptied by staff on an appropriate frequency.

Site clearing and grubbing along the proposed trail systems will involve removal of all shrub and tree vegetation. Regrowth of non-native trees and shrubs within the trail corridor may include the use of spot herbicides if acceptable with Buncombe County's site management criteria.

Volunteer days may be arranged by partnering entities like the Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail and Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa when volunteer opportunities like invasive plant control or trash clean up can be arranged by them.



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
P.O. Box 2508, Room 4010  
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 4077550286  
Dec. 08, 2011 LTR 4168C 0  
20-8266327 000000 00

00030679  
BODC: TE

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS OF  
SWANNANDA INC  
N CAROL GROBEN  
PO BOX 697  
SWANNANDA NC 28778-0697



001001

Employer Identification Number: 20-8266327  
Person to Contact: Vaida Singleton  
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Nov. 02, 2011, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in April 2010.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

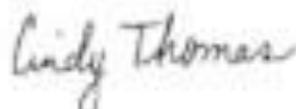
Please refer to our website [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo) for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

4077550286  
Dec. 05, 2011 LTR 4168C 0  
20-8266327 000000 00  
00050680

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS OF  
SWANNANDA INC  
% CAROL GROBEN  
PO BOX 697  
SWANNANDA NC 28778-0697

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Cindy Thomas  
Manager, EO Determinations

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: APR 30 2010

SWANANOA PRIDE COMMUNITY COALITION  
INC  
PO BOX 697  
SWANANOA, NC 28778-9998

Employer Identification Number:  
20-8266327  
EIN:  
17051365391049  
Contact Person:  
GARY MERTHELT ID# 31518  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Public Charity Status:  
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)  
Form 990 Required:  
Yes  
Effective Date of Exemption:  
March 11, 2009  
Contribution Deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Letter 947 (DO/CO)

SMASHANCA PRIDE COMMUNITY COALITION

Sincerely,



Robert Choi  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements

Enclosure: Publication 4221-PC

**Woodmen Trailhead & Educational Park**

Preliminary Cost Estimate, 3.31.24

Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa

	Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Note
<b>Tier 1: Acquisitions</b>						
	Purchase of Woodmen Property	1	each	\$250,000.00	\$250,000	3 acres
	Purchase of Storage Building Easement	1	each	\$20,000.00	\$20,000	
	Purchase of Stewart Property	1	each	\$60,000.00	\$60,000	2.3 acres
	Closing Costs for all properties	1	each	\$9,500.00	\$9,500	
	Survey of all properties	1	each	\$15,000.00	\$15,000	
					<b>\$354,500</b>	
<b>Tier 1: Acquisitions</b>						
<b>Alternate</b>	Purchase of Woodmen Property	1	each	\$425,000.00	\$400,000	5 acres
	Purchase of Storage Building Easement	1	each	\$20,000.00	\$20,000	
	Purchase of Stewart Property	1	each	\$60,000.00	\$60,000	2.3 acres
	Closing Costs for all properties	1	each	\$9,500.00	\$9,500	
	Survey of all properties	1	each	\$15,000.00	\$15,000	
					<b>\$504,500</b>	
<b>Tier 2: Improvements</b>						
<b>*on site</b>	Design & Construction Documents	1		\$0.00	\$0	Not provided for by this grant
	<b>Site Prep</b>					
	Mobilization	1	ea	\$20,000.00	\$20,000	Allowance
	Clearing & Grubbing	1	ea	\$10,000.00	\$10,000	Allowance
	Rough & Fine Grading	1	ea	\$200,000.00	\$200,000	Allowance
	Invasive Plant Removal	1	ea	\$20,000.00	\$20,000	Allowance
	Erosion Control	1	ea	\$15,000.00	\$15,000	Allowance
	Storm Control Measures	1	ea	\$45,000.00	\$45,000	Allowance
	Utilities	1	ea	\$75,000.00	\$75,000	Allowance
	<b>Hardscaping &amp; Landscaping</b>					
	Crusher Run Parking Lot	10000	square foot	\$2.50	\$25,000	
	Crusher Run Path	2300	linear foot	\$8.00	\$18,400	5' wide
	Crusher Run Path	1700	linear foot	\$19.00	\$32,300	12' wide
	Culvert Pedestrian Crossing	3	ea	\$3,000.00	\$9,000	
	Timber & Concrete Boardwalk	1000	square foot	\$60.00	\$60,000	
	Timber & Concrete Observation Deck	750	square foot	\$65.00	\$48,750	
	Trees	20	ea	\$800.00	\$16,000	
	Wetland Planting	2000	square foot	\$12.00	\$24,000	
	Planting Area (Low Density)	8000	square foot	\$10.00	\$80,000	
	Native Meadow Install	13000	square foot	\$2.00	\$26,000	
	<b>Misc.</b>					
	Wayfinding Signage	1	ea	\$10,000.00	\$10,000	Allowance
	Educational Signage	1	ea	\$15,000.00	\$15,000	Allowance
	Seating	10	ea	\$1,800.00	\$18,000	
	Trash Cans	6	ea	\$1,500.00	\$9,000	
	Landscape Lighting	1	ea	\$5,000.00	\$5,000	Allowance
	Bicycle Rack	2	ea	\$1,500.00	\$3,000	
	Construction Management, Permitting, Environmental Site Assessment	1	ea	\$0.00	\$0	Not provided for by this grant
					<b>\$784,450</b>	
<b>Tier 3: Improvements</b>						
<b>*for connectivity to adjacent parcels</b>	Design & Construction Documents	1		\$0.00	\$0	Not provided for by this grant
	Multi-modal bridge over Swannanoa River	1	each	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	Allowance
	Multi-modal bridge over tributary	1	each	\$50,000.00	\$50,000	Allowance
	Construction Management, Permitting, Environmental Site Assessment	1	ea	\$0.00	\$0	Not provided for by this grant
					<b>\$350,000</b>	
		<b>Tier 1, 2, 3</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,488,950</b>	
		<b>Tier 1 Alternate, 2, 3</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,638,950</b>	

**Note! This estimate is schematic in nature, and is for preliminary budgeting purposes only.**

## ***Compelling Narrative for Grant Applications***

In November 2023, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released its sixth annual report affirming the rise of outdoor recreation to a *trillion-dollar industry*. The 2022 data shows outdoor recreation generated **\$1.1 trillion in economic output**, comprising 2.2 percent of U.S. GDP, and supporting 5 million jobs — 3.2 percent of all employees in the country — which contributes more to the U.S. economy by percentage than mining (1.8 percent), computer and electronics products (1.2 percent) and agriculture (1.1 percent). In [North Carolina](#), this equates to **\$14.6 billion value added** and **146,507 direct jobs**. This annual report showcases the economic importance of national and state outdoor recreation economy data to inform strategic industry development and policy investments. [Outdoor Industry Association](#).

Over the past decade, a partnership emerged to harness this national momentum and direct outdoor industry investment locally in Western North Carolina. After years of strategic growth, organization evolution, and several successful Outdoor Economy Conferences, the Made By Mountains Partnership was born. The [MADE X MTNS \(Made By Mountains\) Partnership](#) is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, growing outdoor businesses, and amplifying outdoor culture. Key investors in this work include Appalachian Regional Commission, Dogwood Health Trust, and Mountain BizWorks.

In 2023, the Partnership commissioned Appalachian State University's Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis to conduct the [Western North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey](#), which gathered data from several thousand respondents that traveled to Western North Carolina from North Carolina and four neighboring states.

In January 2024, the Partnership published its first round of landmark data unveiling that outdoor recreation visitor spending generated **\$4.9 billion in economic output** in Western North Carolina in 2022, which distilled at the county level, equates to **\$571.7 million** in Buncombe County. These survey results illuminate the economic significance of the outdoor recreation economy, which can support community leaders and decision makers to conduct proactive policy and planning, and target outdoor infrastructure investment.

These findings deliver a powerful message to diverse stakeholders about the burgeoning outdoor recreation economy and reveal the potential impact that continued investment can have on economic opportunity, job creation, quality of life, social equity, and environmental stewardship.

For more details on the regional and county-specific economic impacts, see the attached Infographic provided with the supplemental materials. WNC Impact is on page 1 (front) and Buncombe County Impact is on page 2 (back).



# WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION SURVEY

The total economic output from outdoor recreation visitor spending is

## \$4.9 BILLION



which is equivalent to creating approximately

## 48,000 FULL-TIME JOBS

## \$1.48 BILLION

in labor income

## \$197.5 MILLION

in county-level tax revenue across the region

### POPULAR ACTIVITIES

- DAY HIKING (50%)
- NATURE VIEWING (46%)
- FISHING (36%)
- CAR CAMPING (22%)
- MOUNTAIN BIKING (16%)

**2/3** of recent trips were overnight, averaging a stay of **2.5 NIGHTS**



### AVERAGE TRAVEL PARTY SIZE

**\$479:** average spending per trip



## 94%

of respondents were satisfied with their outdoor recreation experience



The study focused on participants in outdoor recreation activities across

## 25 WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES & THE QUALLA BOUNDARY

The Western North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey, conducted in 2023, gathered data from 5,462 respondents in North Carolina and four neighboring states. Specifically, 1,786 respondents engaged in outdoor recreation across 25 WNC counties or the Qualla Boundary. This data supports regional and county-specific estimates for economic impact and benefit-cost analyses within the Building Outdoor Communities (BOC) program. The survey serves as a comprehensive analysis of outdoor recreation in the region, providing insights into its economic significance and guiding future research and decision-making efforts.



The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, growing outdoor businesses, and amplifying outdoor culture. For more information, visit [madexmtns.com](http://madexmtns.com) or [@madexmtns](https://twitter.com/madexmtns)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS





# BUNCOMBE COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION SURVEY

The total economic output from outdoor recreation visitor spending is

## \$571.7 MILLION



## \$201.1 MILLION

which is equivalent to creating approximately

in labor income

## 4,793 FULL-TIME JOBS

### POPULAR ACTIVITIES

- SCENIC DRIVING (48%)
- DAY HIKING (47%)
- NATURE VIEWING (44%)

**65%** of recent trips were overnight, averaging a stay of **1.5 NIGHTS**



### AVERAGE TRAVEL PARTY SIZE

**\$494:** average spending per trip



**95%**

of respondents were satisfied with their outdoor recreation experience



### POPULAR SPENDING



- LODGING - \$168
- RESTAURANT MEALS - \$106
- GASOLINE - \$66
- ENTERTAINMENT - \$61

### POPULAR DESTINATIONS

- BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY (83%)
- PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST (45%)
- FRENCH BROAD RIVER (39%)

### POPULAR LODGING

- HOTEL/MOTEL (29%)
- SHORT TERM RENTAL (11%)
- CAMPER (9%)



The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, growing outdoor businesses, and amplifying outdoor culture. For more information, visit [madexmtns.com](http://madexmtns.com) or @madexmtns

SUPPORTING PARTNERS





Buncombe County  
January 2024

## Western North Carolina (WNC) Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey

The WNC Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey, conducted in 2023, gathered data from 5,462 respondents in North Carolina and four neighboring states. 1,786 respondents engaged in outdoor recreation across 25 WNC counties or the Qualla Boundary. This data supports regional and county-specific estimates for economic impact and benefit-cost analyses within the Building Outdoor Communities (BOC) program. The survey serves as a comprehensive analysis of outdoor recreation in the region, providing insights into its economic significance and guiding future research and decision-making efforts.

