



MOUNTAINS-to-SEA

North Carolina State Trail

MASTER PLAN



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Introduction

Background and Plan Purpose

In February of 2014, the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR) began the process of developing this master plan for the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail (MST). The vision for the MST is an off-road hiking trail connecting Clingmans Dome on North Carolina's western border to Jockey's Ridge State Park on its eastern Outer Banks. In this master plan, DPR remains focused on moving forward the singular planning corridor, proposed more than 30 years ago, to connect these trail limits.

The process of building a state trail is a complex and substantial undertaking. Figure 1 depicts a simplified description of the main phases of this process and some of the key activities that take place during each phase. While this information is intended to provide a basic understanding of the work that goes into building a trail, in reality the phases and the activities within them will overlap and shift. Within the statewide corridor for the MST there are segments of trail in each of these phases.

The goals of the master plan are to promote completion of the MST across the state by engaging stakeholders, confirming the guiding vision and established corridor for the MST, defining segments within the statewide MST corridor, gathering and consolidating information about each segment, creating an approach to prioritize further work along the MST, providing centralized web-based content about planning efforts that can be updated as progress along the MST continues, and developing an initial set of tools to assist trail planning partners.

As the MST crosses the state, its vision is being implemented in a variety of forms that complement the varied context of the trail and serve a broad range of interests. Similarly, within the established statewide corridor, trail planning partners are refining and shifting the alignment of segments to address challenges and opportunities identified at a regional or local level. The master plan is not intended to identify or restrict detailed alignments or designs for any segment of the MST or provide a detailed analysis of the challenges, opportunities, and stakeholders for individual segments – this work must be done at regional and local scales. Rather, the master plan is intended to focus and maximize trail planning efforts and expand partnerships to achieve more detailed trail alignments, funding, construction, and management of trail segments. Achieving the master plan goals is one of many necessary steps towards completion of the MST and realization of the ultimate vision.

Master Plan Goals

1. Create a web-based master plan to help advance the planning, construction, and management of the MST.
2. Define and prioritize segments for future planning.
3. Develop tools to support trail partners in the planning, construction, maintenance, and promotion of the MST.
4. Engage agencies, non-profit organizations, and volunteers throughout the planning process.



Figure 1. The phases of building a trail

To promote ongoing development of the MST, this plan defines 18 Planning Segments of the MST and 8 Designated Segments. Designated Segments include sections of trail that have primarily been constructed and gone through the designation process. The designation process involves applying for designation, review by DPR staff, approval by the North Carolina Trails Committee, and designation by the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Planning Segments include sections of trail that are primarily at some stage of planning and design prior to designation. A description of the location and status of each Planning and Designated Segment of the MST is included in the master plan to inform the development of information for the NCParks.gov website.

Planning Segments are prioritized using a methodology that addresses 13 criteria gauging readiness for further planning and implementation. The prioritization of Planning Segments is intended to help MST partners sharpen their focus on those segments ready to move forward in the near term and develop strategies for addressing segments confronting challenges. It is a transparent approach, and can provide trail planning partners with an understanding of potential strategies to increase the priority of a segment of interest.

The master plan also began the process of developing a toolkit for trail planning partners. The toolkit includes resources on funding and costs; standards for signage, publicity, camping facilities and safety; and clarification of partner roles. These tools are intended to help partners of the MST maximize efforts and leverage successes while also ensuring that the trail is developed and promoted in a consistent manner. The tools will eventually be available through the NCParks.gov website. Recommendations are made in the master plan for the expansion of the toolbox through the development of additional resources.

Appendices to the master plan provide additional supporting information including a glossary of terms, a summary of comments received on the public draft of the plan, details for the scoring of Planning Segments, and initial ideas for trail signage.

By combining information on segments for future planning, providing tools and resources for MST partners, and enhancing the web-based information on the MST, the master plan is intended to facilitate the development of the trail to achieve its desired goal of a continuous route across North Carolina, from Clingmans Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Jockey's Ridge State Park on the Outer Banks.

Master Planning Process

A variety of strategies were used to communicate with stakeholders throughout the master planning process:

- **MST Master Plan website** – As part of the development of the master plan, DPR developed a Master Plan website at www.ncmountaintosea.org. This website was informed by the master plan and will assist in updating the MST web presence at www.NCParks.gov as a new website is currently under development. During the planning process, the master plan website was used to share information with stakeholders, request input from stakeholders through polls and surveys, and share updates about the status of the planning process. In addition, visitors to the web site were able to submit a request to be added to the email distribution list used to provide updates about the plan.
- **Trails section of the NCParks.gov website** – Updates about the master planning process and opportunities to participate were posted on the [North Carolina State Parks](http://NorthCarolinaStateParks) website. Information from the master plan will be used to update the trails section of the NCParks.gov site.
- **Email and social media** – An email distribution list was developed during the planning process. The distribution list includes current section sponsors within Designated Segments of the trail; potential section sponsors within Planning Segments; contacts within metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and rural planning organizations (RPOs); parks and land managers; leaders in counties, cities and chambers of commerce crossed by the planned trail corridor; interest groups and volunteer organizations; and others who requested to be included on the distribution list. Notice about the availability of the draft master plan for public review was distributed using this list, along with a post on the Friends of the MST Facebook page, a notice through the NCPlan email list, a post on the MST Master Plan website, and a post on the NCParks.gov website.
- **Conferences and events** – Information about the master planning process was shared through hosted booths at the annual conference for the North Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association (October 2014) and at the celebration for the Hillsborough Riverwalk (October 2014).

The master planning process kicked off with meetings held across the state with potential section sponsors within Planning Segments. During these meetings, potential section sponsors were asked for an update about their trail planning process, information about challenges and opportunities they are confronting, and what needs they have to move the trail forward. This information was used to inform draft information sheets for Planning Segments and to confirm the relevance of specific tools for the Trail Planning Toolbox.

During the master planning process, multiple meetings were held with members of the Friends of the MST to gather input about their hopes for the master plan and on additional work needed beyond the scope of the master planning process to move forward completion of the MST. Members of Friends of the MST were engaged at the outset of the planning process, prior to release of the draft plan, and as part of the public review of the draft plan.

Once mapping and information was gathered for Designated Segments, the section sponsors within Designated Segments of the trail were given an early preview of the descriptions for their respective segments. Preliminary feedback from section sponsors was collected through an online survey. The input provided was used to modify the descriptions of Designated Segments.

In May 2015, the public was invited to review the entire plan and provide feedback by participating in an online survey and/or by attending a regional meeting. The regional meetings were open-house format and were held at the following locations and dates:

- May 4th: Carteret Community College, Morehead City, NC
- May 5th: Herman Park Center, Goldsboro, NC
- May 6th: Lake Mackintosh Clubhouse, Burlington, NC
- May 7th: Southside Branch Library, Winston-Salem, NC

A summary of comments received through the online survey, meetings, and email, are provided in Appendix B, along with individual responses documenting how this input informed the revised master plan.

Overview and History of the MST

Touching upon the highest elevation in North Carolina (6,684 feet on Mt. Mitchell) and the lowest elevation (sea level at Cape Hatteras National Seashore), there are currently over 600 miles of the MST open for use and enjoyment by both residents of and visitors to North Carolina.

Sharing its origins with trading routes used before English settlers arrived in North Carolina, the trail has a rich history (<http://ncpedia.org/history/colonial/trade-routes>); that links communities together and serves as the backbone of a growing system of land and water trails across the state.

Along its planned path, the trail passes through more than 30 counties, numerous small towns, 3 national parks, several national forests and national wildlife refuges, state parks, and larger towns and cities. The continuous route will offer outstanding recreational opportunities while also protecting riparian buffers, corridors of wildlife habitat, and access to resources of statewide significance.

North Carolina Trails System Act

In 1973, North Carolina passed the North Carolina Trails System Act, which proposed the establishment of trails in “natural, scenic areas of the State, and in or near urban areas” to “promote public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoor, natural, and remote areas of the State.”

This legislation created the North Carolina Trails Committee, made up of seven citizens serving as advisors on the state’s trail-related matters. The North Carolina Trails Committee assisted in the development of the early concepts of the MST and advised the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development “on all matters directly or indirectly pertaining to trails.”

Early Planning Efforts

At the National Trails Symposium at North Carolina’s Lake Junaluska in 1977, the idea of a cross-state trail gained further momentum. The North Carolina Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, Howard Lee, addressed the crowd about the trail, saying, “I want our State Trails Committee to look at recommending a trail that would give North Carolina and national visitors using it a real



Volunteers working to build a section of the MST



Early planning corridor for the MST



feel for the sights, sounds, and people of the state... I think it would be a trail that would help — like the first primitive trails — bring us together.”

That same year, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposed a 712-mile bike route, identifying it as “Mountains-to-Sea” in planning documents. Soon after, DPR proposed a statewide hiking trail across the state using the term ‘Mountains-to-Sea Trail’. While these two initiatives are not one and the same, and their paths only cross or follow each other in a few locations, the early concepts laid the foundation for more detailed development of the cross-state trail. In the early 1980’s, a 20-mile wide corridor spanning the state focused on connecting major population centers with outlying natural resources such as national forests and state parks.

The North Carolina Trails Association (NCTA) also formed in these early years. This organization was chartered in 1982 by a group of outdoor enthusiasts. Their mission addressed a wide range of interests including working with partners from the state to local levels, shepherding land acquisitions, and building and maintaining trail. The NCTA was last active in the late 1980’s and was soon followed by the formation of the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail (Friends of the MST). The Friends of the MST charter noted the organization will work “to promote the concept, research and provide information, advocate cooperative efforts among allied government offices and citizens, and support task forces” for the benefit of the MST. Today the Friends of the MST continues to provide trail information, sponsors the majority of the task forces that build and maintain the trail, supports task forces that are sponsored by separate non-profit organizations, and serves as a leader of the completion of the MST through fundraising, promotion and advocacy.

In 2000, the MST became a state trail, a part of the North Carolina Trails System and an official unit of the state parks system, administered by the DPR. Since then, North Carolina has committed funding for planning and to acquire land for the trail, and DPR has worked with local partners to secure critical tracts (<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-recent/6200>). Since the trail became a unit of the parks system, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and the Recreation Trails Program have both provided funding for projects along the MST along with additional grants, private funding, and donations related to trail development.

From Planning to “On the Ground”

The first dedicated segment of the MST was a 75.8-mile trail along the Cape Hatteras National Seashore in 1982. Despite this first, much of the early trail was on the ground in the mountain region. Throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s most trail construction took place in the mountains

Important Dates for the MST

- 1973 North Carolina Trails System Act passed to promote public access to natural environments
- 1977 North Carolina’s cross-state trail proposed and gains interest through various agencies, groups and events
- 1982 75.8 miles of trail along the Cape Hatteras National Seashore becomes the first MST segment
- 1980s Volunteer efforts expand the trail in individual segments
- 1990s Volunteer efforts continue to expand the trail
- 1997 First thru-hike of the partially completed trail shows its potential
- 2000s Friends of the MST spearheads extensive trail development
- 2000 MST is named an official unit of the state park system
- 2001 MST East Plan begins
- 2005 Johnston County MST Plan
- 2005 MST Piedmont East Plan begins
- 2007 MST Piedmont West Plan
- 2008 State funding helps push the trail’s development through the Piedmont
- 2013 Southwestern Commission Regional Trails Plan
- 2014 Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Sub-Section Master Plan
- 2015 MST Master Plan

in the western part of the state because of the availability of public lands, though trails near Falls Lake in the Piedmont were dedicated in 1987 and 1991. The U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, many municipalities, and citizens worked collaboratively with task force members to build and maintain segments of the trail. Through these efforts an average of 15 miles of new trail were established each year.

As interest in the trail continues to grow, it is the efforts of a multitude of partners across the state that will continue to move forward trail construction. Independent sections of the trail and extension of existing segments are getting on the ground via specific volunteer efforts and also through greenway system planning. Now, and into the future, getting trail on the ground outside of available public lands will require additional coordination and property owners that are willing to embrace and champion the MST concept. In this way, the trail will continue to grow incrementally and offer new opportunities to explore North Carolina's unique resources while also making long-awaited connections in many communities.

Recent Planning Efforts

Over the past 10 years, 19 counties along the MST planning corridor have developed plans to support trails and recreation in their communities (see Figure 2). This includes local trails, as well as trails that would comprise portions of the planned MST route. The State Trails Program has also facilitated a series of regional planning efforts, organized around the council of governments' structure (see Figure 3). These plans include the MST East Plan, MST Piedmont East and West Plans, Johnston County MST Plan, and the Southwestern Commission Regional Trails Plan. The most recent is the Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Sub-section Master Plan, addressing a segment of the MST approximately 50 miles in length and connecting two state parks, through three counties and two municipalities.

Currently, local jurisdictions are working hard to incorporate the MST into their local planning efforts, a critical step towards the continued development and success of the trail. This coordination among local officials, various stakeholders, and support from community members is essential in having a strong support system in place to develop a sustainable trail, and maintain it over the long term.