### Participation and Trips

- 29% of all households from North Carolina and the four contiguous states who visited WNC for the primary purpose of outdoor recreation visited Buncombe County.
- The average number of recreation trips taken annually is 2.3 per household.
- An estimate of the total number of trips taken for the primary purpose of outdoor recreation is 1.01 million annually.

### Most Recent Trip

- The average number of people in the travel party was 3.0. 65% of the most recent trips were overnight trips. The average number of nights stayed was 1.6.
- The most popular overnight stay mode is in a hotel/motel (29%). Other popular overnight modes are in a short-term rental (11%) and in a camper (9%).
- The average amount of spending is \$494 on the most recent trip. The largest spending categories are lodging (\$168), restaurant meals (\$106), gasoline (\$66), and entertainment (\$61).
- 95% of respondents were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with trip quality. The most recent trip was a typical trip for 82% of visitors.
- Popular destinations were the Blue Ridge Parkway (83%), Pisgah National Forest (45%) and the French Broad River (39%).
- Popular activities were scenic driving (48%), day hiking (47%) and nature viewing (44%).

### Economic Benefits and Impacts

- The economic benefit, over and above spending, is \$920 per trip. The economic benefit per person per day is \$198. The annual aggregate benefit of outdoor recreation in Buncombe County is \$925.6 million.
- The economic impact of spending on outdoor recreation trips in Buncombe County is \$571.7 million in economic activity, 4,793 full-time equivalent jobs, and \$201.1 million in labor income.

Click [here](#) to access the full report on the Made By Mountains website.

## **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS OF SWANNANOVA, INC.**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa, Inc. (FANS) authorizes Board member Megan McCreary to file an application on behalf of FANS for Buncombe County Passive Recreation bond funding to be used by the county for the purchase of land and easements in Swannanoa.

Unanimously approved by the Board and certified by the Secretary on March 26, 2024.

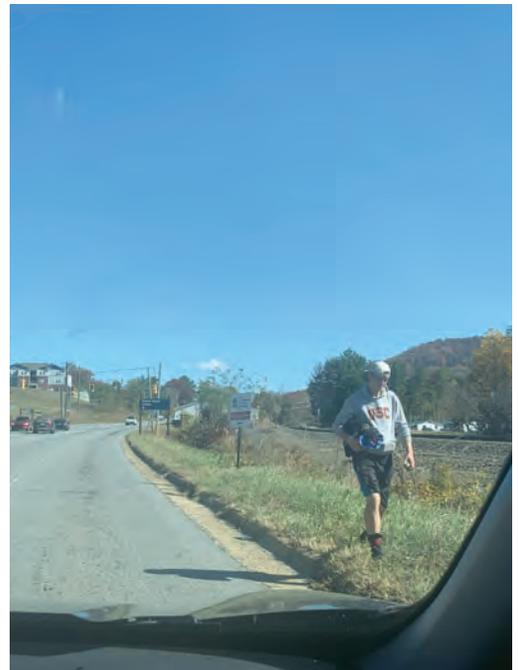
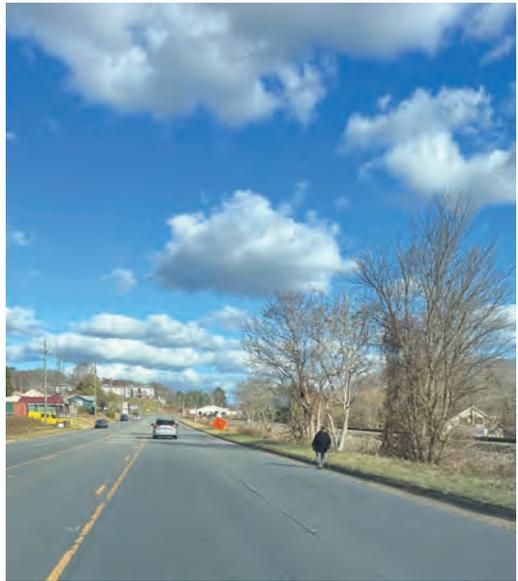
Andrew Belz, Board Secretary



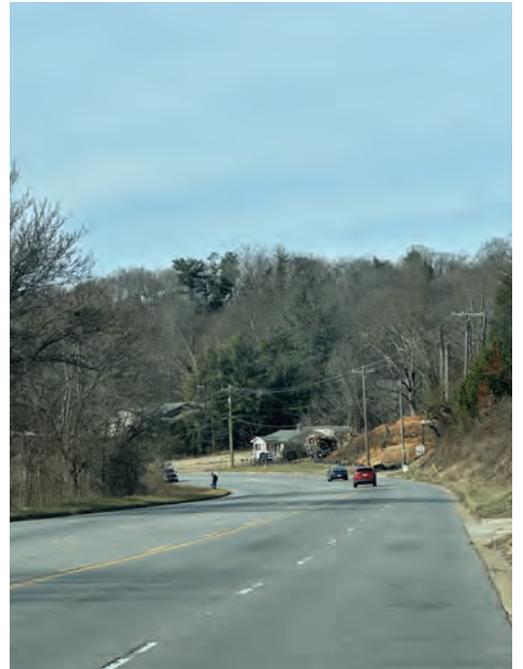
460 Old US 70  
Swannanoa, NC



## Woodmen Property Photos



Photos of pedestrians on US 70 and Old US 70 in Swannanoa.  
Photos taken fall of 2023.





Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail, Inc.  
P.O. Box 698  
Marion, N.C. 28752  
info@fontaflorastatetrail.com

To whom it may concern,

Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail, Inc. (F3ST) is writing this letter regarding the acquisition of property along Old US-70, in Swannanoa. F3ST supports Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) and other associated organizations in pursuing grant funding, to fund the County's purchase of 3 acres at 460 Old US-70, an easement along the river at 500 Old US-70, and related passive recreation improvements. The purchase of this property along the Swannanoa River would allow for future construction of the Fonta Flora State Trail. This segment of property meets the qualities that constitute the identity of the Fonta Flora State Trail as a scenic urban trail that connects communities to their most precious water resources like the Swannanoa River in Buncombe County and the Catawba River in McDowell and Burke Counties.

This letter conveys F3ST's interest in prioritizing pedestrian infrastructure and safety, and multi-modal recreational opportunities in the Swannanoa Valley, connecting Swannanoa to the Town of Black Mountain and the rest of Buncombe County through the Fonta Flora State Trail.

The mission of F3ST is to connect mountain communities in western North Carolina through the Fonta Flora State Trail to promote physical health, mental wellness, economic development, and outdoor recreation with trail partners for the enjoyment and education of all people. F3ST is the official partner of the Fonta Flora State Trail as authorized by the N.C. General Assembly and N.C. State Trails.

Sincerely,

Amanda Elledge Finn

Executive Director

Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail, Inc.



March 25, 2024

To the Passive Recreation Open Space Bond Committee:

The Black Mountain Greenways and Trails Committee, an all volunteer citizens advocacy group in Black Mountain, wholeheartedly supports FANS in its efforts to secure the easements, property and improvements for their trails project. FANS has been working hard for months researching the possibilities of reviving and adding to trail plans for Swannanoa. Swannanoa is overdue for love from Buncombe County. Swannanoa was an early contender for greenways in 2006. These plans sadly never came to fruition. Now, with interest from the FFST, Asheville, Black Mountain, and surrounds for connectivity it is time to fund Eastern Buncombe County projects.

Please fully fund the FANS grant request. It is a keystone project for Eastern Buncombe and will stimulate other projects in the area.

Thank you much,

Ann Lutz, Chair  
Black Mountain Greenways and Trails Committee

March 21, 2024

To Buncombe County Passive Recreation Bond Staff and Reviewers,

I am writing on behalf of the Swannanoa Community Council (SCC) in support of the application by Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) for Passive Recreation Bond funding for the purchase of a 3-acre portion of the Woodmen of the World tract on Old US 70 in Swannanoa, and for an easement on an adjoining property. This property and easement purchase, together with existing county-owned parcels immediately to the east, will support a passive recreation park and future greenway alignment along the Swannanoa River. These purchases will establish an important segment of the proposed Fonta Flora trail, as well as connections to the nearby Grovemont community and the recently-announced Beacon Village recreational area on the former site of the Beacon blanket mill.

The SCC is a 501c3 all-volunteer organization that owns and maintains Grovemont Park and the Swannanoa Library building. The SCC has a 50-year history of developing and supporting cultural, recreational, and health-related initiatives in the Swannanoa Valley. The SCC sponsors an annual summer concert series; raised the funds to install and maintain a community playground, walking paths, and an outdoor performance pavilion; and is in the process of undergoing a long-term environmental restoration of a two acre forested-wetland parcel of land in the Grovemont community of Swannanoa that is now known as Fox Creek Park.

The SCC supports the efforts of FANS to seek funding for this important project that will improve the quality of life for Swannanoa residents, and increase outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for this historically underserved area of Buncombe County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Dye', written in a cursive style.

Allen Dye  
Board Chair  
Swannanoa Community Council  
[Abdye.1960@gmail.com](mailto:Abdye.1960@gmail.com)  
828-275-1183



**Board of Directors**

**President**

Adam Rosen

**Vice President**

Alex smith

**Secretary**

Megan McCreary

**Treasurer**

Scott Dickens

Dustin Baker  
Greg Duff  
Tina Gaafary Newport  
Allison Glackin  
Stockton Hill  
Bill Miller  
Peter Mills  
David Nutter  
Mary Weber  
Bill Werme

**Emeritus Members**

Ann Babcock  
Marcia Bromberg  
Nancy Waldrop

**March 29, 2024**

Dear Buncombe County Passive Recreation Bond Staff and Reviewers,

As an organization dedicated to supporting and growing greenways throughout all of Buncombe County, Connect Buncombe wishes to offer its strong support for Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) and its application for Passive Recreation Bond funding for the purchase of a 3-acre portion of the Woodmen of the World tract on Old US 70 in Swannanoa, and for an easement on an adjoining property. This property and easement purchase, together with existing county-owned parcels immediately to the east, will support a passive recreation park and future greenway alignment along the Swannanoa River. These purchases will establish an important segment of the proposed Fonta Flora trail, as well as connections to the nearby Grovemont community and the recently announced Beacon Village recreational area on the former site of the Beacon blanket mill.

Connect Buncombe believes this project will improve the quality of life for Swannanoa residents, increase outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for this historically underserved area of Buncombe County, and help secure future greenway access in the Swannanoa area.

Sincerely,

**Adam Rosen**

President

Connect Buncombe

153 S. Lexington Ave.  
Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 253-2834



## Letter of Support

### Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS)

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March 27, 2024

To: Buncombe County Passive Recreation Bond Staff and Reviewers

We are thrilled to offer this Letter of Support on behalf of Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) for Passive Recreation Bond funding for the purchase of a 3-acre portion of the Woodmen of the World tract on Old US 70 in Swannanoa, and for an easement on an adjoining property. This property and easement purchase, together with existing county-owned parcels immediately to the east, will support a passive recreation park and future greenway alignment along the Swannanoa River. These purchases will establish an important segment of the proposed Fonta Flora State Trail, as well as connections to the nearby Grovemont community and the recently-announced Beacon Village recreational area on the former site of the Beacon blanket mill.

The collaboration of Mountain BizWorks and the Made By Mountains Partnership is working diligently to build a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem and support communities across Western North Carolina to advance catalytic outdoor community and economic development projects.

The proposed project has the potential to be a catalyst for community and economic development by initiating the first phase in a critical link in the burgeoning regional and statewide trail network. Continued investment in this segment will eventually connect two additional Fonta Flora State Trail segments (McDowell County Line to Eastern Black Mountain & Swannanoa River Greenway - Azalea) that have been identified by NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division as priority projects in the Great Trails State Plan.

Successful programming of these Passive Recreation Bond funds for land and easement acquisition and pocket park development has the power to stimulate economic development, job creation, quality of life, social equity, public health, and environmental stewardship and education, all identified as desired outcomes in Buncombe County's Comprehensive Plan.

We encourage your favorable consideration of FANS's application recognizing that the environmental, social, and economic impact of this investment can yield immense benefits for the residents and businesses of Swannanoa and the county at large.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Raker".

Matt Raker – Executive Director  
Mountain BizWorks  
matt@mountainbizworks.org

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amy Allison".

Amy Allison – Director  
Made By Mountains Partnership  
amy@madexmtns.com

Mar. 25, 2024

To Buncombe County Passive Recreation Grant Staff and Reviewers,

We as representatives of the Swannanoa Watershed Action Network (SWAN) are writing this letter in regards to purchase of a portion of the Woodman of the World Tract in Swannanoa for a passive recreation park along the Swannanoa River. The Swannanoa Watershed Action Network (SWAN) is a self-organized association of community members working together at a watershed level in the Swannanoa Watershed. Our mission is to advocate for and maintain equitable space and a sustainable future in our watershed without compromising the social foundation of our communities and without overshooting the ecological ceiling of our natural resources and environment in the Swannanoa Valley.

We support Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) and other associated organizations in pursuing this grant to purchase this tract of land in the community of Swannanoa and passive recreational improvements to it and adjacent parcels under Buncombe County's Passive Recreational Grant program. This tract of land and other county-owned tracts within close proximity are at the nexus of the proposed Fonta Flora Trail, along with proposed sidewalk accesses to both the Grovemont neighborhood and the future Beacon recreational area in Swannanoa. Natural surface trail systems on floodplain tracts like these can be a valuable recreational asset to our community, along with providing a soft surface trail design that could be more manageable after flooding events.

We recognize that this area of Buncombe County ranks high on the Buncombe County Community Index mapping of areas with low average income, percentage of the population living below poverty level, and other economic and social factors which show it to be disadvantaged as compared to other communities in the region. Part of our organization's mission is to work towards making sure the residents of our watershed are not experiencing shortfalls in terms of social justice and their social needs. This includes access to parklands and environmental educational opportunities like river access points and wetland experiences.

Although this letter does not necessarily convey an intent to financially contribute to this fundraising campaign, it does convey our interest in seeing passive recreational park areas, pedestrian infrastructure and safety, and other passive recreational opportunities in the Swannanoa Valley such that these areas of shortfall to our residents can be addressed.

Sincerely,

*RJ Taylor, member*

*Carlos Espinosa, member*

*Courtney Bruch, member*

*Paul Clark, PhD, LCSW, member*

*Swannanoa Watershed Action Network*

# Worx Community Forest Trail Development

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*Open Space Bond: Passive Recreation Lands  
Application Window*

## ***Camp Grier***

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Jason McDougald  
985 Camp Grier Rd  
PO Box 490  
Old Fort, NC 28762

jason@campgrier.org  
O: 828-668-7793  
M: 828-713-4732

## ***Jason McDougald***

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985 Camp Grier Rd.  
PO Box 490  
Old Fort, NC 28762

jason@campgrier.org  
O: 828-668-7793  
M: 828-713-4732

# Application Form

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## *Introduction*

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters approved a \$30 million General Obligation Bond to fund projects that conserve open space, build greenways, and expand passive recreation opportunities. The goals at the heart of the Open Space Bond are to **preserve the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increase the quality of life for its residents, and improve access to passive recreational activities in the area.**

The **Passive Recreation Lands** component of the Bond will fund projects that provide publicly-accessible land, outdoor space, waterbodies, and corridors where passive recreational activities – such as hiking, birding, bicycling, and wildlife viewing - place minimal stress on a site's resources in a designated area. These lands provide ecosystem services and are highly compatible with natural resource protection.

Projects are welcome to apply for funding from any of the three project categories of the Open Space Bond. However, one project will only be able to receive funding from one category.

### Timeline

- January 16 - Application Launch
- Ongoing: Pre-Application Support
- February 21 at 2 PM: Applicant Webinar
- March 31: Application Deadline
- April - June: Proposal Review

### Application Process

**Deadline:** Applications are due by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2024. Organizations are encouraged to apply online through Buncombe County's grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](https://www.buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the General Obligation Bonds page at [www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds](https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/bonds). Applicants can pick up and return paper applications at 200 College Street, Suite 300, Asheville, NC 28801. If returning the application by mail, the package must be postmarked by the application deadline.

**Consultations:** Staff is available to answer questions and to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants. Contact [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org) to request a consultation.

**Workshop:** An application writing workshop will be held on February 21, 2024, from 2 – 4 PM. This will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this workshop is to provide in-depth information about the application process. A recording will be posted online after the session. The pre-application workshop is not mandatory for the application process. Those interested in attending the webinar should complete this form to register.

**Committee Contact:** Applicants are asked not to communicate with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee members regarding their applications. If the Subcommittee decides to ask follow-up questions or hold meetings with finalists, County staff will notify applicants.

### Review Process

**Scoring Committee:** A scoring committee will review and score applications utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Scores will be assigned independently and average project scores will be shared with the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee.

The following criteria will be considered:

*Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)* - Passive Recreation Lands should be compatible with conservation and natural resource protection. How well does the project minimize the potential negative impacts of use and land improvements, and actively contribute to habitat, landscape, and wildlife protection or restoration?

*Feasibility (20%)* - Bond-funded projects must be able to be completed and open to the public in an efficient and timely manner. How feasible is the project's completion, and how does its scope, timeline, staffing, physical and social qualities impact that feasibility?

*Accessibility (15%)* - Bond-funded projects should be accessible to everyone in Buncombe County, regardless of physical ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status. How accessible is the project to members of our community?

*Equity (15%)* - The County considers equity as a foundational focus and value within our community. How does the project promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in passive recreation?

*Long-Term Management and Maintenance (10%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe and enjoyable for public use for years to come. What are the plans for the long-term management and maintenance of the project?

*Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)* - It is essential that Bond funds be allocated efficiently and, when possible, in conjunction with other funding sources. How does the project budget minimize costs and leverage bond funds?

*Alignment with County Plans & Priorities (5%)* - The County aims to allocate Bond funds in a strategic manner, creating an intentional network of Open Space. How does the project align with existing local plans or other priorities?

*Safety (5%)* - Bond-funded projects should be safe for all to use. How does the project support safety from accidents, crime, and other concerns?

Projects will be scored against each criterion on a scale of 1-5 with a maximum score of 40. The corresponding weights for each criterion will then be applied.

**Subcommittee's Role:** The Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will review all scored project applications. Selected project applicants will be asked to give a presentation and site visit to the Subcommittee or selected members. The Subcommittee will recommend projects and funding amounts based on project scores as well as fit within the overall portfolio, taking factors into consideration such as geography, project focus areas and categories.

**Board of Commissioner's Role:** The recommended project list will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in a regular meeting. The Commission will make the final decision on which projects should receive funding and specify the amount approved for each project.

## **Awards**

Funding recommendations prepared by the Passive Recreation Lands Subcommittee will be submitted for a vote to the Board of Commissioners. Funding awards will be finalized with budget amendments upon contract finalization. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis in the specified funding amount for the completion of given deliverables.

### **Project Implementation & Evaluation**

All project awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures, and a timetable that allows for the allocation of Bond funds by 2030. There is no required timeline or end date for the projects. Prior to contract development, projects must submit proof of insurance, financial audit documentation, and landowner notification (when applicable).

Projects will be subject to a regular reporting process. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County on an ongoing basis. In addition to on-site monitoring of the project, monitoring will include: examination of books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the applicant as they relate to the project. Applicants must maintain an accounting system for the project in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures and standards. The project records and related financial records must be retained and accessible by County staff for no less than 5 years after the project is completed. Performance results will be published online in a funded projects dashboard.

The Community Oversight Committee will be responsible for monitoring the investment of Open Space Bond dollars. The Committee will review each awarded project to ensure it meets the financial and legal requirements of the Bond.

### **Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this Bond program is provided by Buncombe County's County Management Department. For more information, contact Open Space Bond Manager Jill Carter at [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org).

### **Note RE: Documentation**

When attaching documents, it is recommended that you PDF files and condense them when possible. If you desire to attach documents that exceed the size limits of the platform, please contact Jill Carter.

## *Project Overview*

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### **Project Name\***

Worx Community Forest Trail Development

### **Agency/Organization Requesting Funding:\***

Camp Grier

### **Organization Type\***

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, an applicant and project must be Buncombe County or a municipality in Buncombe County; any agency, commission, or instrumentality of the County or municipality within Buncombe County; a not-for-profit charitable organization; schools and universities; and any other entities as may be approved by the County Commission.

Nonprofit

## Co-Applicants (If Applicable)

Please list the names of any co-applicants for the project.

## Project Type\*

To be eligible for Passive Recreation Lands funds, a project must be for acquisition, improvement (restoration, public access, recreation development, etc.), or a combination of types. The completed project must be accessible by the public in perpetuity.

Acquisition Definition: The purchase of (fee simple) or acquisition of easement rights for land for public access to open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities, such as greenways, outdoor gathering areas, trails, and access to rivers or other waterways.

Improvements Definition: Implementation or construction of new site improvements for, and that facilitate, outdoor passive recreation and education including public access to open spaces and parks for outdoor recreational use. Physical improvements can include any part of building structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping that aligns with the spirit and definition of Passive Recreation Lands. Sample improvements include: trails, trailheads, picnic, and staging areas, natural playgrounds, and outdoor classrooms to promote health and wellbeing, as well as environmental education.