Hikers enjoying a paved section of the MST

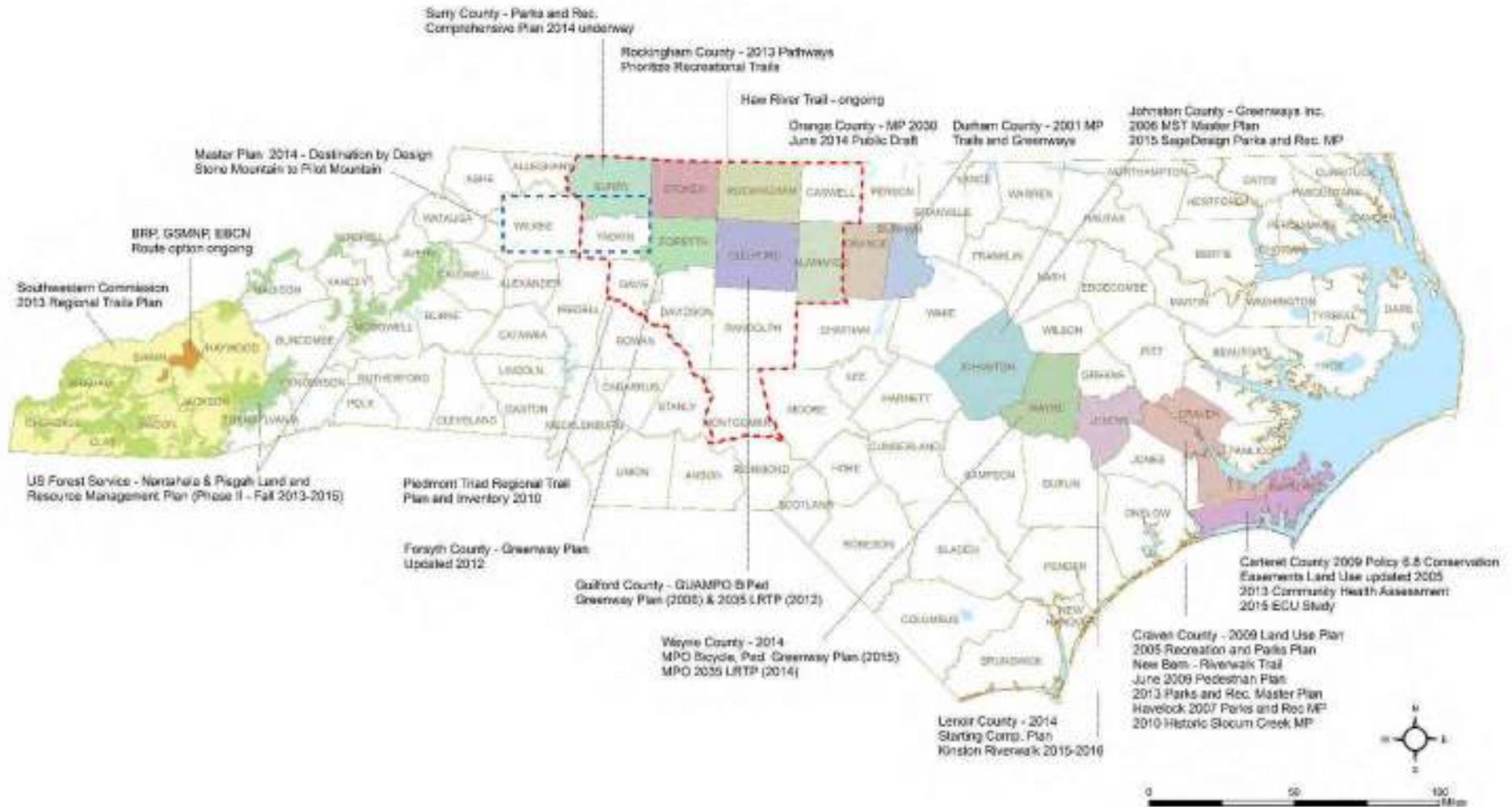


Figure 2. Recent trail and recreation planning efforts along the MST planning corridor

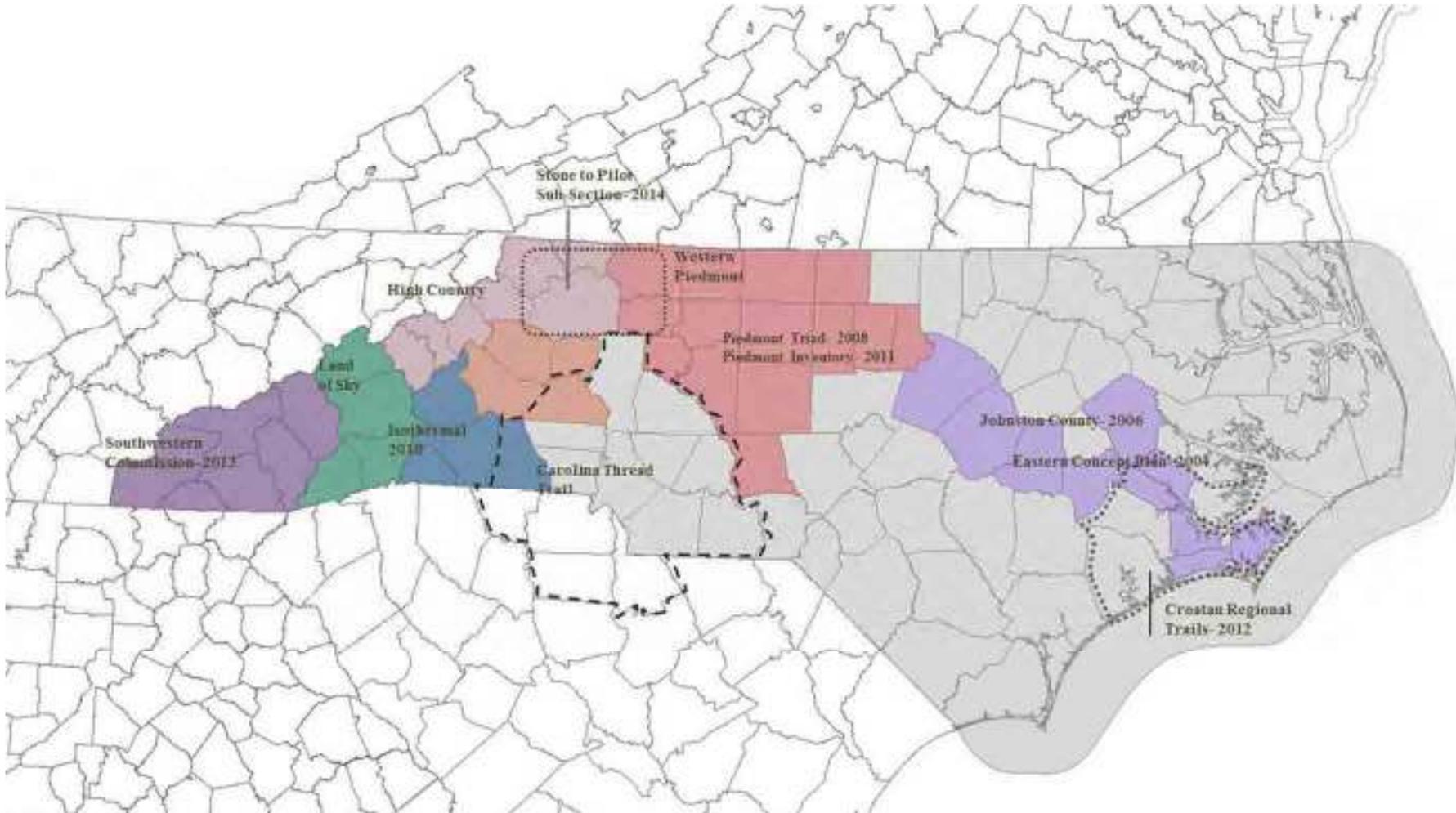


Figure 3. Completed regional trail planning efforts with councils of government



Geography of the MST

As the MST links North Carolina’s mountains, piedmont region, and coastal plain, its path can be viewed through a focused lens by considering segments at a similar stage in development and within a similar planning context. The geography of the MST is explored in this section – including segment beginning and end points, descriptions of each segment, and priorities for further planning and implementation.

Overview of Segment Types

Two types of segments are considered in this master plan – Designated and Planning. A statewide map of these segments is provided in Figure 4.

Designated Segments

The Designated Segments of the MST include primarily constructed sections that have been designated by the DPR. Currently, there are over 600 designated miles of the MST, with the majority of those miles lying within the western part of the state. The following Designated Segments are identified in this master plan:

- A. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- B. Southern Blue Ridge
- C. Central Blue Ridge
- D. Northern Blue Ridge
- E. Pilot Mountain to Hanging Rock State Park
- F. Greensboro Watershed Trails
- G. Falls Lake/Neuse River
- H. Outer Banks

Planning Segments

The Planning Segments of the MST are primarily in some stage of development prior to official designation. Criteria used to define geographic boundaries of Planning Segments include route length (preferably 20-30 miles), jurisdictional boundaries, and natural features. The following Planning Segments are identified:

- 1. Cherokee to Balsam Gap
- 2. Northeastern Wilkes County
- 3. Yadkin River (Surry/Yadkin County)
- 4. Stokes County
- 5. Atlantic and Yadkin (A&Y) Greenway
- 6. Northwest Forsyth County
- 7. Winston-Salem
- 8. Piedmont Greenway
- 9. Upper Haw River
- 10. Haw River Trail
- 11. Southwest Orange County
- 12. Eno River
- 13. Johnston County
- 14. Wayne County
- 15. Lenoir County
- 16. Northern Craven County
- 17. Southern Craven County
- 18. Carteret/Ocracoke

Segment Descriptions

On the following pages, descriptions of the Designated and Planning Segments are provided. These descriptions are intended to consolidate and provide consistent information about the MST and will eventually inform the trails section of the NCParks.gov website. Each description includes a list of current or potential section sponsors along with other stakeholders, a map and description of the geographic location of the designated trail or planned trail corridor, and resources for additional information. For the Planning Segments, challenges to and opportunities for advancing planning, construction, and designation of each Planning Segment are also included.

Both Designated Segments and Planning Segments are comprised of individual trail sections within the jurisdictional boundaries of a single agency or organization who serves as the sponsor of that section. A section sponsor is any agency or organization that owns the land the trail uses and that enters into an agreement with the DPR to maintain trail as a part of the MST. Section sponsors are responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of the trail within their section, including its location, appearance, surface, uses and amenities. Section sponsors retain authority on lands under their jurisdiction and are encouraged to showcase places of natural, scenic, historic and cultural significance; to feature the diversity of natural communities and landscapes in the state; and to consider the needs of both long- and short-distance trail users.

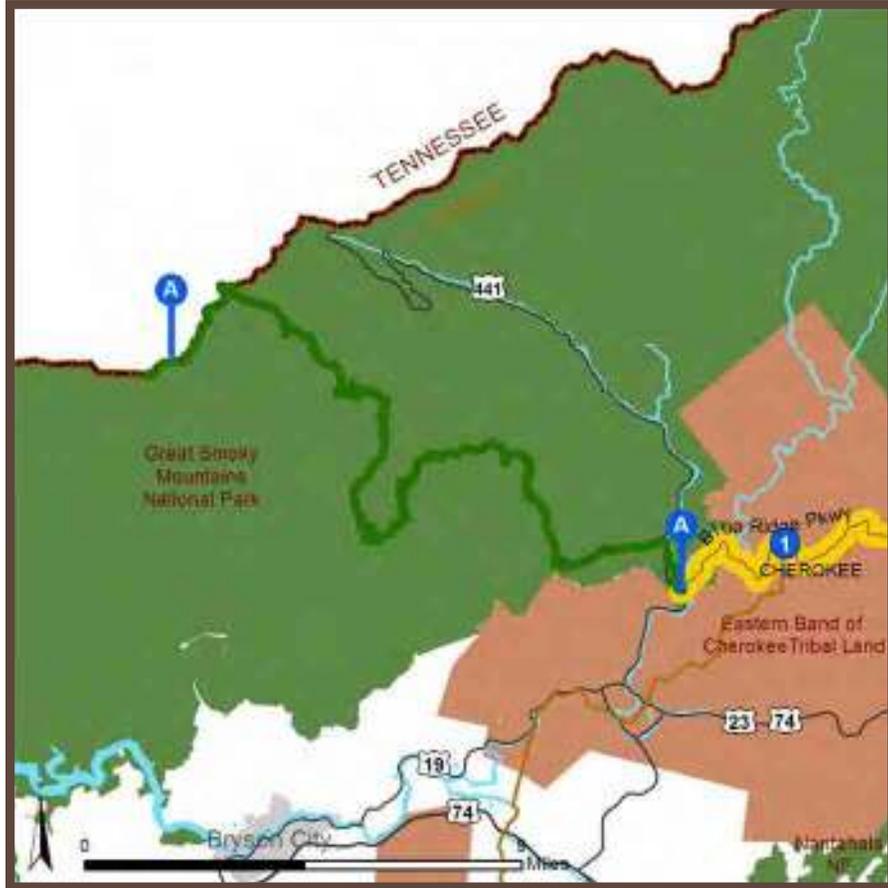
Other agencies and organizations included in the descriptions are listed under Additional Planning Stakeholders and Trail Maintainers/Volunteers. Agencies and organizations included in these categories have a role or interest in the planning, construction, or maintenance of the MST in this segment. DPR and the Friends of the MST are included in the descriptions for each segment. Overall trail corridor planning and coordination are the responsibility of DPR. DPR will provide guidance, coordination and assistance for the multiple section sponsors. Volunteers are one of the trail's greatest assets because of the commitment and energy they devote to building, maintaining and promoting the trail. Section sponsors are encouraged to involve volunteers as much as possible in trail construction and maintenance. The statewide Friends of the MST helps to form and support the local volunteer task forces, and is able to assist section sponsors in building, maintaining, and managing the trail.

The planned route shown in the descriptions is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon landowners' willingness to participate, the feasibility of road and river crossings, the participation of other agencies, and other factors important to the section sponsors. It is also possible for the designated route shown in the descriptions to change to address environmental or maintenance issues, to include additional amenities, or for other reasons. Within each trail section the section sponsors may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. Prior coordination with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections and written approval from DPR is required for the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. When changes to the planned or designated route are made, updated mapping should be shared with DPR.

Where there are currently gaps between Designated Segments of the MST, hikers may choose to use temporary alternative routes including adjacent paddle routes or bicycle routes to complete the entire trip from the mountains to the sea. The Friends of the MST identifies alternative routes for this purpose and provides information and guidebooks to aid trail users on their website. While the Friends of the MST recognizes the significant accomplishment of those using alternative routes to cross the state and DPR recognizes the importance of providing options for those wishing to complete the entire trip now; in this master plan and in its work, DPR is focused on completion of the entire primary route of the MST hiking trail from Clingmans Dome to Jockey's Ridge, as described on the following pages.

The information included on these segment descriptions represent the best information available during the preparation of the master plan. DPR is aware that work on the trail is ongoing and will provide updated information in the trails section of the NCParks.gov website as it becomes available.

SEGMENT A: Great Smoky Mountains



Description

From: Clingmans Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

To: Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation lands

This segment runs from Clingmans Dome on the Tennessee/North Carolina border in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the edge of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation lands.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~27 miles

Route Alignment: Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Section Sponsor(s): Great Smoky Mountains Natl. Park

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Swain County, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Jackson County, Haywood County, Southwestern RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Plan Your Trip

- [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)
- [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park maintains the trail within its boundaries.

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT B: Southern Blue Ridge



Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Description

From: Balsam Gap

To: Buncombe/Yancey County line

This segment travels from Balsam Gap to the Buncombe/Yancey County line. The MST passes through Pisgah National Forest in the southwestern and northeastern parts of the segment and through Biltmore Forest and Asheville in the central part of the segment.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~107 miles

Route Alignment: Blue Ridge Parkway

Section Sponsor(s): U.S. Forest Service Pisgah Ranger District, U.S. National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Asheville, Biltmore Forest, Buncombe County, Henderson County, Transylvania County, French Broad River MPO, Land of Sky RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Plan Your Trip

Use Blue Ridge Parkway Overlooks to access the trail. Do not park along the Blue Ridge Parkway motor road.

- [Pisgah Inn](#)
- [Biltmore Forest](#)
- [Blue Ridge Parkway \(including Folk Art Center\)](#)
- [Asheville](#)

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The [Carolina Mountain Club](#) maintains the MST throughout this segment.

SEGMENT C: Central Blue Ridge



Description

From: Buncombe/Yancey County line

To: Avery/Watauga County line

This segment passes through Yancey, McDowell, Burke, Caldwell and Avery counties. Portions of this segment follow the Blue Ridge Parkway. It travels through Pisgah National Forest and includes Mount Mitchell State Park, Pisgah National Forest, and Grandfather Mountain State Park.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~90 miles

Route Alignment: Blue Ridge Parkway

Section Sponsor(s): [US Forest Service Grandfather Mtn. Ranger District](#), [US Forest Service Pisgah Natl. Forest](#), [US](#)

[National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway](#), [NC Division of Parks and Recreation](#)

Additional Planning Stakeholders: [Friends of the MST](#), [DPR](#), [Avery](#), [Burke](#), [Caldwell](#), [McDowell](#) and [Yancey](#) counties, [Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail](#), [High Country COG](#), [Western Piedmont COG](#)

Plan Your Trip

Use Blue Ridge Parkway Overlooks to access the trail. Do not park along the Blue Ridge Parkway motor road.

- [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- [Mount Mitchell State Park](#)
- [Little Switzerland](#)
- [Grandfather Mtn. State Park](#)

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

This segment is maintained by the [Carolina Mountain Club](#), [Mt. Mitchell State Park](#), [NC High Peak Trails Association](#), [Central Blue Ridge Task Force](#), and [Tanawha Task Force](#).

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT D: Northern Blue Ridge



Description

From: Avery/Watauga County line

To: Stone Mountain State Park

This segment travels along the Blue Ridge Parkway corridor from the Pisgah National Forest south of Boone to Stone Mountain State Park in Alleghany and Wilkes counties.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~75 miles

Route Alignment: Blue Ridge Parkway, Stone Mountain State Park

Section Sponsor(s): US National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway, NC Division of Parks and Recreation

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Stone Mountain State Park, Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany and Wilkes Counties, High Country RPO, Middle Fork Greenway, Friends of the MST, DPR

Plan Your Trip

Use Blue Ridge Parkway Overlooks to access the trail. Do not park along the Blue Ridge Parkway motor road.

- [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- [Stone Mountain State Park](#)
- [Moses H. Cone Memorial Park](#)
- [Julian Price Memorial Park](#)

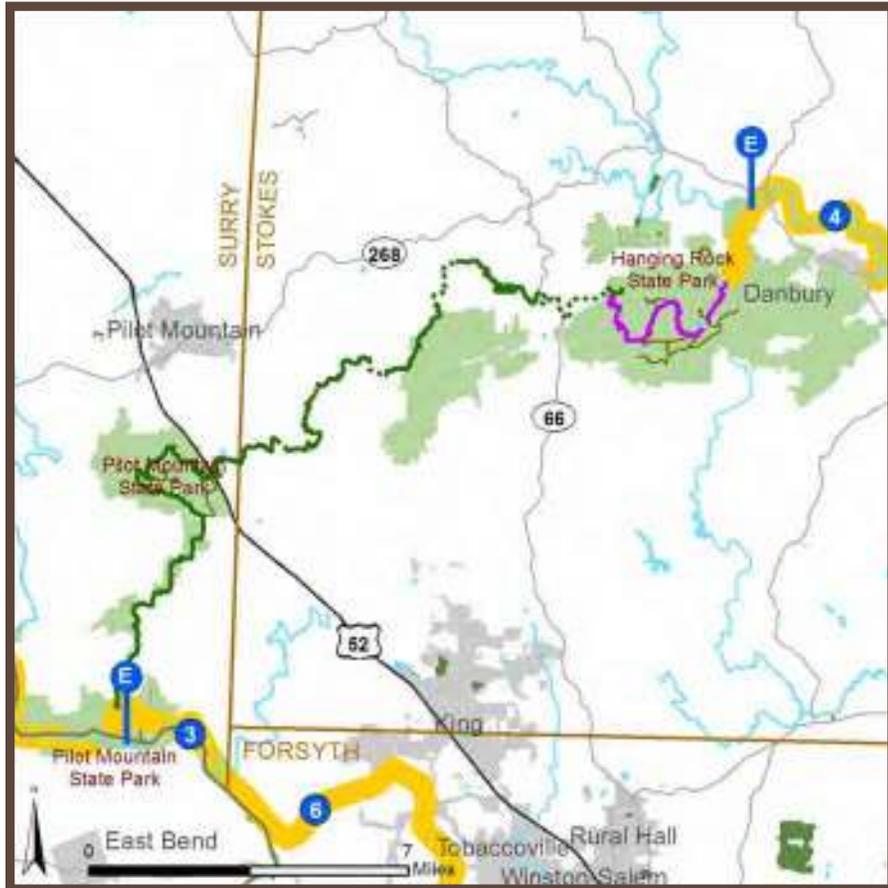
Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The maintenance groups within this segment include the NC Division of Parks and Recreation, Watauga Task Force, the South Ashe Task Force, the North Ashe Task Force (Ashe and Alleghany Counties), the Friends of the MST (Ashe, Watauga, Alleghany), and the Alleghany Task Force. The Tanawha Task Force also maintains the Tanawha Trail in Watauga County.

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT E: Pilot Mountain to Hanging Rock State Park



Description

From: Pilot Mountain State Park

To: Hanging Rock State Park

This segment of the MST stretches from Pilot Mountain State Park in Surry County to Hanging Rock State Park in Stokes County using State Park trails and the Sauratown Trail. The Sauratown Trail is an equestrian and hiking trail, managed by a local non-profit, that crosses private farms and rural woodlands.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~31 miles

Route Alignment: State parks, Sauratown Trail on private property

Section Sponsor(s): [NC Division of Parks and Recreation](#), [Sauratown Trails Association](#), [Friends of Sauratown Mountains](#)

Additional Planning Stakeholders: [Surry County](#), [Stokes County](#), [Northwest Piedmont RPO](#), [Piedmont Triad Regional Council](#), [Friends of the MST](#), [DPR](#)

Plan Your Trip

- [The Historic Martin Rockhouse](#)
- [Sauratown Trails information](#)
- [Hanging Rock State Park](#)
- [Pilot Mountain State Park](#)

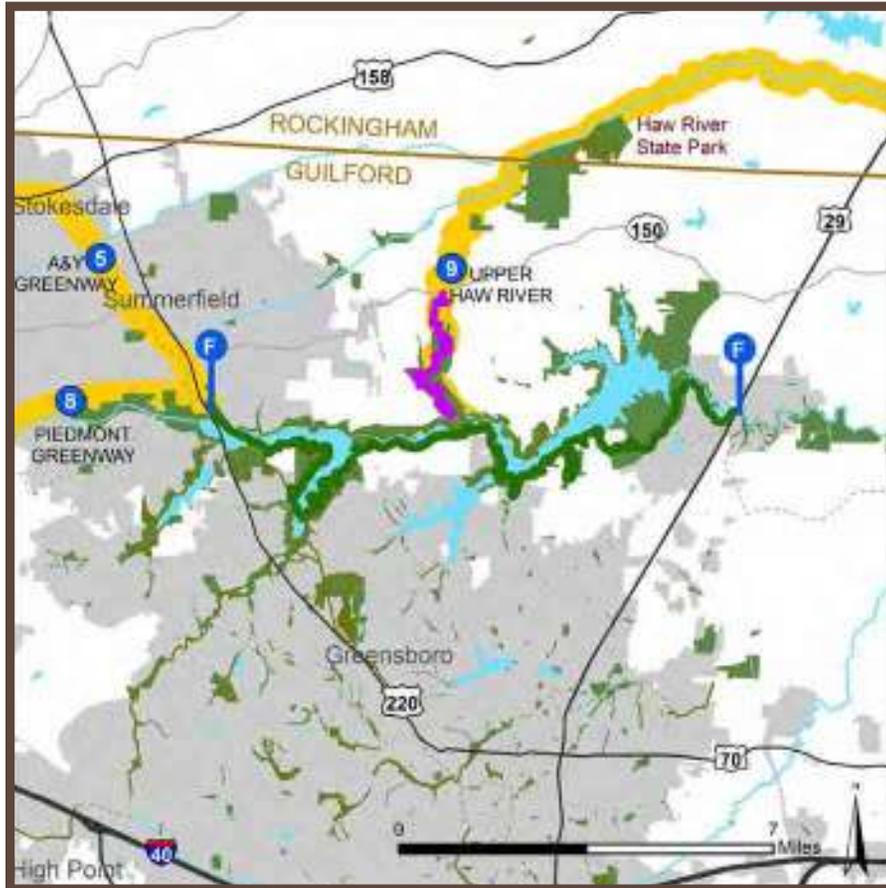
Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The Sauratown Trails Association, Friends of Sauratown Mountains, and the NC Division of Parks and Recreation are also the trail maintainers.

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT F: Greensboro Watershed Trails



Description

From: US 220 in Summerfield

To: US 29 in Greensboro

The MST coincides with the Greensboro Watershed Trails between US 220 and US 29. The trail is on the southern edge of the city's water supply at Lake Townsend and Lake Brandt. A small portion of the MST from the Greensboro Watershed Trails north to US 220 near the Town of Summerfield coincides with the Atlantic and Yadkin Greenway.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~29 miles

Route Alignment: Greensboro Watershed Lakes

Section Sponsor(s): City of Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department, Guilford County

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Guilford County, Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Greensboro MPO, Piedmont Land Conservancy, Friends of the MST, DPR

Plan Your Trip

- [Greensboro Hiking & Biking Trails](#)
- [West House Historical Home Site](#)
- [Bur-Mil Park](#)
- [Bryan Park](#)
- [Guilford Courthouse National Military Park \(south of trail on A&Y Greenway\)](#)

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The City of Greensboro maintains the Greensboro Watershed Trails except where the existing Atlantic and Yadkin Greenway extends into Guilford County's Bur-Mil Park. Guilford County maintains trails located within county parks. The Guilford County FMST also assists with trail maintenance.

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT G: Falls Lake/Neuse River



Description

From: Western edge of Falls Lake in Durham County

To: Clayton Riverwalk southern terminus in Johnston County

Unpaved trails in Falls Lake in east Durham County and northern Wake County connect with the paved Neuse River Greenway at the eastern edge of Falls Lake. The Neuse River Greenway travels south alongside the Neuse River for 28 miles until it terminates near Clayton in Johnston County at a trailhead parking lot.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~88 miles

Route Alignment: Falls Lake, Neuse River

Section Sponsor(s): City of Raleigh, Clayton, NC Division of Parks and Recreation, US Army Corps of

Engineers, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Durham County, Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Wake County, Capital Area MPO, Upper Coastal Plain RPO, Friends of the MST

Plan Your Trip

- [Falls Lake](#)
 - [Milburnie Park](#)
 - [Annie Louise Wilkerson Nature Preserve](#)
 - [Anderson Point Park](#)
 - [Blue Jay Point County Park](#)
 - [Penny's Bend Nature Preserve](#)
 - **Portions of this segment of the MST pass through NCWRC Game Lands.**
- For more information on gameland activities and regulations, please visit, www.ncwildlife.org**

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

The City of Raleigh manages the Neuse River Greenway Trail, and the Town of Clayton maintains the Clayton Riverwalks. The Friends of the MST has an agreement with NCDPR, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the US Army Corps of Engineers to manage the Falls Lake section. Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces manages the trails through Blue Jay Point County Park.

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT H: Outer Banks



Description

From: Ocracoke Island

To: Jockey's Ridge State Park

This segment runs along the Outer Banks from Ocracoke Island to Jockey's Ridge State Park. The NC Ferry system is used to get from Cedar Island in Carteret County to Ocracoke and from Ocracoke Island to Cape Hatteras. Along the Outer Banks, hikers can walk along the beach.