Allowable Costs: Open Space Bond funds can be used for:

- Acquisition of land and/or establishment of conservation easements/permanent deed restrictions on property.
- Examples of improvements that may be funded with Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include: natural area restoration, boardwalks, foot bridges, trails, trailheads, roadways, parking areas, ranger stations, restrooms, picnic shelters, natural playgrounds, observation platforms, fishing docks, outdoor classrooms; may include amenities that place minimal impact to areas as approved through the application process.
- Equipment needed to support the development of a passive recreation project.

Disallowable Costs: Items that will NOT be funded from Passive Recreation Lands Bond funds include, but are not limited to:

- Planning, engineering, and design fees
- Capital improvements for indoor recreation (e.g., swimming pools, rec centers, gyms, etc.) or other active recreation (e.g., basketball courts, soccer fields, etc.)
- Long-term operating costs, including staffing.
- Administrative fees and insurance
- Outstanding financial obligations

Please indicate the type of project for which you are seeking funding.

## Improvements

## Scope of Work

SOW Worx Forest (4).pdf

## Project Schedule

Schedule Worx Forest (1).pdf

## *Project Location*

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### Address\*

55 Woodson Rd Fairview, NC 28730

### Parcel Number

PIN: 060697225800000

### Acreage

220

### Zoning Designation

REL.CAMP/RESORT/ASMB

## *Funding Request & Leveraged Funding*

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### Bond Funding Request\*

The Open Space Bond will make available a portion of the \$30 million for eligible Passive Recreation Lands projects that score well against the evaluation criteria. The FY24 application window will make available the first funds for Passive Recreation Projects, and we anticipate additional application windows in the future. The County is not obligated to award any bond funding at the outset of any application window.

There is no cap on the amount of funding any individual project may receive, but efficient allocation of project costs will be considered in proposal evaluation.

Please provide the total amount of Open Space Bond funding the project is requesting.

\$756,800.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Please provide the total cost of the project, including all funding sources.

\$756,800.00

### Non-Bond Funding

Please provide the total amount of funding secured or anticipated from non-Bond sources.

Non-Bond funds are not required, but are encouraged.

### Please list all non-Bond funding for the project.

For each non-Bond funding source, please include the following:

- 1) Funding Source
- 2) Funding Amount
- 3) Funding Status (i.e., secured, pending, etc.)

## *Project Summary*

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### Project Summary Narrative.

Please provide a summary of the project, including the following items. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- What is the purpose and objective of the project? What are the anticipated outcomes?
- What are the proposed uses of the bond funding?
- How does the project align with the Open Space Bond's goals of preserving the natural beauty of Buncombe County, increasing the quality of life for its residents, and improving access to recreational activities in the area?
- Who are the typical users of the project?

Bond Funds are being requested to develop 11 miles of multi-use natural surface trails on the Worx Community Forest in Fairview. The Worx Community Forest is a 225 acre conservation project surrounding the Worx Campus, a 35 acre, career connected learning campus for middle and high school students in Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools. The purpose of the project is to provide a recreation asset to the residents of Fairview and an out of school resource for young people in Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools. This region of Fairview is in a recreation shadow with no public hiking or biking trails available to community residents. The Worx Community Forest will add a hiking and mountain biking option for community residents in the southeast portion of Buncombe County. The Worx trail proposal builds on a successful \$1.5MM conservation effort by Conserving Carolina and will result in a 250 acre community conservation, recreation, and educational asset that will benefit not only the residents of Fairview but also the young people of Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools in perpetuity. The primary users of the property will be local residents of Fairview and public school students in Asheville and Buncombe County Schools. Trails at the Worx Forest will be designed for a beginner and intermediate hiking and mountain

biking user experience. The primary user will be those seeking a quiet walk on a weekday or an easy mountain bike experience with their family.

## *Eligibility*

### **Eligibility Summary\***

Please attest to the project's eligibility for Bond funds, including the following requirements. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

- Proposed use of Bond funds must be for either acquisition of land or improvements on the land (or a combination).
- Is the project located within Buncombe County?
- Does the project's timeline allow for the allocation of funds within the Bond schedule?
- Does the project include a plan for long-term management and maintenance?
- Is the project accessible to the public?
- Proof of non-profit or government status, if applicable.

Trail development at the Worx Community Forest in Fairview will be used for land improvements (recreational trails, trailhead, bathrooms) to benefit the residents of Buncombe County. All grants funds are secured and the 250 acre conservation project will close in late summer of 2024. Conserving Carolina will hold title to the 225 acre community forest and lease this parcel back to the Worx Project for development, maintenance, and management. Camp Grier, the Worx Project's parent nonprofit, will hold title to the 35 acre Worx Campus at the center of the conservation area. This campus will be used for educational programming with youth in Buncombe County, Asheville City, and other public education and entities. The Worx Community Forest timeline fits well with the grant timeline. A trail concept plan has been created and trails will be ready to put out to bid once funds are allocated. We anticipate that trail construction can be completed in 12-18 months from the time of the grant award. The 225 acre Worx Community Forest will be open to the public and Camp Grier will manage the long term trail maintenance and recreational infrastructure for the project. Camp Grier has extensive experience planning, designing, managing, and maintaining trail projects through our G5 Trail Collective Program. Currently, Camp and the G5 program are adding 42-miles of multiuse trails to public lands surrounding the town of Old Fort in partnership with the USFS.

## *Improvements Narrative*

### **Improvements Narrative**

Please provide a narrative summary of how the project will use bond funds for any improvements of land for passive recreation opportunities. Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The Worx Project will use grant funds to build 11 miles of multi-use natural surface trails for hiking and mountain biking. Funds will also be used to create a 1-acre trailhead that will contain 6 parking spaces, an informational kiosk, and one vault waterless bathroom for public use. The Worx Project will manage and maintain the trail and trailhead infrastructure as part of its agreement with Conserving Carolina. The trails at the Worx Community Forest will be designed for beginner and intermediate users and our target market will

be local residents. There is a need for “gateway wilderness experiences” in Western North Carolina for those who are new to the outdoors or who want a more accessible outdoor experience. Pisgah National Forest provides abundant opportunities for more advanced hikers and riders but areas designed around a beginner's user experience are lacking. The Worx Community Forest will fill this need.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Conservation and Environmental Impact (20%)*

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Describe how the project contributes to any of the following:

- Restoring/Protecting wildlife habitat
  - Endangered or threatened species
  - Protecting wildlife access
- Maintaining an ecosystem and biodiversity
- Protection of natural resources and infrastructure (forests, freshwater, wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, watershed, tree canopy, etc.)
- Increasing or maintaining opportunities for conservation education
- Defending against threat of loss of habitat or natural resources
- Removing nonnative invasive species and/or restoring native plants
- Improving water quality
- Managing water quantity (e.g., stormwater runoff)

Text boxes are limited to 1,500 characters.

The Worx Project and the Worx Community Forest will protect 225 acres of forested land and a 35 acre camp in a rapidly developing area of Buncombe County. The project will provide access to out of school time programming for thousands of public school students each year and connect them to conservation education and the natural resources located in their backyard. The project has been created with assistance from professional engineers, geologists, landscape architects, biologists, environmental scientists, sustainable trail designers, conservation organizations, contractors, and the surrounding community. The project balances the need to preserve wildlife habitat while also providing access to passive recreation infrastructure and educational opportunities for local residents and their children.

Infrastructure such as trails and buildings have been planned in collaboration with NC Land and Water Fund, Conserving Carolina, and the USDA Forest Service to establish natural buffers between streams, wetlands, springs, and riparian areas, therefore avoiding sensitive areas. The project will establish and maintain native vegetated buffers, adhere to permitting regulations, and implement SESC and Stormwater Control Measures. Finally, the project will incorporate NIS eradication and maintenance plans into restoration, enhancement, and forest stewardship plans and permitting with Local, State, and Federal regulatory agencies and commissions.

## Describe how the project contributes additional, protected open space (if applicable).

- Does the project acquire new land for public open space for recreation and/or natural resource restoration?
- Is the property adjacent to or nearby existing open space?

The project team, Conserving Carolina and Camp Grier, have been working for the past several years to conserve the entire 250 acre parcel, the project does add new public land and open space assets to the community even though we are NOT requesting acquisition funding from the Open Space Bond Grant in this proposal. The team has raised \$1.5MM from the NC Land and Water Fund, a Private Conservation Donor, the USFS Community Forest Grant Program, and the Buncombe County Land Conservation Fund to secure funding to conserve the entire 250 acre parcel.

The Worx Project does not directly border any other public land assets. However, the project team is taking into account public recreation assets that are nearby such as the Florence Nature Preserve, Strawberry Gap, Bearwallow, and Weed Patch Mountain when thinking about the user experience of the Work Community Forest. Hiking and mountain biking trails are planned for the Worx Forest because of drive times to other hiking and biking trailheads. For example, Weed Patch is an advanced hiking and biking trail and a 55 minute drive from Fairview. Bent Creek is 41 minutes, the Florence Nature Preserve is 22 minutes, and the BRP Visitor Center is 24 minutes. Due to these factors hiking and biking for beginner and intermediate users was identified as a need in this region. This project will fill a public recreational need in the Fairview area and give residents access to hiking and biking trails that are much closer to home.

## How does the project contribute to educational opportunities related to conservation and wildlife?

The 225-acre Worx Community Forest surrounds The Worx Project, a 35 acre campus run by Camp Grier and dedicated to year round out of school educational opportunities for public school youth. The Worx Community Forest will not only provide 11 miles of public hiking and biking trails in the community of Fairview but it will also be used by the Worx Project for career and technical education, environmental and conservation education, recreation, and other out of school time programming for youth in the region. Youth involved in the Worx Project will participate in trail maintenance, access the trails for environmental education, and use the trails for hiking and biking recreation. During the summer of 2023, the first summer of programming, the Worx Project served more than 350 youth during 4 weeks of programming. During that time, middle school youth from Buncombe County Schools were able to explore careers in the construction, culinary arts, environmental sciences, and manufacturing trades. This summer the Worx program will add programming for Asheville City Schools as well.

## How will you measure the success of conservation/environmental benefits?

Success of the project will be measured in several ways. First, placing the Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project into conservation will be a success marker. This step will add 250 acres of public open space to the region in an area that is rapidly developing. The project will protect the headwaters of the Broad River and miles of ridgelines from development. Second, the Worx Community Forest will have multiple trail counters located in the system that will measure hike and bike usage for the system. Finally, we will measure success by the number of young people served at the Worx Project during out of school times who are utilizing the Worx Campus as well as the trails and recreational infrastructure during out of school times.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Feasibility (20%)***

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### **How will the applicant ensure that the project is completed?**

Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina have put together an experienced team with a track record of successful project design, development, and implementation. Conserving Carolina and Camp Grier are two mature nonprofits with decades of experience in successful conservation and natural surface, multi-use, recreational trail projects in Western North Carolina. Second, project completion is determined by a well thought out and appropriate plan. The Worx partners have engaged the same trail planner, Steve Kasacek, who designed the 42 mile Old Fort Trail Project. Steve served as the lead planner for the International Mountain Biking Association Planning Division, Trail Solutions, and has been involved in thousands of miles of trail planning, design, and construction. Steve's knowledge around sustainable trail planning, managing user conflicts, and trail user experience is second to none. The final step to ensuring project completion is hiring the right trail contractor to build the trail to the correct specification for the intended user. Camp Grier's G5 Trail Collective Program and Conserving Carolina have worked with almost all of the regional trail contractors and have a proven track record of choosing the right contractor for the desired trail experience. Camp Grier's trail staff have the bandwidth to project manage the trail construction, build the maintenance program, and recruit and train the volunteers to ensure the project is not only completed but sustainable long term.