Segment Details

Designated Trail Length: ~84 miles

Route Alignment: Cape Hatteras Natl. Seashore, NC Highway 12

Section Sponsor(s): Nags Head, NC Division of Parks and Recreation, National Park Service, NCDOT (ferry service)

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Dare County, Hyde County, Rodanthe, Hatteras Village, Salvo, Avon, and Ocracoke, Down East RPO, Albemarle RPO, Friends of the MST, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Plan Your Trip

- [Jockey's Ridge State Park](#)
- [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)
- [Town of Nags Head](#)
- [Outer Banks Visitors Bureau](#)

Trail Maintainers/Volunteers

NCDOT is responsible for maintaining the ferries connecting Ocracoke to Hatteras and Cedar Island to Ocracoke. The NC Division of Parks and Recreation maintains Jockey's Ridge State Park, and the National Park Service maintains Cape Hatteras National Seashore which stretches over 70 miles, from Ocracoke Island to Bodie Island. Dare County and the Town of Nags Head maintain trail in their jurisdictions. The US Fish and Wildlife Service maintains trail within the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge.

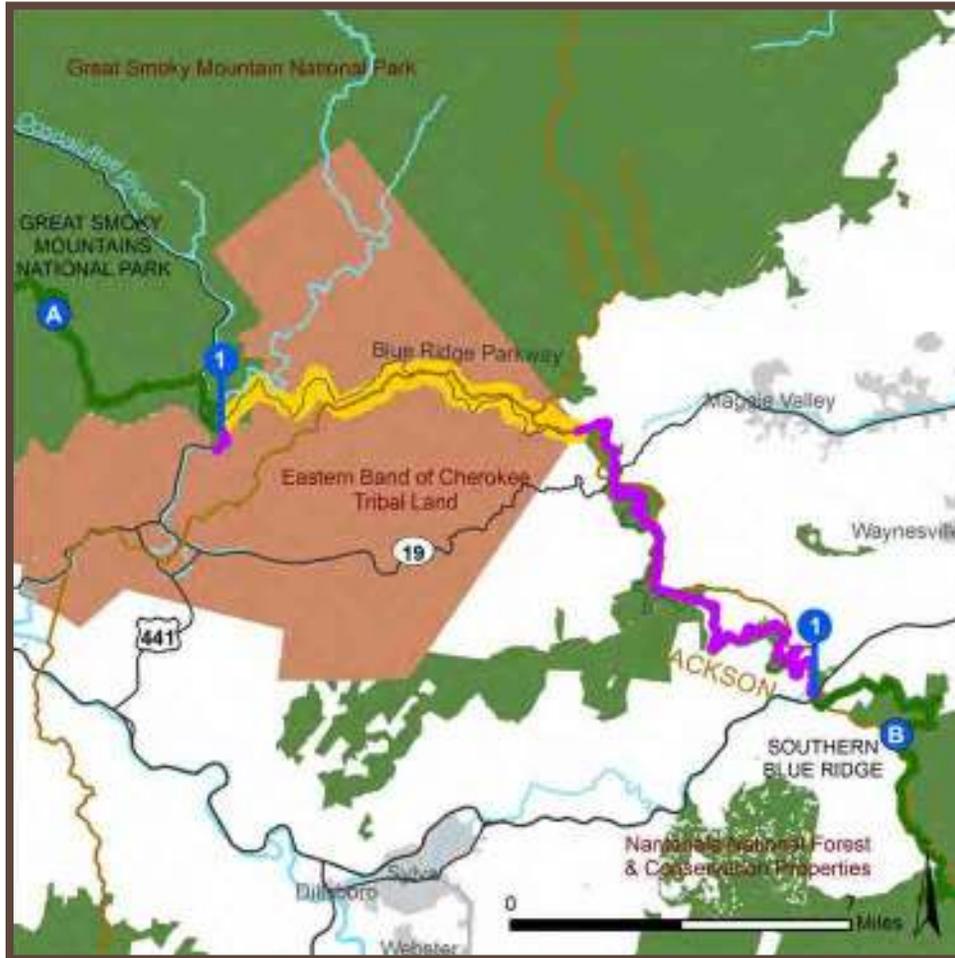
Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

SEGMENT 1: Cherokee to Balsam Gap

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Description

From: Eastern band of the Cherokee Nation lands

To: Balsam Gap

This segment is located along Blue Ridge Parkway lands within the tribal lands of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation. The planned route runs from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the existing MST trail, parallel to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Planning Strategies

Trail-specific plans are in place for this segment. Further coordination among the many trail partners is needed to move forward the last remaining unconstructed segment in the mountains.

Opportunities

The Blue Ridge Parkway right-of-way is the proposed corridor for the MST within the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation. Trail partners are actively coordinating to move this segment forward and there are large parcels, which could streamline acquisition of easements.

	Large Landholdings	Stream/River Corridors	Staff Resources
	Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	Federal Property
	Local Planning	Floodplain/Wetlands	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Trail planning for this segment requires coordination among many trail partners, including: the U.S. National Park Service, NCDPR, the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation and interested organizations.

	Stream/River Crossings	Coordinating Easements	Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment	Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	Floodplain/Wetlands	

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None

Route Alignment: Blue Ridge Parkway, Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation Lands

Key Properties: Blue Ridge Parkway right-of-way

Approximate Length: 24 miles

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

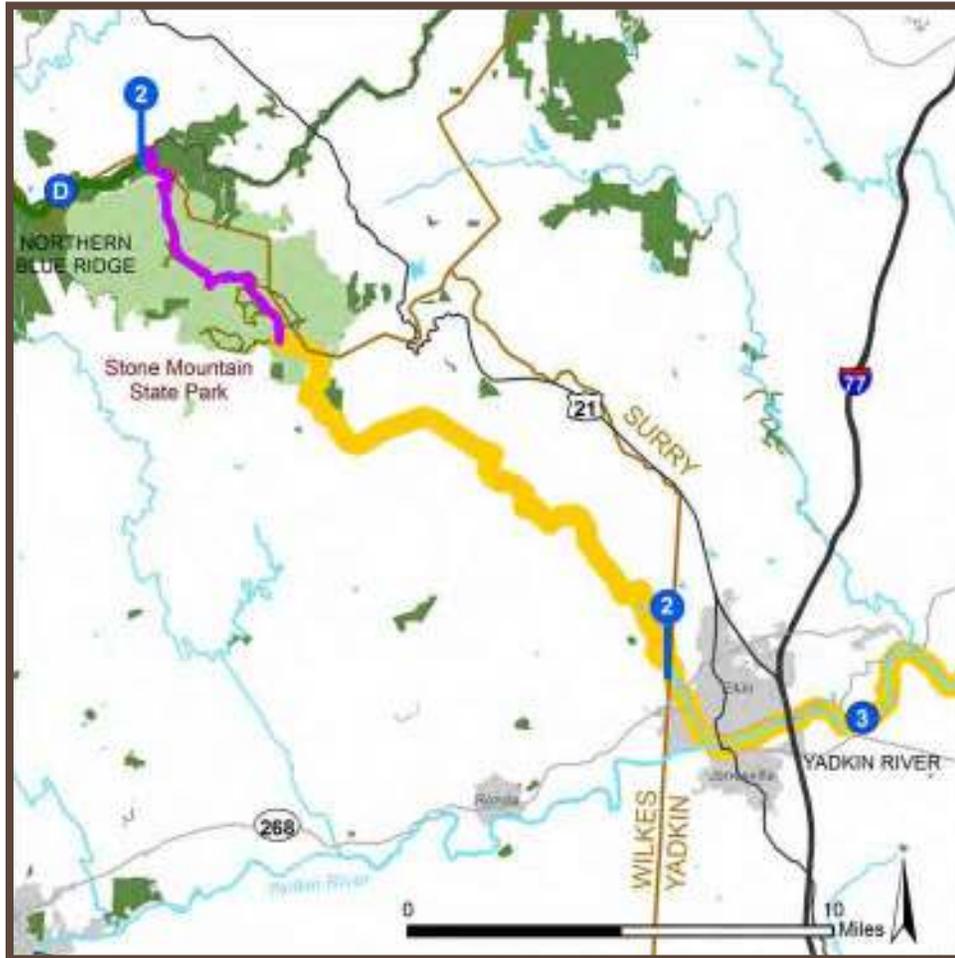
Potential Section Sponsors(s): Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation, Blue Ridge Parkway

Additional Planning Stakeholders: U.S. National Park Service (Blue Ridge Parkway), Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Southwestern RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

SEGMENT 2: Northeast Wilkes County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Description

From: Stone Mountain State Park

To: Surry County

This segment runs from Stone Mountain State Park through northeastern Wilkes County to the Yadkin County line.

Planning Strategies

The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan (2014) resulted in a route shift for this segment and established a vision for moving the segment forward.

Opportunities

The Elkin Valley Trails Association is active in constructing the trail via the Stone Mountain Trail and the E&A Rail Trail.

	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors		Staff Resources
x	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands	x	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Coordinating easements on private property and bridge and stream crossings are the primary challenges in this segment.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: Portions of trail in Stone Mountain State Park

Route Alignment: Elkin Creek

Key Properties: Stone Mountain State Park, Wells Knob

Approximate Length: 25 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Wilkes County, Elkin, Jonesville, NCDPR, Stone Mtn. State Park

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor, High Country RPO, Northwest Piedmont RPO, Elkin Valley Trails Association, Friends of the MST

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None. Elkin Valley Trails Association has constructed portions of trail along Elkin Creek.

SEGMENT 3: Yadkin River (Surry/Yadkin County)

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Wilkes County

To: Pilot Mountain State Park

This segment runs from Wilkes County near Elkin to the existing MST at Pilot Mountain State Park.

Planning Strategies

The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan (2014) identifies the preferred route for this segment. The MST is also addressed in Surry County and Yadkin County park and trail plans. The Piedmont Triad COG study shows interest in trails and this COG has successfully planned trails, and there are indications that the private land-owners support the trail.

Opportunities

The proposed MST route follows the Yadkin River throughout this segment. There are some public lands that may be used for the trail, depending on the final route. Large parcels intersect about half of the planned corridor, which could streamline co-ordination of easements. There is a potential to leverage the work of the Elkin Valley Trail Association, Sauratown Trails Association, and Friends of Sauratown Mountains. Access points for the paddle trail along the Yadkin River may be used to provide access to the MST. There is a potential to leverage the work of Mt. Airy, Dobson and Pilot for an eventual greenway connector to the MST.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors		Staff Resources
x	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands	x	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

River crossings and developing the final alignment are the primary challenges.

x	Stream/River Crossings		Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None constructed

Route Alignment: Yadkin River

Key Properties: None

Approximate Length: 34 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s):

Yadkin County, Surry County, Elkin, Jonesville, Pilot Mtn. State Park

Additional Planning Stakeholders:

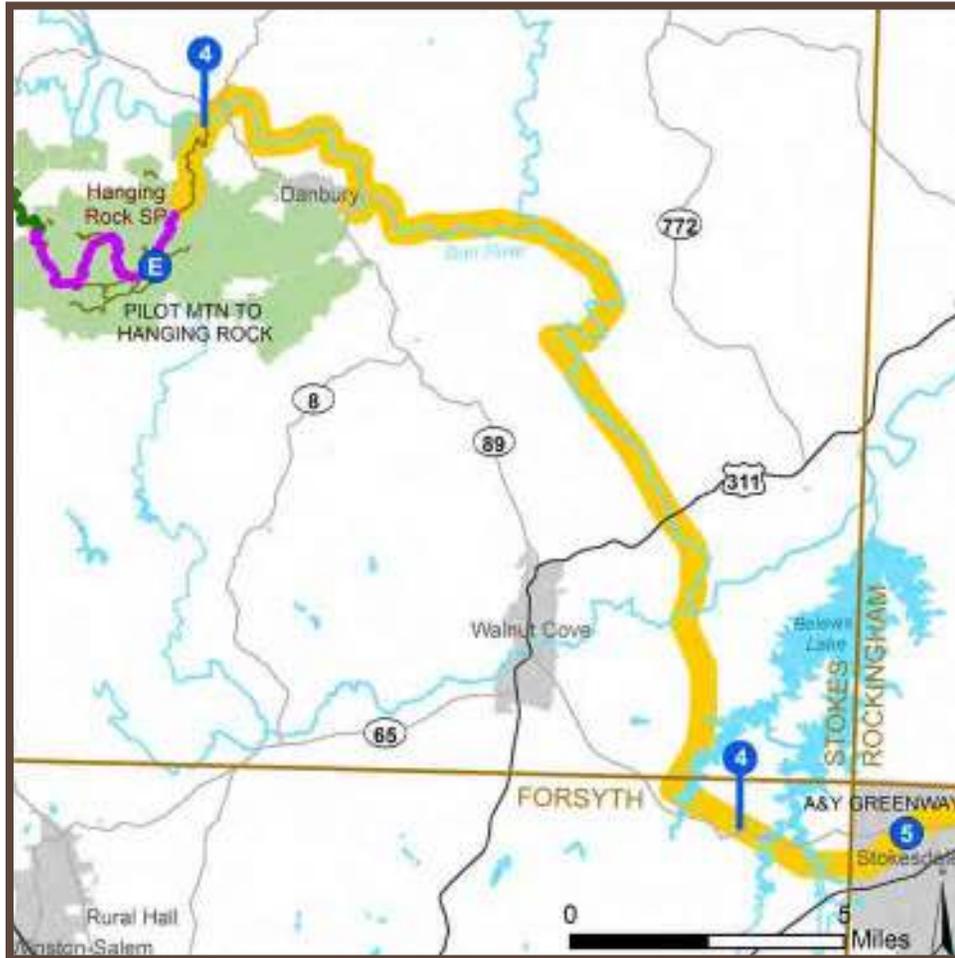
Boonville, Northwest Piedmont RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR, Yadkin River-keepers, Yadkin Valley Heritage, EVTA, Rockford Historic Preservation Society, Sauratown Trails Association, Friends of Sauratown Mountain

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

SEGMENT 4: Stokes County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| # Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| # Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Hanging Rock State Park

To: Belews Lake (Forsyth County)

This segment connects Hanging Rock State Park to the future Atlantic and Yadkin Greenway extension terminus at Belews Lake. Belews Lake is owned by the Duke Energy Company.