### **What are the potential risks/impediments to completion?**

- How will these risks/impediments be addressed?
- What other factors may affect the project's timeline?

The biggest impediments to completion are a short timeline and being rushed to spend grant money quickly. Having a five year window to spend the Open Space Bond Grant will be more than enough time to ensure that the Worx team is able to bid the project effectively and have enough lead time for a contractor to work the project into their schedule. Another factor that can delay project construction is seasonality and weather. Again, having an ample grant window will ensure that the contractor can work around the winter freeze/thaw cycles as well as rain events that can slow down trail construction.

### **Please describe the readiness of the project.**

Please include:

- The current status of the project
- The timeline for completion
- The timeline for public use/access

To date, Conserving Carolina and Camp Grier have raised the necessary \$1.5MM in conservation funds needed to place easements on both the 225-acre Worx Community Forest tract and the 35-acre Worx Project Tract. Currently Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina are completing the necessary pre-closing tasks such as external and internal boundary surveys, creating the community forest plan, completing the appraisal, and conducting the Phase I environmental assessments necessary for the conservation closing and property transfer. The deadline for closing is August 1, 2024. At that time, post-closing, the Camp Grier and Worx Project team will be ready to begin environmental permitting for trail construction. We expect to have the 11 mile trail shovel ready by the end of 2024 with construction beginning in January 2025. We anticipate trail construction taking approximately 18 months and the team plans to open trail sections to the public as they

are ready to allow users to begin to access some components of the trail system when they are ready in the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026.

### **Who are the partners involved in the project and what are their roles?**

The two primary partners in this project are Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina. Conserving Carolina will be the title holder of the 225-acre Worx Community Forest. Conserving Carolina will monitor the conservation easements on the property and will be the primary liaison between the project and the conservation funding entities. Camp Grier will be the title holder to the 35-acre Worx Project parcel and serve as the programming and maintenance role for both parcels. Camp Grier, through its G5 Trail Collective and Worx Programs, will oversee programming at the Worx Project and operate under an MOU with Conserving Carolina to permit, construct, and maintain the 11 mile trail complex at the Worx Community Forest.

### **Please describe the historical uses of the land.**

The 250 acre parcel being conserved has been owned by the Presbytery of WNC since the early 1950s. For about 35 years the Presbytery used the property as a church camp for congregations in Western North Carolina. Due to the reorganization of the Presbyteries in the 1970s use of the camp declined. Beginning in 1980, the Presbytery began leasing the property to the State of NC for use by Camp Woodson, a program of the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Camp Woodson used the property as a basecamp until the State closed the program in 2011. In the 13 years since Camp Woodson's closing a group of community members have been working to conserve the property for the benefit of the Fairveiw community and the youth of Buncombe County. The goal of the effort was to maintain the original and historical use of the property as a place that brought health and healing to young people and the State of North Carolina. The Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project achieves this mission by not only conserving a high value property but also by operating a program for public school students in the region.

### **Please describe the physical aspects of the property that may impact project completion.**

These aspects can include vegetation, soils, hydrology, wildlife, topography, etc.

The Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project have been created with assistance from professional engineers, geologists, landscape architects, biologists, environmental scientists, sustainable trail designers, conservation organizations, contractors, and the surrounding community. The intent of this collaboration is to avoid sensitive areas, protect wildlife, and preserve the natural integrity of the landscape. The project team is confident that the trails are located within an appropriate corridor and that sensitive areas have been identified and will not affect project completion.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Accessibility (15%)***

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**Please describe if/how the project is accessible by various transportation methods.**

This can include:

- Road
- Greenway
- Trail
- Waterways
- Public Transportation

The project is located in the Fairview community of Southeastern Buncombe County. It will be accessed by car as there is not public transportation access to the site. The project can be accessed by bike or foot travel by residents who live near the project. Public school students will access the project through buses and other school transportation assets.

### **How does the project address public access and use?**

Please discuss the following questions:

- Are there any anticipated limitations to public access?
- Will the property be available to rent/lease for private use (e.g., events)?
- Does the project make available amenities such as restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, sitting areas, etc.?

The Worx Community Forest will be open to the public from dawn till dusk throughout the year unless conditions such as heavy rains or freeze thaw make trail conditions impactful to sensitive areas. The Worx Community Forest will provide a one acre parking area as well as a waterless restroom for visitor use.

The Worx Community Forest will not be available for rent. However, the Worx Project Campus will be available for rent on the weekends when not in use by public school students. This rental component is part of the sustainability plan for both the Worx Community Forest and the Worx Campus. Financial resources generated from this rental program will be used to maintain the infrastructure on both properties.

### **If the project in close proximity to a nearby community or neighborhood?**

If yes, please describe the community and how they will access the project.

The Worx Community Forest is located in the Fairview Community of Buncombe County. Residents or Fairview will be able to access the community forest with a vehicle, bike, or foot travel depending on their proximity to the project.

## Please describe how the project (or elements of the project) meets ADA compliance.

While none of the trails will be completely ADA accessible due to their natural surface state there will be trails that are designed for adaptive recreation and adaptive cycles. A model for this type of accessibility was created in Old Fort at the Gateway Trail System by Camp Grier's G5 Trail Collective and we envision building a similar type of system at the Worx Community Forest. These adaptive designed trails will connect to the parking area which will have one accessible parking space for adaptive users.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Equity (15%)*

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### How does the project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

The project promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion through the trail design at the Worx Community Forest, program design at the Worx Project Campus, and the sustainability built into the business plan. Trails at the Worx Community Forest will be designed for beginner, intermediate, and adaptive users. This is a recreation need in Western North Carolina due to the technical nature of trails in the surrounding National Forest and private recreation facilities like bike parks. The system will also be user friendly for those new to outdoor recreation. Much like the Gateway Trails in Old Fort, signage and maps will be located at the trailhead, at key intersections along the trail, and at regular intervals throughout the trail complex. The design of the Worx Project programming ensures equal access to any public school student in the Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools systems. Finally, through the weekend rental component of the Worx Project Campus the project team can ensure there are financial resources available to support the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the trail infrastructure.

### Does the project serve traditionally disadvantaged communities? How?

The project is not centered in a historically disadvantaged community but the ethos of the design is to provide access and invitation to disadvantaged communities throughout Buncombe County and Asheville City. Outreach from Worx Project Staff is specifically targeted to public schools students, parks and recreation programs, and nonprofits working with disadvantaged communities and communities who have been denied a historical connection to outdoor recreation.

### Is the project close to existing or planned low-income or senior housing?

If yes, which projects?

The project is located in Fairview, a rural part of Buncombe County. There are low-income and senior residents located throughout the community but the area is lacking a large high density low-income or senior housing community.

## What are the historical or cultural features of the land?

How does the project contribute to their protection/education?

The property has been historically used as a camp by the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, a basecamp by a therapeutic wilderness program, and has been idle for more than a decade. The goal of the development team is to maintain the original intent of the property, conserve the property to maintain this conservation and education legacy, and use the property to the benefit of Buncombe County residents and youth.

## Describe the community support/involvement in the project.

- How was the community involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- Describe any community outreach completed or planned.

The residents of the Fairview Community have been engaged in the design of the project for over a year. A community forest advisory committee was formed in 2023 and is made up of leaders from the Fairview community who have professional experience in education, forestry, elected office, conservation, and real estate. Community informational meetings have been held and were publicized in the Fairview Town Crier, a hyper-local newspaper with high circulation and readership in the Fairview Community. Community members have also been surveyed online and input and preferences have been taken into account in the design of the community forest. This survey continues to be open on the Worx Project website and residents are encouraged to continue to submit comments and feedback.

## How does the project consider and mitigate for potential negative impacts on community?

The development team has mitigated negative impacts on the community through design and community engagement. The trails at the Worx Community Forest are designed with a local user experience in mind. We don't want to design a trail system that would attract high levels of destination recreation users. The team has avoided trails with long technical descents, unique or distinct trail features, or trails with bike park features. The design goal is to make this a system for local users and their families.

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Long-Term Management & Maintenance (10%)*

### What is planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please speak to (where applicable):

- Invasive species management
- Trash and litter management
- Maintenance techniques

The Worx Community Forest will be owned by Conserving Carlina and leased to nonprofit Camp Grier/Worx Project for development and maintenance. Camp Grier has extensive trail design, trail construction, and trail

maintenance experience through its G5 Trail Collective Program based in Old Fort. Trail design has been completed with the same designer that created the Gateway Trail System in Old Fort to ensure sustainability and low maintenance characteristics of the system. Construction of the trails will be put out to bid to a list of over 15 trail contractors and a selection will be made based on the style of the builder to meet the user experience goals of the system and value of the bid. All of these steps will ensure that the trail system is as low maintenance as possible. Once the trails are complete the Worx Project and G5 Staff will recruit, train, and deploy volunteers on dedicated trail maintenance days to clear drains, cut trees that fall, and brush the trail corridor as needed. Funds to support this work will come from the weekend rental operation of the Worx Project Campus.

### Will there be staff dedicated to land management and maintenance?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

The Worx Project will have dedicated program staff that will share responsibility and lead efforts to maintain the Worx Community Forest trail system. Worx Staff will also have the support of Camp Grier administration that includes business management, marketing, advancement, and Executive Leadership. In addition, Worx Staff will be supported by Camp Grier's G5 Trail Collective Staff which includes trail contracting, trail maintenance, and volunteer recruitment support. In addition, the Worx Project Director has extensive experience in the mountain bike industry and has been a trail user and advocate for decades.

### Will there be staff dedicated to financial management of the project?

Please describe their experience, credentials, and expertise.

Yes, the Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project will have the administrative support of Camp Grier which include financial management, grant writing, and grant management support.

### What financial resources are planned for long-term maintenance and management of the project?

Please describe the following:

- The plan for securing these financial resources, if applicable.
- How the operations and maintenance costs have been identified and the activities needed.

The Worx Community Forest will be supported through weekend rental revenue of the Worx Project Campus. This revenue will support volunteer maintenance coordination, paid trail crew staff, and general organizational support needed to maintain the trail complex. On average Camp Grier estimates trail maintenance at \$1 per linear foot per year. This equates to approximately \$58,000 a year that would be necessary to maintain the Worx Community Forest Trail System. In addition, Worx Project and Camp Grier would advocate for Buncombe county to allocate funding to passive recreation maintenance of county trail infrastructure to support organizations like Worx who are maintaining passive recreation assets in the county. This funding would be utilized primarily to support volunteer coordination for trail maintenance activities.

## Is the community involved in project management/maintenance?

If yes, please describe the plan for community involvement.

Yes. Worx Project envisions creating a volunteer maintenance program much like the G5 Trail Collective or Pisgah SORBA where a small staff is utilized to recruit, train, and deploy trail volunteers who will maintain the system once it is completed. This model creates an ethos of stewardship within the trail user community and helps encourage a conservation mindset among trail users.

## Long-Term Maintenance and Management Plan

Worx Maintenance and Management Plan.pdf

## *Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Costs and Leveraged Funding (10%)*

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### Describe the specific project components to be completed using bond funds.

How were these costs estimated?

The project components to be completed using Open Space Bond funds include the construction of 11 miles of beginner and intermediate hike/bike natural surface trails, a one acre parking facility with a waterless restroom, and informational signage for the trailhead and trail system. These estimates were calculated using previous trail construction bids, previous parking lot grading bids, and actual costs from other similar projects the design team has been involved with in the region.

### What efforts have been made to pursue funding from other sources?

The project team has secured \$1.5MM to conserve the property and create the community forest. The project team will also apply to the NC Recreational Trails program for this project. However, Buncombe County funds are prioritized to minimize the grant administration burden of the project.

### If awarded less than requested, what components of the project could still be completed?

What are the costs of these components?

If awarded partial funding the project team would prioritize the most accessible trail areas for construction as well as the parking area. The team would also begin to apply for additional funding from the NC Recreational Trail Program and Great State Trails Fund.

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: County Plans/Needs/Priorities (5%)***

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### **How will this project fulfill community needs?**

These needs can include:

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Public Services
- Other

The Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project will fill community recreation, tourism, economic development, and public health needs. The Worx Community Forest will provide public access to beginner and intermediate hiking and biking trails. This will provide a public outdoor recreation asset in a region that currently lacks public trail and outdoor recreation resources. The Worx Project Campus will be used on the weekends for rental events such as weddings, corporate events, and retreats. This function will generate revenue that will be used to support ongoing maintenance of the recreation infrastructure at the community forest. The weekend rental activity will also have positive economic development outcomes for the Fairview Community. Local small businesses such as Turgua Brewing, Whistle Stop Brewing, the Local Joint Restaurant, Piazza, and others will benefit from local and visitor traffic to the community forest. Finally, the Worx Community Forest will add to the outdoor recreation community culture and provide more opportunities for residents to get outdoors and be active which will improve community health outcomes for the region.

### **Does this project address any current county/regional/municipal plans?**

If yes, which goals are impacted?

Western North Carolina is an outdoor recreation destination and industry hub. The Worx Community Forest adds another outdoor recreation asset to the community but targets local trail users instead of destination trail users. The Worx Community Forest provides passive recreation infrastructure to an area of Buncombe County that currently lacks this type of outdoor recreation experience.

### **Did you receive input from a municipal or County planning department or person?**

Yes

### **If yes, please provide their name, department, and email address.**

Jill Carter [jill.carter@buncombecounty.org](mailto:jill.carter@buncombecounty.org)

## ***Alignment with Evaluation Criteria: Safety (5%)***

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### **How will the project be managed to address safety concerns?**

The project team will meet with Buncombe County EMS to give them a walkthrough of the trail complex prior to opening of the system to the public. During the walkthrough EMS will be able to familiarize themselves with access points and the layout of the trail system. Digital maps will be provided to EMS to help rescue personnel navigate the system to potential injured users. The Worx Project also has a caretaker living on the Worx campus. This will provide a presence at all times of the day and night which will reduce negative incidents and provide for user and resident safety.

### **How will the project be protected from deterioration and vandalism?**

The Worx Community Forest will be protected from deterioration and vandalism through the trail maintenance program, the activity at the Worx Project Campus, and the onsite caretaker position. All of these efforts will help to minimize vandalism and help to keep the community forest trails in working order.

### **How does the project mitigate against potential conflict between different user groups?**

For example, how might the project mitigate against accidents between hikers and cyclists?

The Worx Community Forest team has specifically designed the system to minimize conflict with different user groups. First, the trail experience is designed to be for beginner and intermediate users. This design will minimize long downhills where bikes can pick up excessive speeds and conflict with hikers or runners. Control points (turns, constrictions, and intersections) are also designed into the system to limit speeds and minimize user conflicts.

### **Please describe any clear signage and navigation tools to be made available.**

The trail system and the trailhead will have maps located at the parking area, key intersections, and trail blazes along the trail system to help users and EMS navigate the system. In addition online maps will be available on the Worx Project website and the trails will be uploaded to common apps such as TrailForks, Trail Run Project, AllTrails, and MTB project so users can navigate the system using their cell phone or smart watch. Camp Grier works with the creative company Uproar Concept to produce all of our maps for the Old Fort Trail Project. The Worx Project will also work with the Uproar team to produce accurate and easy to read maps for the Worx Community Forest.

## ***Applicant Experience***

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### **Please provide a summary of the applying organization's experience, including:**

- Time in service

- Staff
- Fiscal Capacity

Camp Grier has been in service since 1952. The organization has an annual operating budget of over \$2MM and has 16 full time staff and more than 50 seasonal and part time employees. Camp Grier has managed grants from Dogwood Health Trust, NC Recreational Trails Grant Program, the NC Water Resource Grant Program, the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, directed grants from the State of NC Legislature, and other smaller grants from donors, corporations, and private foundations. Camp Grier has the organization and leadership capacity to support the development of the Worx Community Forest and the Worx Project. Worx is currently operating under a three year \$500,000 program development grant from the Dogwood Health Trust to provide out of school programming to Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools.

### Please provide a summary of the applicant's relevant past experience, including:

- Past project descriptions
- Size/location/method of conservation or improvements

Camp Grier has been involved in multiple conservation and trail development projects in the region. 200 of Camp Grier's 700 acre campus in Old Fort is under conservation easement and Camp Grier has trails and other recreational infrastructure on site and is accustomed to maintaining this infrastructure. In addition, Camp Grier created the G5 Trail Collective Program in 2018 to build and maintain trails on USFS lands surrounding the town of Old Fort as an economic development tool for the community. Camp Grier has raised more than \$3.5MM to build 42 miles of multi-use hike, bike, and equestrian trails in the Old Fort complex. To date 12 miles have been built and open and 35 additional miles will be built over the next three years. The Old Fort complex has trails for beginner, intermediate, and advanced riders, hikers, and runners. In addition, Camp Grier was the nonprofit partner that constructed the parking area and bathrooms for the project and is responsible for maintaining the trail system under a partnership agreement with USFS. In 2013, Camp Grier's G5 Trail Collective program organized more than 3,000 volunteer hours on existing trails in Old Fort.

### Please provide a summary of the qualifications of all organizations involved in the project.

The two primary organizations involved in the project are Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina. Both are established nonprofit organizations with long serving executive leadership teams. These two organizations have been consistently working to conserve the Worx Forest and Worx Campus since 2011. Conserving Carolina is a certified land trust in Western North Carolina with a history of successful conservation projects in the region. Camp Grier was established in 1952 and has successfully managed development projects on its campus and across the Grandfather Ranger District in collaboration with the USFS.

### Proof of nonprofit/governmental status (where applicable)

Camp Grier Determination Letter (1).pdf

## Resumes of Key Staff

Jason and Sara Bio.pdf

## *Budget*

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### Please provide a narrative explaining the project's budget.

Camp Grier estimates the construction of 11 miles of new natural surface hike/bike trail to cost approximately \$10 a linear foot. This estimate is based on previous trail projects and contractor bids for similar trail products. \$9,000 for signs will include graphic design support as well as printing and installation of the signs along the trail complex and at the trailhead. \$25,000 is estimated for the one acre parking lot construction to include grading and graveling of the site. The SST bathroom is a waterless restroom and based on a quote from the company supplying the unit. Trail counters are based on a previous quote for counters at the Gateway System and will allow staff to monitor use of the system. Permitting and environmental assessment will be required for trail construction since an area greater than one acre will be disturbed. Project management is critical to successful implementation of the trail system. It is necessary to have a project manager inspect the site several times a week to ensure contractors are building the trail to the design standards and can ensure that the project stays within budget.

## Project Budget

Worx Trail Budget - Sheet1.pdf

## *Additional Documentation*

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### Certified authorizing resolution from nonprofit corporate board

If applicable

3217162\_v1\_Camp Grier\_Filed Articles of Incorporation (1).pdf

## Project Maps (location, site, parcel)

Worx Project Map (1).pdf

## Project Photos and Illustrations

2301030 Worx Planned Trails PUBLIC (3).jpg

## Letters of Support

Community Forest Letter of Support Combined.pdf

## Other Documentation

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- SOW Worx Forest (4).pdf
- Schedule Worx Forest (1).pdf
- Worx Maintenance and Management Plan.pdf
- Camp Grier Determination Letter (1).pdf
- Jason and Sara Bio.pdf
- Worx Trail Budget - Sheet1.pdf
- 3217162\_v1\_Camp Grier\_Filed Articles of Incorporation (1).pdf
- Worx Project Map (1).pdf
- 2301030 Worx Planned Trails PUBLIC (3).jpg
- Community Forest Letter of Support Combined.pdf



## **The Worx Community Forest Scope of Work**

The Worx Project will add 11 miles of hike and bike trails to a 220 acre parcel of property in the Fairview community of southern Buncombe County.

The project will consist of green and blue trails for beginner and intermediate hikers and mountain bikers. The system will also have one mile trail for adaptive athletes and adaptive mountain bikes.

The project partners, Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina, will close on the property in August of 2024 and trail construction can begin as soon as funds are awarded.

Trail contractors with a history of successfully building trails to these specifications will be considered for the project. Camp Grier's G5 Trail Collective program has worked with many of the trail builders in this region and will oversee trail construction on the Worx Community Forest.

In addition, a one acre parking area, trailhead kiosk, a waterless "SST" restroom, and trail signs will be installed.



## The Worx Community Forest Schedule

- **Summer 2024-** Grant funds awarded
- **August 2024-** Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina close on the Worx Community Forest and Worx Project Campus-
- **Fall 2024-** Bid documents are created and RFP is released-
- **Winter 2024-** Contractor selection
- **Winter 2025-** Construction begins
- **Fall 2025-** Parking Lot and Trail Kiosk are constructed
- **Spring 2026-** Construction Ends
- **Summer 2026-** Trails are opened to the community



## Management and Maintenance Plan

### Management

- The Worx Community Forest will be open from sunrise to sunset every day.
- Worx Staff will monitor trail use and collect feedback from trail users and community residents through its community forest committee.
- A trail inventory will be created documenting the current state of each trail in the complex.
- A trail inspection checklist will be created to document trail issues and plan volunteer and paid trail crew maintenance tasks.
- Users will be able to report trail maintenance issues through a contact form on the Worx website.
- Volunteer trail maintenance days will be scheduled once per month unless more or less maintenance needs are identified and maintenance workflow can be established.
- Weekly trail inspections will be conducted and will include parking, trailhead kiosks, bathrooms, and trail blazes and trail signs.
- Maintenance issues will be identified and logged.
- Rules and expectations will be posted on the Worx website as well as at the trailhead kiosks.