Planning Strategies

An updated Comprehensive Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan in Stokes County will address the MST and strategies to move forward trail plans along the Dan River and private property. Identification of additional planning stakeholders may help to move this segment forward.

Opportunities

The Dan River offers a potential corridor from Hanging Rock State Park to just north of Belews Lake. There are large land parcels, which could help to streamline acquisition of easements. Access points for the paddle trail along the Dan River may be used to provide access to the MST.

Large Landholdings	Stream/River Corridors		Staff Resources
	Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	Federal Property
	Local Planning	Floodplain/Wetlands	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Planning is needed to determine the exact alignment of the MST between the Dan River and Belews Lake. While there is some staff availability, there is not a dedicated parks and recreation department in Stokes County.

	Stream/River Crossings		Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None constructed

Route Alignment: Dan River, Private Property

Key Properties: Hanging Rock State Park, Duke Energy (Belews Lake)

Approximate Length: 32 miles

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

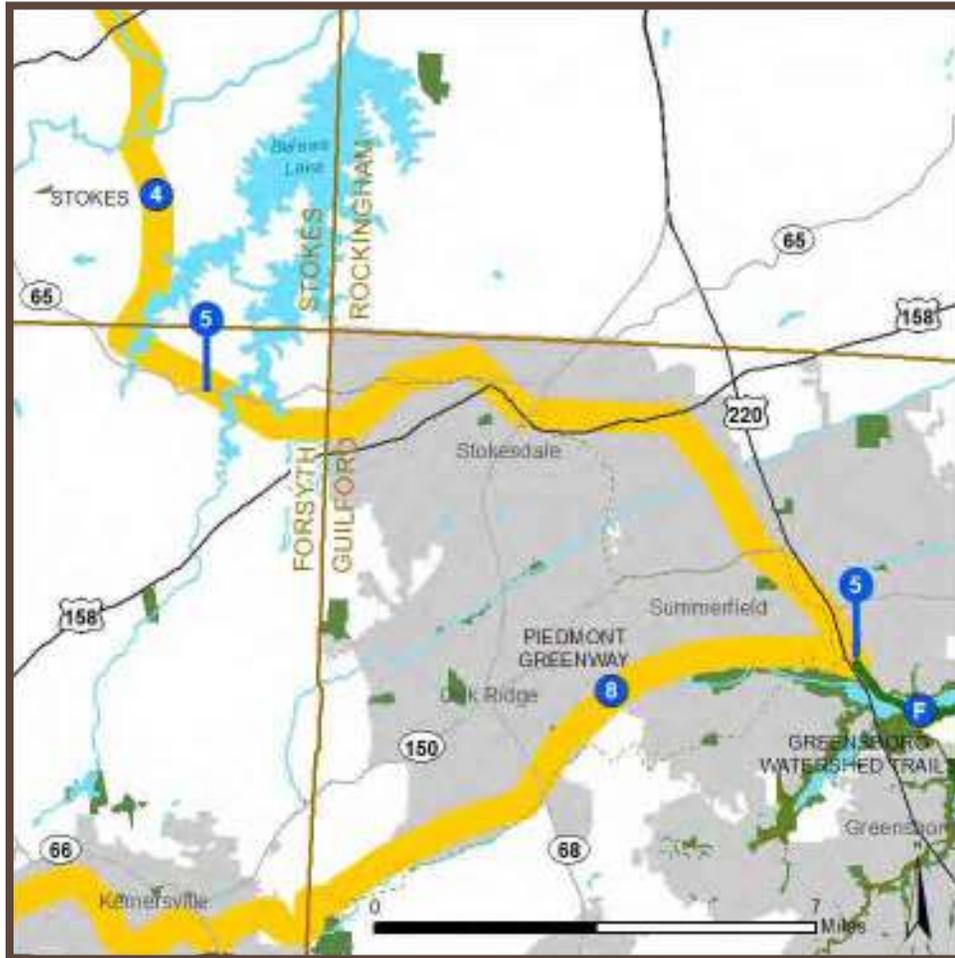
Potential Section Sponsors(s): Stokes County, Forsyth County

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Hanging Rock State Park, Duke Energy (Belews Lake), Danbury, Northwest Piedmont RPO, Winston-Salem MPO, Friends of Sauratown Mountain, Walnut Cove, Friends of the MST, DPR

SEGMENT 5: Atlantic and Yadkin Greenway

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Belevs Lake (Forsyth County)

To: Existing A&Y Greenway northern terminus (Greensboro Watershed Trails)

This segment is the Atlantic & Yadkin Greenway extension from its northern terminus in Greensboro to the railroad trestle over Belevs Lake, owned by Duke Power Company, near the Forsyth County line.

Planning Strategies

After partnering to conduct a feasibility study on the A&Y extension, the Greensboro Urban Area MPO, Guilford County and the Towns of Summerfield and Stokesdale are working together to finalize the alignment and move the trail forward. Further coordination is needed with potential managers of adjoining segments.

Opportunities

The abandoned A&Y Railroad corridor from Stokesdale north to Belevs Lake will accommodate that portion of the trail. Trail partners are actively coordinating to move forward this segment.

	Large Landholdings	Stream/River Corridors	Staff Resources
	Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	Federal Property
x	Local Planning	x Floodplain/Wetlands	x Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

The primary challenge is establishing easements across private property and crossing Belevs Lake. Multiple planning corridors in this area makes coordination and efficient use of resources difficult.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x Coordinating Easements	x Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment	x Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x Floodplain/Wetlands	

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None Constructed

Route Alignment: Atlantic & Yadkin Railroad, sidewalks, private property

Key Properties: Belevs Lake

Approximate Length: 13 miles

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

Potential Section Sponsors(s):

Guilford County, Summerfield, Stokesdale, Forsyth County

Additional Planning Stakeholders:
Greensboro, Duke Energy, Winston-Salem MPO, Greensboro MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

SEGMENT 6: Northwest Forsyth County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Pilot Mountain State Park

To: Winston-Salem City Limits

This segment extends from Pilot Mtn. State Park to the northwestern municipal limits of Winston-Salem near the town of Bethania.

Planning Strategies

The 2012 Forsyth County Greenway Plan and the Piedmont Triad Regional Council's regional trail inventory and plan address the MST. Future planning is needed to finalize the alignment of this segment.

Opportunities

The future trail could utilize the Yadkin River and/or several creeks in the area.

Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

The primary challenge is the lack of planning focus on this segment. Most support for trails and greenways in Forsyth County is within Winston-Salem and Kernersville.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None constructed

Route Alignment: Yadkin River, Private Property

Key Properties: Pilot Mountain State Park, Historic Bethania

Approximate Length: 14 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Forsyth County, Bethania, Surry County, Yadkin County

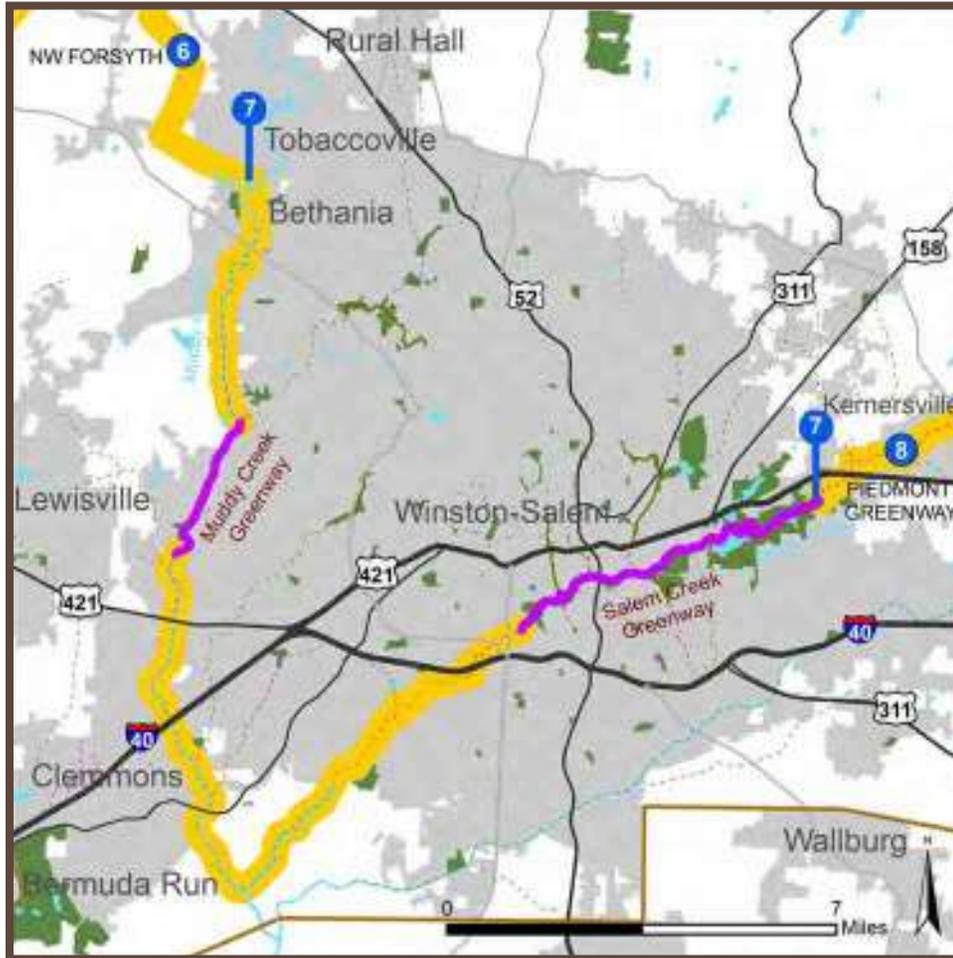
Additional Planning Stakeholders: Tobacoville, Northwest Piedmont RPO, Winston-Salem MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

SEGMENT 7: Winston-Salem

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Northwest Forsyth County near Bethania

To: Future Piedmont Greenway near Kernersville border

This segment includes existing and future paved greenways within Winston-Salem.

Planning Strategies

Winston-Salem has a Greenways Master Plan with priority tiers assigned to future greenways which make up the entirety of the MST in Winston-Salem city limits. There is a potential to leverage the active work of Bethania Trails System.

Opportunities

Winston-Salem has built the Muddy Creek Greenway and the Salem Lake Greenway with short term plans to extend these trails and begin filling in remaining MST gaps.

	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
	Public Land	x	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

While funding is secured for greenway extensions, future design and construction funding will be needed to fill in the remaining funding gaps in southwestern Winston-Salem.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
x	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: Muddy Creek Greenway (2.9 mi), Salem Lake Greenway (6.5 mi)

Route Alignment: Salem Creek, Muddy Creek

Key Properties: None Identified

Approximate Length: 30 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Winston-Salem

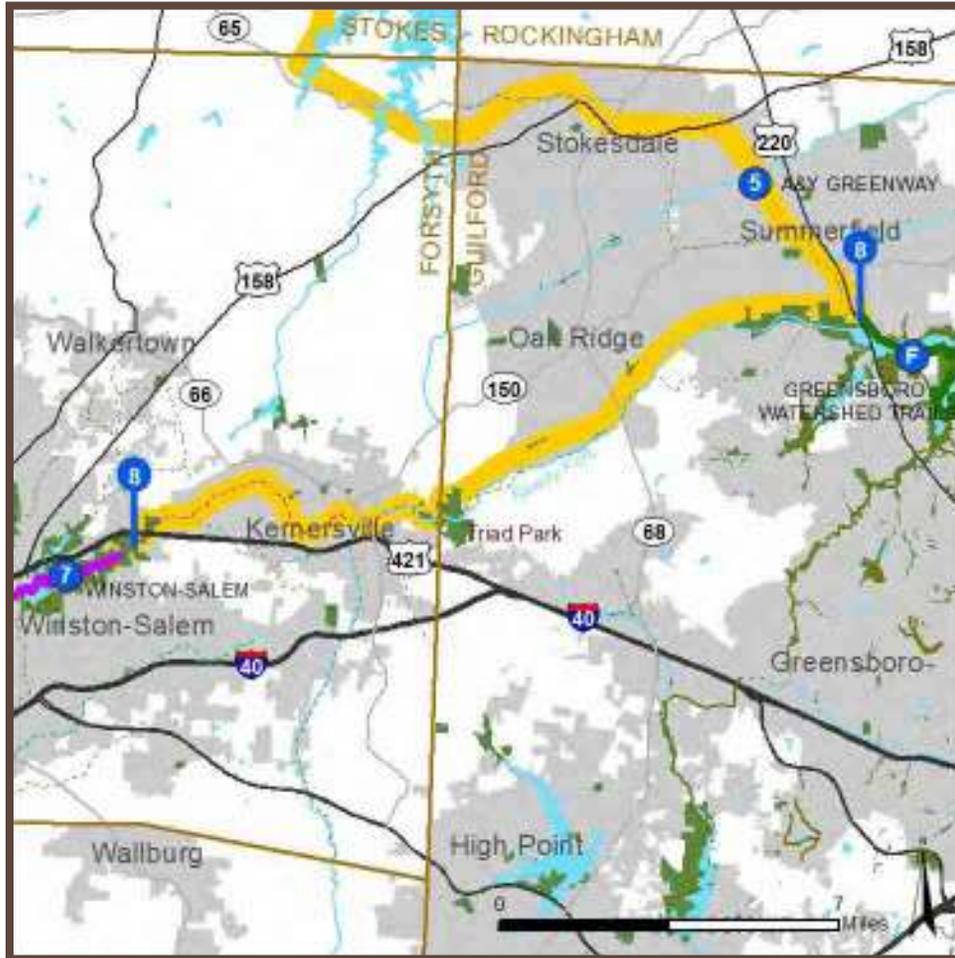
Additional Planning Stakeholders: Lewisville, Clemmons, Bethania, Bermuda Run, Tobaccoville, Winston-Salem MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: Constructed segments include Muddy Creek Greenway, and the Salem Lake Greenway, both maintained by the City of Winston-Salem.