### Maintenance

Worx Project Staff will coordinate with Camp Grier and G5 Trail Collective Staff to create a trail maintenance program at the Worx Community Forest. The trail maintenance program will include:

- Recruiting trail maintenance volunteers from the local trail user community.
- Worx will partner with Pisgah SORBA, the G5 Trail Collective, local NICA teams, hiking groups and local residents to form the basis of the trail volunteer program.
- Volunteer trail crew leaders will be trained through the McDowell Tech Trail School and be certified as trail crew leaders, buckers, and fellers. Trail crew leaders will coordinate with the Worx staff to schedule monthly trail maintenance days.
- Worx will also have access to the G5 Trail Collective Paid crew assets if a paid crew is needed to clear particularly complex trees or to do maintenance rock work, etc.
- The volunteer program will focus on training, creating the trail maintenance community, and building local trail crew leaders.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: JUN 07 2015

CAMP GRIER  
C/O ROBINSON BRADSHAW & HINSON PA  
DIANNE CHIPPS BAILEY  
101 NORTH TRYON ST STE 1900  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28246

Employer Identification Number:  
90-1033788  
DLN:  
17053086326015  
Contact Person:  
THOMAS C KOESTER ID# 31116  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Public Charity Status:  
509(a)(2)  
Form 990 Required:  
Yes  
Effective Date of Exemption:  
December 6, 2013  
Contribution Deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

CAMP GRIER

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,

  
Director, Exempt Organizations

## **Jason McDougald**

Jason turned 47 this year and has been involved in outdoor recreation and the outdoor recreation industry his entire life. He began backpacking as a child with his father in the mountains of North Georgia. In 1987, when he was 12 years old, his dad opened an outdoor store in Greensboro, NC where Jason worked outdoor retail and attended trade shows through middle school, high school, and throughout college and graduate school. Working in his father's store gave Jason the opportunity to be mentored in many outdoor recreation activities like rock climbing, whitewater paddling, backpacking, mountaineering, and mountain biking. These activities have taken him all over the world.

Professionally, Jason has a Master's Degree in Education and taught 4th grade from 1999-2004 in Black Mountain, NC. In the summers Jason worked for Pisgah Climbing Guides (then ClimbMax Mountain Guides) leading trips for private clients and groups. In 2004, Jason began working as the educational coordinator for Woodson Wilderness, a program modeled after Outward Bound, operated by the NC Department of Juvenile Justice. There he managed all teaching and educational support for students and also served as a trip leader for backpacking, climbing, and paddling programs.

In 2013, Jason transitioned to Camp Grier, a non-profit co-ed residential summer camp and event venue in Old Fort, NC. In this role Jason managed all organizational operations and developed programs like Streets to Peaks and the G5 Trail Collective. Through a formal partnership agreement with the USFS the G5 trail collective is working to increase trail maintenance and trail development resources on the Grandfather Ranger District of Pisgah National Forest. Currently the G5 Trail Collective Program is working in Old Fort to develop a 42-mile multi-use trail expansion on USFS lands surrounding the town of Old Fort. Jason has raised more than \$3.5 million for planning, design, permitting and construction for this project. The ribbon was cut on the first six miles of new trail in the complex in June of 2022 and the remaining 36 miles will be built over the next three years.

In addition to the 700 acre camp and proposed development Jason has brought other outdoor recreation assets like Tanawha Adventures, a trail race production company, and Pisgah Productions, a mountain bike race production company, under the Camp Grier umbrella. Tanawah Adventures and Pisgah Productions produce 16 events a year and give approximately 15% of their proceeds back to conservation and trail organizations where those races take place. Finally, in 2021 Jason created the Outdoor for All Conference located at Camp Grier. The OFA Conference is an invitation only event that brings outdoor equity leaders and thought partners from across the country to Old Fort each year to discuss how to make the outdoors a more welcoming and engaging place for all.

Jason has grown the camp's annual revenue by almost 300% and taken Camp Grier from a small and struggling church camp in 2013 to an independent non-profit that is leading equitable outdoor recreation development and community development locally and regionally. Jason has been in a unique position to witness the evolution of the outdoor industry over the last 40+ years. This puts Jason in a unique position to develop and lead an outdoor recreation hub that can attract visitors from across the country and be an equitable economic driver for generations to come.

# Sara Jarrell

Colorado Springs, CO

[sjarrell@sram.com](mailto:sjarrell@sram.com)

[LinkedIn Profile](#)

## Summary

Nearly 20 years of cycling industry experience. Skilled mechanic, problem solver, communicator, community builder, project manager, and people manager. Built the SRAM Women's Program, Ambassador Program, and Community Program from the ground up. Heavily invested in creating more opportunities to get more people on bikes. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are guiding principles in my work. A great honor of my career was being the mechanic for the United States Paralympic Team at the Paralympics in London in 2012.

## Experience

- 

**Global Community Manager**  
SRAM, LLC Jul 2021 - Present (1 year 4 months+)

Manage global ambassador program and local and regional relationships with community organizations. Responsible for community development and engagement with the goal of creating opportunities to get more people on bikes and grow the cycling market. Tracking and measuring KPIs throughout the year to measure the success of projects and outreach. Manage a team of 3 people.
- 

**Ambassador Specialist**  
SRAM, LLC Jul 2020 - Jul 2021 (1 year 1 month)

Developed structure for a global ambassador program consisting of 130+ ambassadors. Responsible for relationship building, contracting, tracking, and measuring performance of ambassador program participants. This job evolved into the Global Community Manager role I currently hold at SRAM.
- 

**Women's Program Coordinator**  
SRAM, LLC Jul 2017 – Jul 2020 (3 years 1 month)

Constructed the SRAM Women's Program from the ground up. Built relationships aimed at getting more women on bikes, tracked and measured the program's success, conceptualized creative ways to reach women through on-the-ground activations like workshops, seminars, and through varied social media content creation projects.
- 

**Engineering Technician**  
SRAM, LLC Jul 2015 - Jul 2017 (2 years 1 month)

Assisted design engineers in the design, prototyping and implementation of new products by providing technical support throughout the product development process. Managed and problem solved all Customer Quality Feedback for the Road Brake Team. Communicated with Dealer Service locations globally about any issues with road brake product and strategy on how to address issues with customers. Retained the role of liaison, organizer, and coach for women's cycling programs sponsored by SRAM.



## **Technical Ambassador**

SRAM, LLC

Nov 2012 - Jun 2015 (2 years 8 months)

Served as the primary instructor for SRAM in the STU classroom and when visiting dealers. Drove technical messages across SRAM Aftermarket team and dealer base. Coordinated communication efforts with Independent SRAM reps, Territory Managers and direct dealer initiatives to address technical product information and service instructions. Served as a liaison, organizer, and coach for women's cycling programs sponsored by SRAM like the Gold Rusch Tour for Women, Liv Ladies AllRide, and I Choose Bikes.



## **Mechanic for US Para Cycling Team**

United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee

Jan 2012 – Oct 2012 (10 months)

Managed mechanical work needed on team bikes and upkeep of team equipment. Kept information on each team members fit, gearing, and preferences logged and organized. Able to maintain composure and high mechanical standards while performing under the pressure of World Championships and Paralympic racing. Honed ability to think on my feet and problem solve mechanically and logistically.

## **Service Manager**

Motion Makers Bicycle Shop

Jul 2008 - Jan 2012 (3 years 7 months)

Helped open and manage flagship store in Asheville, NC. Managed daily service workload, walk in repairs, service writing, delegating work, managing 3 to 4 other mechanics, schedule writing, and customer service. Repairs include everything from flats to overhauling suspension, hydraulic disc brake bleeds, and wheel builds.



## **Ride Society Leader**

Giant Bicycle

Nov 2005 - Dec 2009 (4 years 2 months)

Founding member of the Giant Women's Council which was formed to help get more women on bicycles and to create a hub of information for female cyclist to utilize. I wrote monthly blogs on cycling related topics, attended meetings, lead workshops and camps, tested new products and apparel, and contributed to the council from the point of view of a female mechanic.



## **Service Manager**

Alameda Bicycle

Oct 2004 - Jul 2008 (3 years 10 months)

Led and managed service team. Maintained knowledge on: frame prep for steel, aluminum, titanium, and carbon fiber frames, custom builds, wheel building, and repairs on all types of bicycles. Developed and implemented policies and procedures for customer service, bicycle repair, inventory control, ordering, handling warranties, employee training, scheduling, opening and closing duties. Founded, and ran the Women on Wheels program out of this shop, which was focused on getting more women into cycling.

## Education



**Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College** Associate's  
Degree, Political Science and Government



**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**  
General Studies



**University of North Carolina Asheville**  
Political Science, General Studies

## Licenses & Certifications

**BSE - Certified Expert Mechanic** - Barnett's Bicycle Institute



**Wilderness First Responder** - Wilderness Medical Associates International



**ICP Level 2 Mountain Bike Coach** - International Mountain Bicycling Association



**Certificate of Completion in Improving Your Project Management Skills** -  
American Management Association

## Skills

Management • Community Engagement • Project Management • Brand Ambassadorship • Community  
Management • People Management • Mechanics • Coaching • Sports Marketing • Leadership

Trail Construction	11 miles	\$580,000.00
Signage		\$9,000.00
Parking Lot Constructin		\$25,000.00
SST Bathrooms		\$35,000.00
Trail Counters		\$24,000.00
Permitting and Environmental Engineering		\$15,000.00
Project Management and Administration		\$68,800.00
		\$688,000.00
Total		\$756,800.00



# NORTH CAROLINA

## Department of the Secretary of State

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**To all whom these presents shall come, Greetings:**

I, Elaine F. Marshall, Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina, do hereby certify the following and hereto attached to be a true copy of

### ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

CAMP GRIER

the original of which was filed in this office on the 6th day of December, 2013.



Scan to verify online.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal at the City of Raleigh, this 6th day of December, 2013.

*Elaine F. Marshall*

Secretary of State

C2013 339 00801

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
CAMP GRIER**

Pursuant to Section 55A-2-02 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the undersigned hereby submits these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina.

1. The name of the corporation is Camp Grier.
2. The corporation shall be a charitable corporation within the meaning of Section 55A-1-40(4) of the General Statutes of North Carolina. The corporation was incorporated after the effective date of Chapter 55A of the North Carolina General Statutes.
3. The corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any corresponding United States Internal Revenue Law (the "Code"), including, without limitation, to own and operate a Christian camp and retreat center in the Reformed tradition of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
  - (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles of Incorporation, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (i) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code or (ii) by a corporation to which contributions are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Code.
  - (b) No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its directors, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its tax-exempt purposes.
  - (c) No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
4. The corporation shall have no members. The method of election of the directors is set forth in the bylaws of the corporation.
5. The period of existence of the corporation is unlimited.
6. The mailing address of the initial registered office of the corporation in the State of North Carolina is PO Box 490, Old Fort, North Carolina 28762 and the physical address is 985 Camp Grier Road, Old Fort, North Carolina 28762, which initial registered office is located in McDowell County; and the name of its initial registered agent at such address is Julian H. Wright, Jr.

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7. The street address address of the principal office of the corporation is 985 Camp Grier Road, Old Fort, North Carolina 28762, which principal office is located in McDowell County. The mailing address of the principal office of the corporation is P.O. Box 490, 985 Camp Grier Road, Old Fort, North Carolina 28762, which principal office is located in McDowell County.

8. To the fullest extent permitted by the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act as it exists or may hereafter be amended, no person who is serving or who has served as a director of the corporation shall be personally liable for monetary damages for breach of any duty as a director. No amendment or repeal of this article, nor the adoption of any other amendment to these Articles of Incorporation inconsistent with this article, shall eliminate or reduce the protection granted herein with respect to any matter that occurred prior to such amendment, repeal, or adoption.

9. In the event of the termination, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of the corporation in any manner or for any reason whatsoever, the directors shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the corporation, distribute all of the remaining assets and property of the corporation to the following presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Presbytery of Charlotte (Inc.), Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Presbytery of Western North Carolina, Inc.; and Salem Presbytery Corporation (each, a "Participating Presbytery").

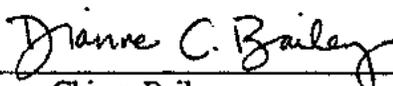
10. All property held by or for the corporation shall be held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

11. The Articles of Incorporation may be amended or repealed and new or amended Articles of Incorporation may be adopted by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the directors then holding office at any regular or special meeting of the board of directors at which a quorum is present, provided that at least ten days' written notice is given of intention to alter, amend, repeal or adopt new Articles of Incorporation at such meeting; provided, however, that Articles 3, 9, 10 and 11 of the Articles of Incorporation may not be amended or repealed without the prior written consent of each Participating Presbytery.

12. The name and address of the incorporator are Dianne Chipps Bailey, Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A., 101 North Tryon Street, Suite 1900, Charlotte, North Carolina 28246.

13. These Articles of Incorporation shall be effective as of filing.

This the 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2013.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dianne Chipps Bailey  
Incorporator

060697225800000

**55 WOODSON RD**

PRESBYTERY OF ASHEVILLE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN USA  
114 SILVER CREEK RD, MORGANTON, NC, 28655

Total Appraised Value  
**\$2,217,400**



- Land
- Building
- Transfer History
- Value Change
- Appeals
- Billing/Tax Lookup
- Appeal
- Comper
- Community
- More ▾

Key Information

Zoning	<b>OU</b>	Neighborhood	<b>UFCA</b>
Land Use Code	<b>REL.CAMP/RESORT/ASM B</b>	Municipality	-
Fire District	<b>FGC</b>	Special District	-
Present Use	-		
Appraisal Area	<b>Chelsea Bond 828-250-4958 chelsea.bond@buncombecounty.org</b>		
Exemption	<b>RXM</b>		
Legal Description	<b>Deed Date: 01/27/1989 Deed: 0876-0140 Subdiv: Block: Lot: Section: Plat: 0026-0111</b>		
Plat Reference	<a href="#"><b>26-111</b></a>		

Assessment Details

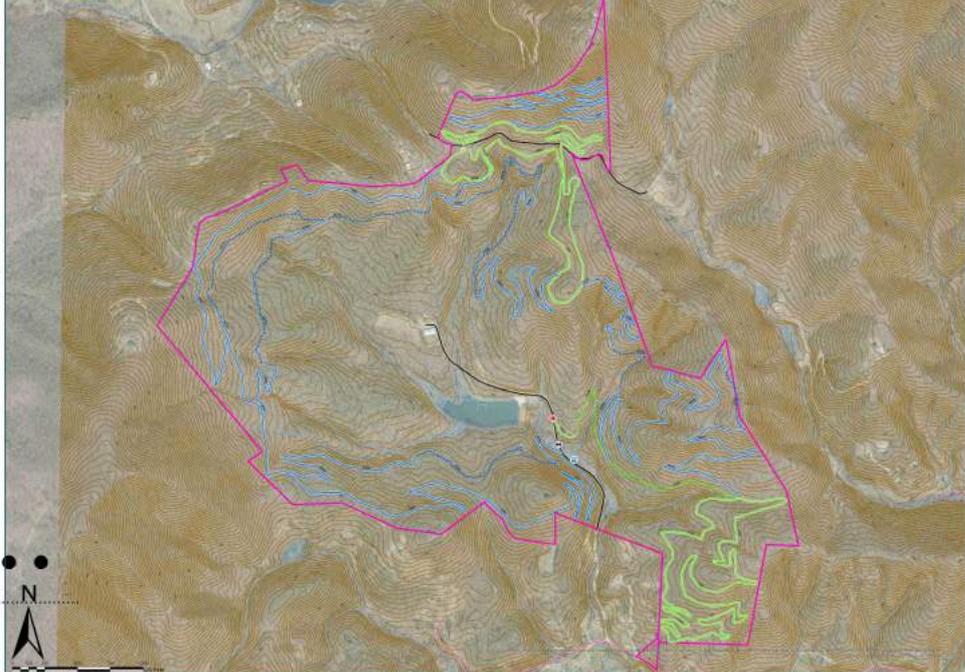
Land Value	<b>\$2,056,300</b>
Building Value	<b>\$104,200</b>
Features	<b>\$56,900</b>
Total Appraised Value	<b>\$2,217,400</b>
Deferred Value	<b>\$0</b>
Exempt Value	<b>\$2,217,400</b>
Total Taxable Value	<b>\$0</b>



Buncombe County, NC

- Legend items including symbols for various features like roads, trails, and boundaries.

Sheet Number





339 New Leicester Hwy Suite 140  
Asheville NC 28806

Date: February 21, 2024  
Open Space Bond:  
Passive Recreation Lands Grant  
Buncombe County

Dear Grant Committee,

We are writing to extend our wholehearted support for Buncombe County's Open Space Bond initiative, which aims to develop more trails, greenways, and preserve open spaces in our community. As the Director of **GO PLACES**, a workforce development program funded by the Department of Labor that is committed to empowering 18–24-year-olds in high crime, high poverty census tracts in Buncombe County, we recognize the significance of projects that contribute to the well-being and opportunities of our residents.

This proposed initiative is of utmost importance for the people of Buncombe County, particularly those facing limited access to natural and financial resources, as well as recreational opportunities. **GO PLACES** fully endorses the collaborative efforts of Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina in providing trails in the Fairview area. In line with our own personal commitment to community development, we are eager to contribute by providing any support that may be needed. From volunteering labor or the use of the GO PLACES platform to promote this effort, we want to be great community partners.

This project aligns seamlessly with our mission to offer support and pathways for success to the young individuals we serve. Access to well-maintained trails and green spaces not only enhances physical health but also fosters a sense of community pride and engagement.

We envision a future where the Fairview community, including the participants of GO PLACES, can work and play in a community that has a trailhead within minutes, facilitating activities like hiking and biking on natural trails and it be close to home for some, but opportunities for all.

We commend the committee for supporting this invaluable effort, and We are grateful for the positive impact it will have on the residents of Buncombe County. Please keep me informed on how **GO PLACES** can continue to support this initiative. We look forward to contributing to the success of this endeavor in any way possible.

Thank you for your dedication to this worthwhile cause.

Gene Ettison  
**GO PLACES** Director  
Phone:(828) 490-5596

February 20, 2024

Open Space Bond:  
Passive Recreation Lands Grant  
Buncombe County

Dear Grant Committee,

I want to express my personal support, as well as that of our company, for Buncombe County's Open Space Bond efforts in building more trails, greenways, and conserving open space in the community.

This project is very important to the people of Buncombe County to help preserve our natural resources and create recreation opportunities in areas, and for people, that currently have limited to no access.

Cane Creek Cycling Components and I personally, fully support Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina to provide trails in the Fairview area. We are willing to aid the effort by providing both verbal support, effort to help promote this effort and trail building volunteer hours.

Those in this area currently have to drive to either Mills River, Bent Creek Park, Pisgah Forest or Dupont to find a trail system. Not everyone has the time and resources to do so. Cane Creek itself has many employees that utilize their lunch breaks to head outside and would be thrilled to have a system close by to utilize as opposed to being relegated to riding on the roads..

Thank you and your committee for supporting this very worthwhile effort. Please keep me informed on how we can help.

Sincerely,

Dorene O'Malley, Director of Advocacy & Outreach  
Cane Creek Cycling Components  
355 Cane Creek Rd  
Fletcher, NC 28732  
408-607-6186  
dorene@canecreek.com

February 22, 2024

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
2023 - 2024**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

Julie Koenke  
Robert Lamb  
Amieris Lavender  
Amanda Pattanayak

**DIRECTORS:**

Kimberly Nava Eggett  
Vlene Fagan  
Lyndi Hewitt  
Melissa Kledis  
Marcus Ronell Kirkman  
D. Tyrell McGirt  
Jenny Pickens  
Jen Rhode Ward  
Landon Ward  
Tre Williams III  
Deborah Bailey

**ACS REPRESENTATIVES:**

James Carter  
Ruafika Cobb  
Maggie Fehrman  
Tracey Barrett  
Ximena Zulay Del Corral

**ACS STUDENT  
BOARD MEMBERS:**

Paiden Castelblanco  
Sophia Glover  
Aidan O'Donnell

Open Space Bond  
Passive Recreation Lands Grant  
Buncombe County

Dear Grant Committee,

As a 5th generation Asheville native, I want to express my support for Buncombe County's Open Space Bond efforts in building more trails, greenways, and conserving open space in the community.

This project is very important to the people of Buncombe County to help preserve our natural resources and create recreation opportunities in places and for people that currently have limited to no access.

I am also the Executive Director of the Asheville City Schools Foundation which fully supports Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina to provide trails in the Fairview area. We are willing to aid the effort by providing connection to our Asheville City Schools, community partners including the United for Youth network, and the United Way volunteer corp. We plan to be active partners in creating a space for our youth and our community at large to learn, explore, and grow.

Our youth deserve preserved open space to spend time after school and during the summer. Our partnership with groups like Asheville on Bikes and the Sierra Club will allow students to take the skills they learn during our In Real Life afterschool programming and then expand their skills in Fairview during summer programming through the WORX project.

Thank you and your committee for supporting this very worthwhile effort. Please keep me informed on how I/we can help.

In community,  
Copland Rudolph