SEGMENT 8: Piedmont Greenway

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Winston-Salem City Limits

To: Greensboro Watershed Trails

The future Piedmont Greenway will travel from Winston-Salem (Salem Lake Greenway) through Kernersville to Triad Park, the town of Oak Ridge and onward to Greensboro to connect with the Greensboro Watershed Trails.

Planning Strategies

The Piedmont Land Conservancy is leading the Piedmont Greenway planning effort, assisting Kernersville, Oak Ridge and Greensboro in implementing the greenway.

Opportunities

Reedy Fork Creek is the primary alignment for the Piedmont Greenway. Local support for the project is strong given it connects the region's two largest cities and their trail networks. Multiple trail partners are actively engaged in moving this segment forward and funding is available. There is support for trails in the counties and municipalities.

	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
x	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Coordinating access on private property is the main challenge towards implementation. The detailed alignment and design will need to address the future I-73.

	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
x	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: Triad Park

Route Alignment: Reedy Creek

Key Properties: Triad Park, Greensboro Watershed Trails

Approximate Length: 19 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Kernersville, Oak Ridge, Greensboro, Guilford County

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Piedmont Land Conservancy, Forsyth County, Guilford County, Winston-Salem MPO, Greensboro MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: None

SEGMENT 9: Upper Haw River

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

Description

From: Greensboro Watershed Trails

To: Alamance County line at the Haw River

This segment extends from the Greensboro Watershed Trails north into Rockingham County along the Haw River Trail to Alamance County. An alternative route could extend from the Greensboro Watershed Trails along Reedy Creek through Guilford County directly to Alamance County intersecting the Haw River Trail.

Planning Strategies

The Piedmont Triad Regional Council completed a trails and greenways plan for Rockingham County. Guilford County is moving forward to extend the Greensboro Watershed Trails towards Alamance County along Reedy Fork Creek.

Opportunities

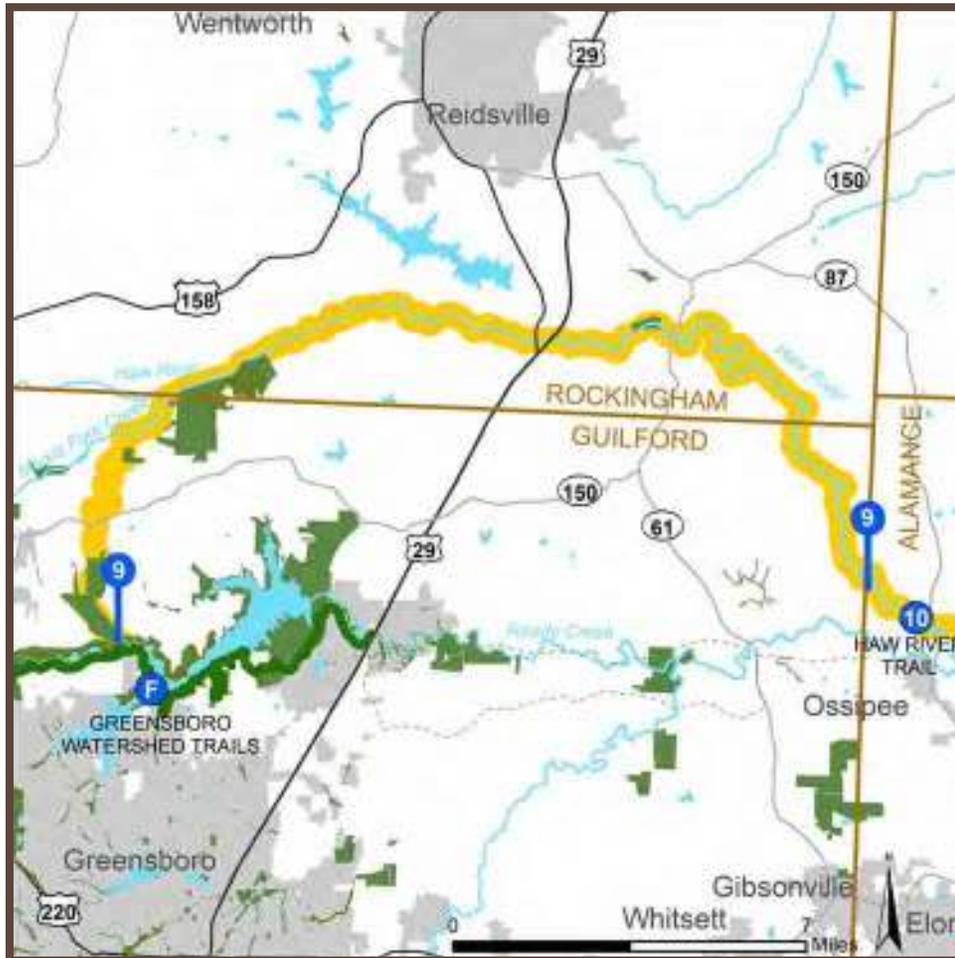
In both Guilford and Rockingham counties, use of the Haw River corridor is an opportunity especially since it would utilize Haw River State Park in Rockingham County. In Guilford County, the ongoing efforts along Reedy Fork Creek are an opportunity. Northeast Park is a major Guilford County park that would accommodate the trail along Reedy Fork Creek. There is also an opportunity to leverage the interest in a connection to this segment among the Piedmont Triad Regional Council and trail groups in Greensboro.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
x	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Rockingham County adopted a Pathways Plan in 2013 that will need funding to implement. The potential Guilford County route along Reedy Fork is moving forward but acquiring easements across private property is a challenge. Multiple corridors in the area makes coordination difficult.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		



Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Segment Details

Approximate Length: 27 miles

Constructed Trails: Greensboro Watershed Trails (Guilford), Haw River State Park (Rockingham) and Northeast Park (Guilford)

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Rockingham County, Guilford County, Haw River State Park

Route Alignment: Haw River (Rockingham) or Reedy Fork (Guilford)

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Greensboro MPO, Haw River Trail Partnership, Friends of the MST, DPR

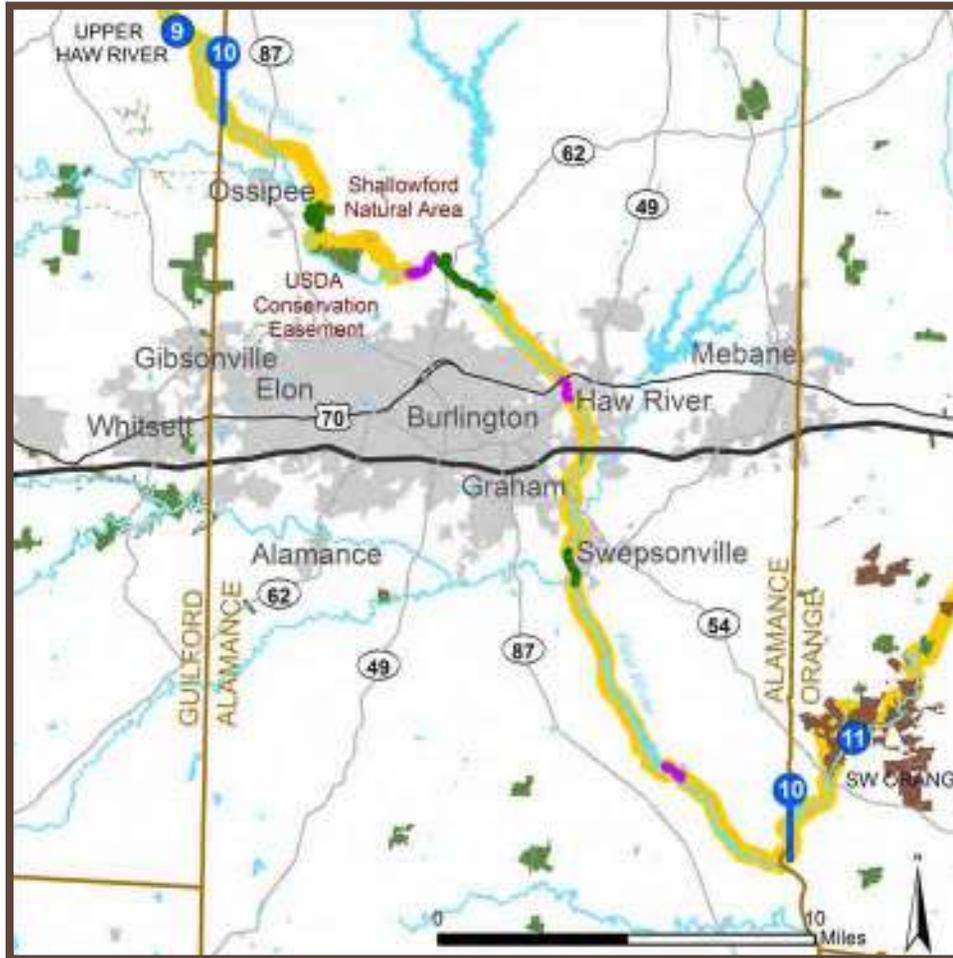
Key Properties: Haw River State Park, Northeast Park

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: Greensboro Watershed Trails (Guilford), maintained by the City of Greensboro.

SEGMENT 10: Haw River Trail

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Alamance County northwest border

To: Orange County

This segment joins the Haw River Trail at the Guilford-Alamance County line and extends south along the Haw River Trail to Cane Creek and follows Cane Creek North into Orange County.

Planning Strategies

The Haw River Trail Coordinator is a dedicated staff position that works with local governments to plan for the Haw River Trail/MST and acquire property and other activities essential to moving the Haw River Trail/MST forward.

Opportunities

The Haw River land and paddle trail is now complete through the extent of Alamance County from Brooks Bridge Paddle Access in Guilford County to the Alamance-Orange County line. Alamance County recently approved a trails plan for the entire county which includes the Haw River Trail/MST as a top priority. Alamance County is in the process of applying for designation of constructed sections of the Haw River Trail.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

The primary challenges are coordinating easements on private property and stream and river crossings.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
x	Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Legend

- MST Status
- Constructed █
- Designated █
- Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) █
- Adjacent Segment #
- Segment Start and End Points #
- County Boundary
- State Park
- Open Space
- Institutional
- Municipal Boundary
- State Boundary
- Interstate #
- NC Route #
- US Route #
- Major Hydrography —
- Proposed Trail —
- Other Trail —

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: Additional portions of the Haw River Trail are constructed in Saxapahaw, the Town of Haw River (0.73 mi), and north of Burlington (3.8 mi)

Route Alignment: Haw River

Key Properties: None Identified

Approximate Length: 35 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): [Alamance County](#), [Burlington](#), [Ossipee](#), [Haw River](#), [Graham](#), [Swepsonville](#), [Saxapahaw](#)

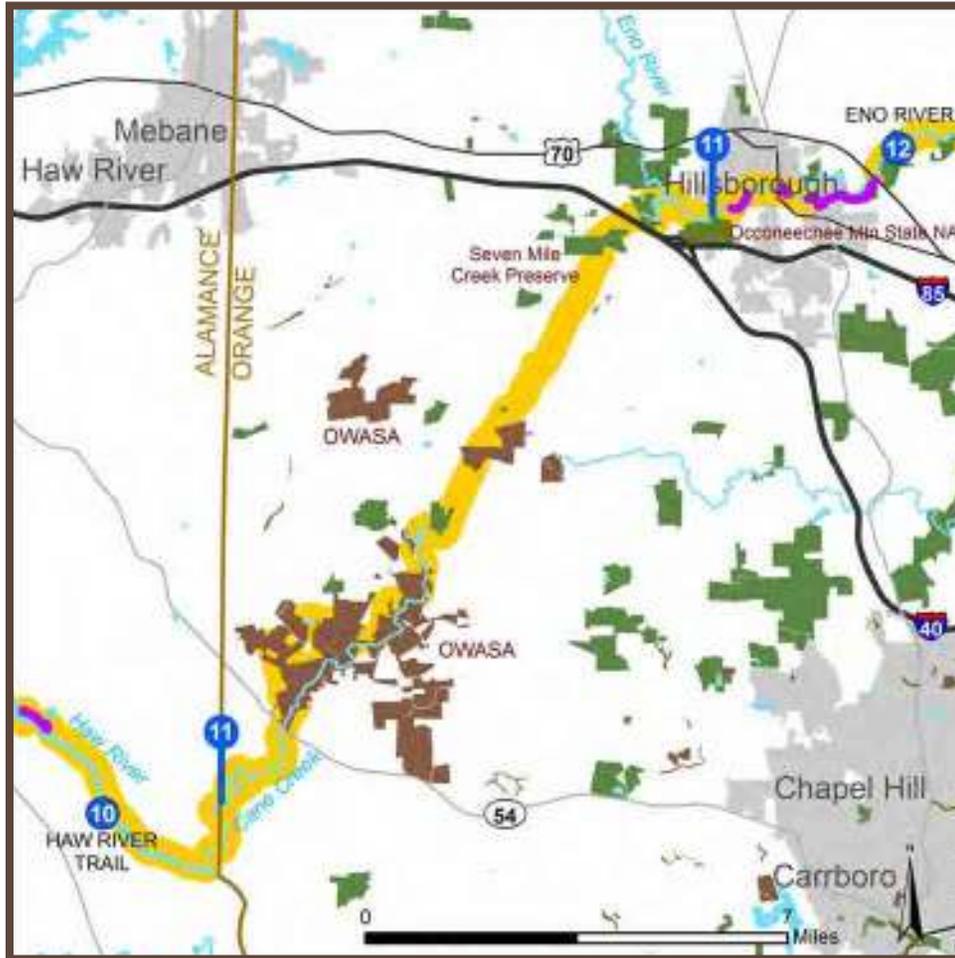
Additional Planning Stakeholders: [Haw River Trail Partnership](#), [Burlington-Graham MPO](#), [Friends of the MST](#), [DPR](#), [Alamance Task Force](#)

Designated Segments within Planned Segment: Three segments of the [Haw River Trail](#) have been designated; Great Bend Park at Glencoe to Stoney Creek Marina (3mi), [Shallowford Natural Area](#), [Haw River Trail](#) (1mi), Swepsonville River Park (1mi)

SEGMENT 11: Southwest Orange County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Alamance County line

To: Hillsborough (I-40/I-85 south of Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area)

This segment runs from the Haw River Trail at the Alamance/Orange County line to the Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area just near Hillsborough. The trail is undeveloped with a considerable amount of public land available at the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) and the Seven Mile Creek Preserve.

Planning Strategies

The Orange County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (adopted November 2014) addresses the current status of the MST and the need for detailed alignment planning in Orange County. Current planning in Orange County is focused on completing gaps between Hillsborough and Durham County. Planning for the trail on OWASA property will occur in the future.

Opportunities

OWASA landholdings and Seven Mile Creek offer future route opportunities. Completion of this segment is an opportunity to connect Eno River State Park, the Hillsborough River Walk, Occoneechee Mountain, and Seven Mile Creek Preserve.

Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Local planning is needed to identify the alignment between OWASA property and the Seven Mile Creek Preserve. How to best cross I-85/I-40 is another planning consideration.

Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
Major Roadway Crossing		Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None

Route Alignment: Cane Creek/OWASA

Key Properties: OWASA

Approximate Length: 19 miles

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: None

Potential Section Sponsors(s):

Orange County, Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA)

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Triangle Area RPO, Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

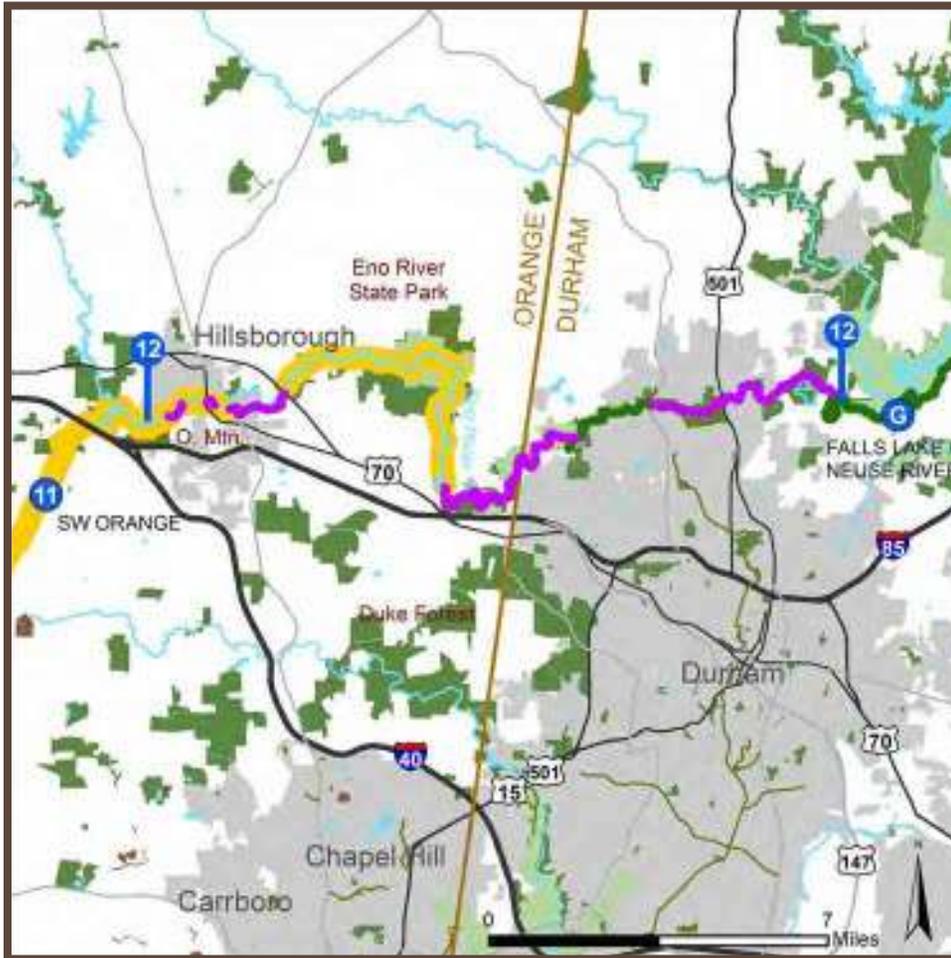
SEGMENT 12: Eno River

Planning Priority

Near-Term

Mid-Term

Long-Term



Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Description

From: Oconeechee Mountain State Natural Area (Hillsborough)

To: Falls Lake/Neuse River

This segment follows the Eno River from the Oconeechee Mountain State Natural Area in Hillsborough through Hillsborough, Oconeechee Speedway and sections of the Eno River State Park to join the MST at Falls Lake.

Planning Strategies

Durham is working to complete minor trail gaps. Hillsborough is moving forward with later phases of their River Walk. Orange County's priority is completing the trail between Hillsborough and Durham County. Land protection specialists with DPR are working with prioritized needs to make connections within the State Parks system.

Opportunities

Much of the remaining trail to be completed in Orange County can be accommodated within Eno River State Park. Trail partners are actively coordinating to complete this priority segment. Friends of the MST Eno River Task Force is ready to assist in building remaining sections of the trail within the park.

x Large Landholdings	x Stream/River Corridors	x Staff Resources
x Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	Federal Property
x Local Planning	Floodplain/Wetlands	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Eno River crossings may be needed, including a safe way to cross at or near Pleasant Green Road. Crossing US 70 is an identified obstacle.

x Stream/River Crossings	x Coordinating Easements	Local Planning
Detailed Alignment	x Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
x Major Roadway Crossing	Floodplain/Wetlands	

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: [Oconeechee Mtn. State Natural Area](#), [Oconeechee Speedway Trail](#), [Hillsborough River Walk](#), [West Point on the Eno](#), [Horseshoe Park](#)

Route Alignment: Eno River

Key Properties: Eno River State Park, Oconeechee State Natural Area, Oconeechee Speedway

Approximate Length: 26 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): [Durham City/County](#), [Hillsborough, Orange County](#), [Eno River State Park](#)

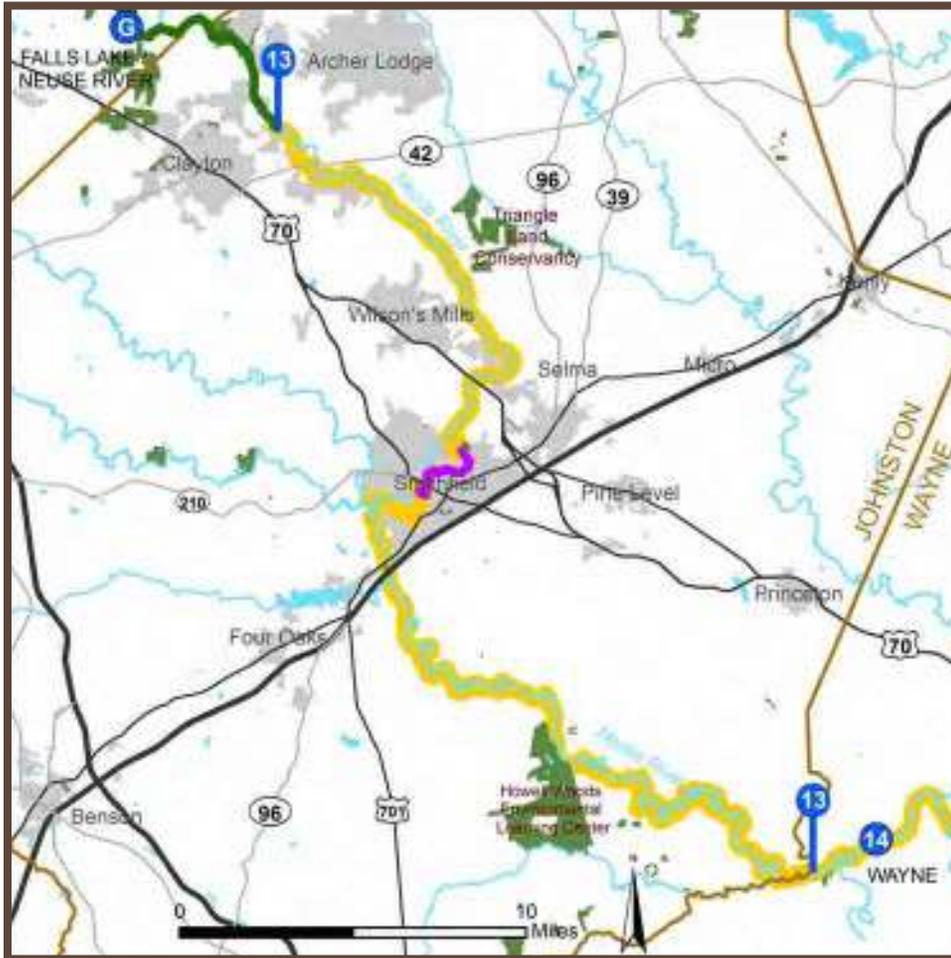
Additional Planning Stakeholders: [Eno River Association](#), [Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO](#), [Friends of the MST](#), [DPR](#)

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: Portions of trail within [Eno River State Park](#) in Durham County

SEGMENT 13: Johnston County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Clayton Riverwalk terminus in Clayton

To: Wayne County

This segment will include an extension of the Clayton Riverwalk in Clayton to connect to the Smithfield River Walk. From Smithfield, a trail will continue to Wayne County along the Neuse River.

Planning Strategies

Prioritize completion of the connection between Clayton and Smithfield.

Opportunities

The Neuse River Corridor is the preferred alignment throughout Johnston County. Strong public involvement and support around the Neuse River Greenway, Clayton Riverwalk and Sam's Branch Greenway is helping to build momentum to extend the greenway southward. Forming potential partnerships and expanded marketing around interests in paddling, OHV/ ATV use, and camping could help to move this segment forward. Triangle Greenways Council is actively working to conserve property for the trail.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors		Staff Resources
	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Political support and additional planning resources are needed to move the Clayton to Smithfield segment forward in the mid-term and the Smithfield to Wayne County section forward in the long-term.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
x	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands		

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: [Smithfield's Neuse River Walk \(2.8 mi\)](#)

Route Alignment: Neuse River

Key Properties: [Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center](#)

Approximate Length: 52 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s): [Johnston County, Clayton, Smithfield](#)

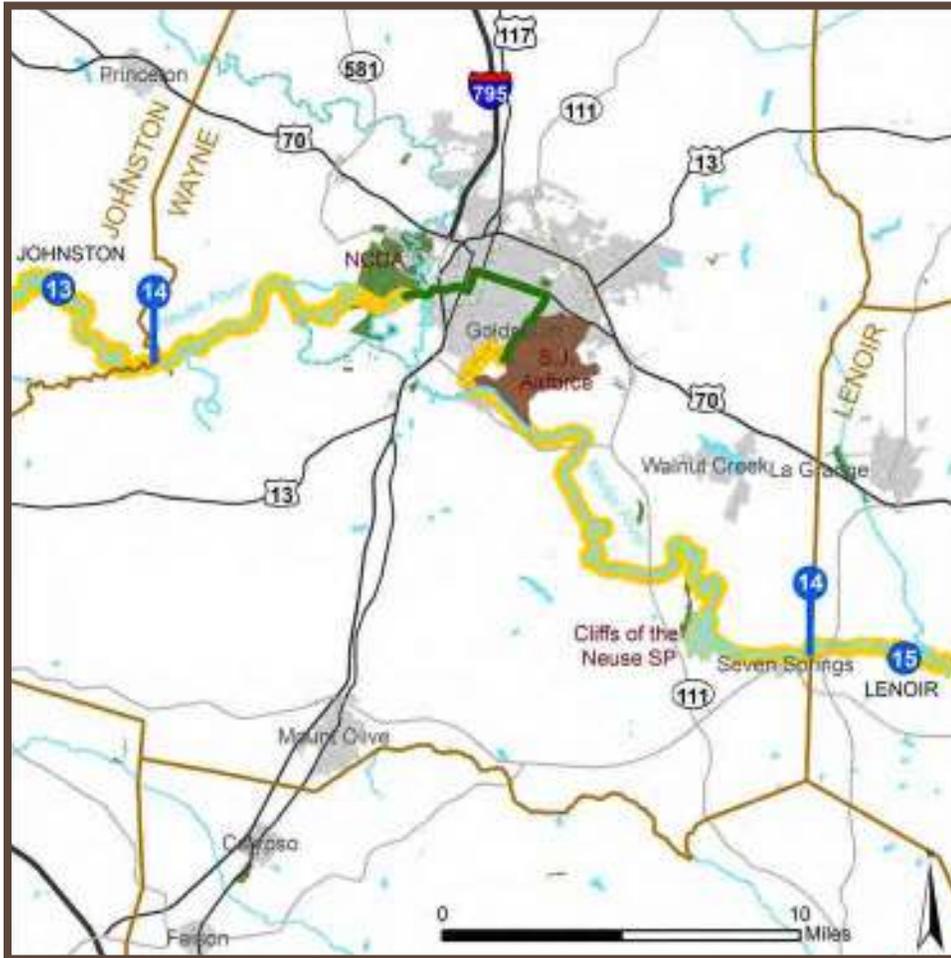
Additional Planning Stakeholders: [Wilson's Mills, Selma, Capital Area MPO, Upper Coastal Plain RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR, Bentonville Battle Grounds, Triangle Greenways Council](#)

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: None

SEGMENT 14: Wayne County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| MST Status | County Boundary | Interstate |
| Constructed | State Park | NC Route |
| Designated | Open Space | US Route |
| Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer) | Institutional | Major Hydrography |
| Adjacent Segment | Municipal Boundary | Proposed Trail |
| Segment Start and End Points | State Boundary | Other Trail |

Description

From: Johnston County

To: Lenoir County

This segment follows the Neuse River in Wayne County between Johnston County and Lenoir County.

Planning Strategies

The Goldsboro MPO recently completed a Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenways Master Plan which depicts the planned MST route through Goldsboro. Trail partners are eager to move the remaining segments of the trail forward in Wayne County outside of Goldsboro.

Opportunities

The Neuse River corridor is the planned alignment for the MST throughout all of Wayne County. Several large properties could be helpful for trail alignments including the NC Department of Agriculture Cherry Research Farm, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base and the Cliffs of the Neuse State Park. Access points for the paddle trail along the Neuse River may be used to provide access to the MST.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
x	Public Land	x	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Wetlands and river crossings are particular challenges in this segment.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements		Local Planning
	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands		

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: Goldsboro Urban MST (6.8 mi)

Approximate Length: 39 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s):

Route Alignment: Neuse River, Urban sidewalk MST

Wayne County, Goldsboro

Key Properties: NC Department of Agriculture Cherry Research Farm, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and the Cliffs of the Neuse State Park

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, NCDA Cherry Research Farm, Cliffs of the Neuse State Park, Friends of Wayne County Greenways, Goldsboro MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR,

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: Goldsboro On-Street MST

SEGMENT 15: Lenoir County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

Description

From: Wayne County

To: Craven County

This segment travels along the Neuse River from the Wayne/Lenoir County line to Craven County passing through downtown Kinston in the middle of Lenoir County.

Planning Strategies

The Neuse River is the planned corridor within Lenoir County. This route will incorporate Kinston's Promenade and connect to the planned MST along the Neuse River in Wayne and Craven counties. Kinston is moving forward with the Promenade, a paved urban trail in downtown Kinston. Outside of Kinston, implementation assistance is needed to move forward planning for the trail along the Neuse River.

Opportunities

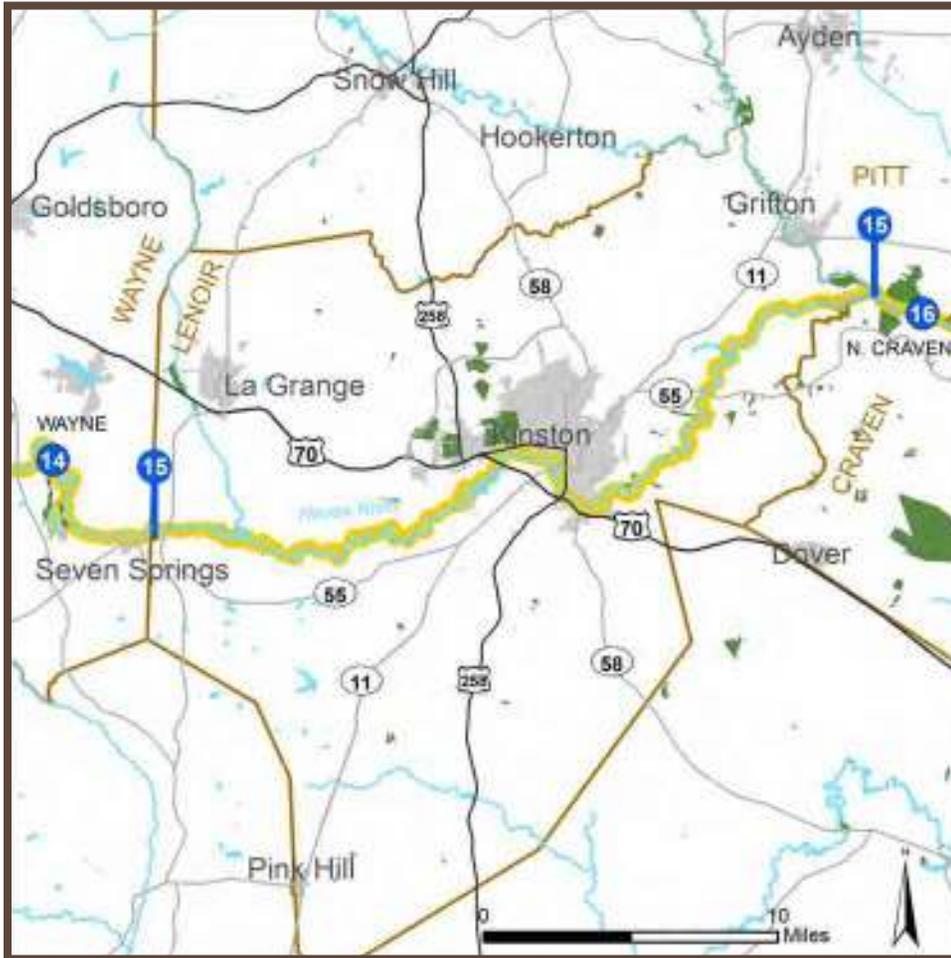
The Neuse River provides a natural feature for the trail alignment to follow. There are large properties throughout the planned corridor, which could potentially result in less coordination to acquire easements for the trail. Kinston and Lenoir County have planning resources to move the trail forward and are actively working on sections. Friends of the MST has expressed a commitment to organize a task force to build and maintain trail.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
	Public Land		Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
x	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

The primary challenge is planning for the MST outside of Kinston in Lenoir County. Planning in this area has not yet identified route constraints and work with private property owners has not commenced.

x	Stream/River Crossings	x	Coordinating Easements	x	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment		Urbanized Corridor		Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands		



Legend

MST Status

Constructed

Designated

Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)

Adjacent Segment

Segment Start and End Points

County Boundary

State Park

Open Space

Institutional

Municipal Boundary

State Boundary

Interstate

NC Route

US Route

Major Hydrography

Proposed Trail

Other Trail

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None

Route Alignment: Neuse River

Key Properties: None

Approximate Length: 39 miles

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: None

Potential Section Sponsors(s):

Lenoir County/Kinston

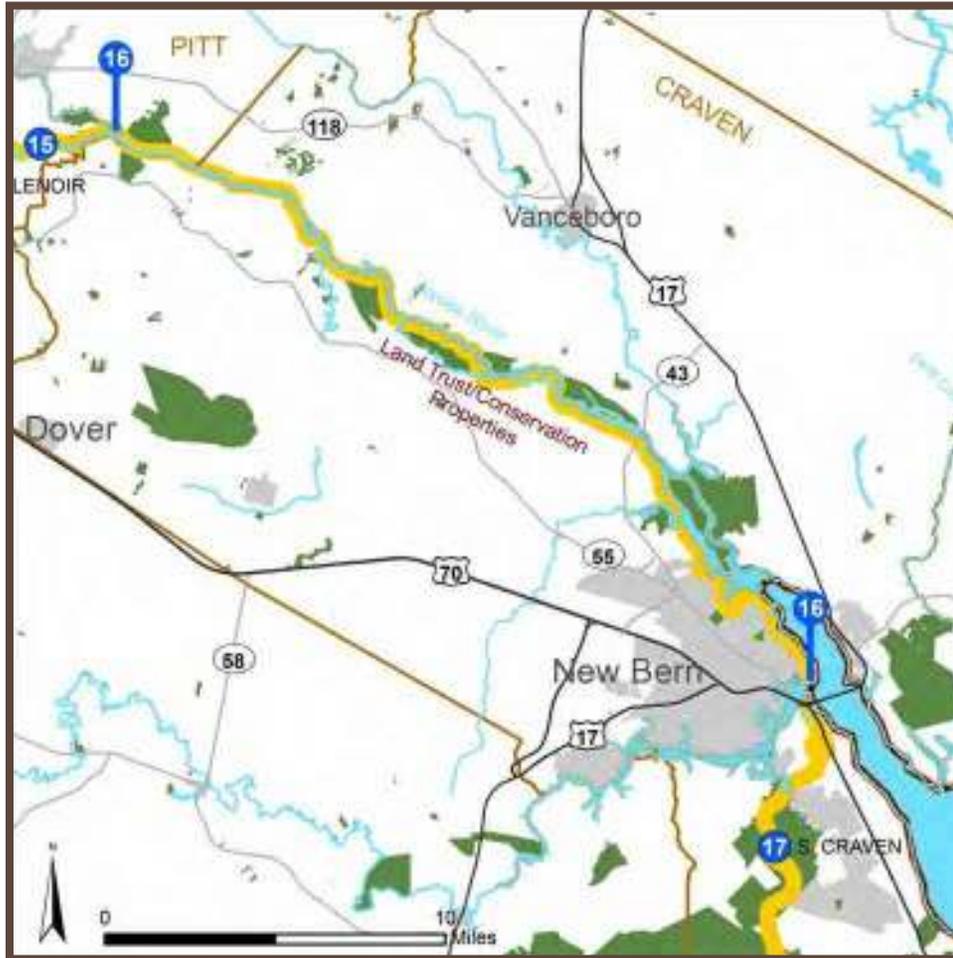
Additional Planning Stakeholders:

NCDOT, Eastern Carolina RPO, Cooperative Extension, Friends of the MST, DPR

SEGMENT 16: Northern Craven County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Lenoir County

To: Bridge Creek (Creek south of New Bern)

This segment runs along the Neuse River from Lenoir County to Bridge Creek just south of New Bern.

Planning Strategies

While the Neuse River offers a potential alignment with numerous conservation properties, the alignment may need to be shifted north or south due to wetlands and site conditions. Planning support among local staff is needed to finalize the alignment.

Opportunities

Multiple conservation properties along the Neuse River could potentially accommodate the trail. The MST could be an urban trail in New Bern using sidewalks and on-street bicycle facilities. Most of the planned corridor is intersected by large parcels, which could facilitate coordination of easements. New Bern and Craven County have planning staff and trails are a public priority.

x	Large Landholdings	x	Stream/River Corridors	x	Staff Resources
x	Public Land	x	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network		Federal Property
	Local Planning		Floodplain/Wetlands		Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

While the Neuse River corridor is an opportunity, the wetlands in the corridor may also make trail construction difficult.

x	Stream/River Crossings		Coordinating Easements	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment	x	Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x	Floodplain/Wetlands	

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None

Approximate Length: 31 miles

Route Alignment: Neuse River, New Bern bicycle/pedestrian network

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Craven County, New Bern,

Key Properties: Conservation properties through NC Clean Water Land Trust, NC Coastal Land Trust & Ducks Unlimited

Additional Planning Stakeholders: Down East RPO, New Bern Area MPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: None

SEGMENT 17: Southern Craven County

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Bridge Creek (Creek south of New Bern)

To: Carteret County

This segment runs from Bridge Creek south of New Bern to Carteret County, traveling primarily through Croatan National Forest.

Planning Strategies

A regional MST plan addresses this segment as does a local parks and recreation plan. A county parks and recreation plan is underway. Continued coordination is needed among segment managers and stakeholders to move the trail forward in this segment.

Opportunities

Croatan National Forest's large landholdings can accommodate the MST. There is planning staff to support trail implementation at the municipal and county levels.

x	Large Landholdings	Stream/River Corridors	Staff Resources
x	Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	x Federal Property
	Local Planning	Floodplain/Wetlands	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

Staff turnover at Croatan National Forest has made moving the MST forward difficult. Wetlands and limited right-of-way along US 70 are also challenges for accommodating the trail in this segment. The Cherry Point Marine Corps property limits alignments to the south. The future Havelock Bypass will need to be considered as the trail corridor is refined.

	Stream/River Crossings	x Coordinating Easements	x Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment	Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x Floodplain/Wetlands	

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Segment Details

Constructed Trails: None. The Eastern terminus of the trail is at the constructed Neusiok Trail, which is part of Segment 18.

Route Alignment:
Croatan National Forest

Key Properties: Croatan National Forest

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: None

Approximate Length: 36 miles

Potential Section Sponsors(s):
[Craven County](#), [New Bern](#), [Havelock](#), [Croatan National Forest](#)

Additional Planning Stakeholders:
[Down East RPO](#), [New Bern Area MPO](#), [Friends of the MST](#), [DPR](#)

SEGMENT 18: Carteret / Ocracoke

Planning Priority

Near-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



Description

From: Craven County

To: Cedar Island Ferry to the Outer Banks

This segment travels from Craven County through a small portion of the Croatan National Forest along the Neusiok Trail through Carteret County to the NCDOT Cedar Island Ferry Terminal.

Planning Strategies

A regional plan addresses this segment of the MST and a parks and recreation plan is currently underway. Future planning is needed to determine the exact alignment of the trail in Carteret County.

Opportunities

Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge and Croatan National Forest can both accommodate portions of the MST in Carteret County. Carteret County, Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge, and Croatan National Forest currently all maintain other trail and park facilities.

x	Large Landholdings	Stream/River Corridors	Staff Resources
x	Public Land	Sidewalk/Bicycle Network	x Federal Property
	Local Planning	Floodplain/Wetlands	Abandoned RR ROW

Challenges

The large industrial agricultural operations will make determining the detailed alignment a primary challenge.

	Stream/River Crossings	Coordinating Easements	Local Planning
x	Detailed Alignment	Urbanized Corridor	Federal Property
	Major Roadway Crossing	x Floodplain/Wetlands	x Private Property

Legend

MST Status	County Boundary	Interstate
Constructed	State Park	NC Route
Designated	Open Space	US Route
Planned Route (1/4 mi. buffer)	Institutional	Major Hydrography
Adjacent Segment	Municipal Boundary	Proposed Trail
Segment Start and End Points	State Boundary	Other Trail

Segment Details

Approximate Length: 81 miles

Constructed Trails: Neusiok Trail (20 mi) (Croatan National Forest)

Potential Section Sponsors(s): Carteret County, Croatan National Forest, Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge

Route Alignment: Federal property, private property

Additional Planning Stakeholders: NCDOT, NC Ferry System, Carteret County Wildlife Club, Down East RPO, Friends of the MST, DPR

Key Properties: Croatan National Forest, Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge

Designated Segments within Planning Segment: Neusiok Trail (Croatan National Forest)

Planning Segment Prioritization

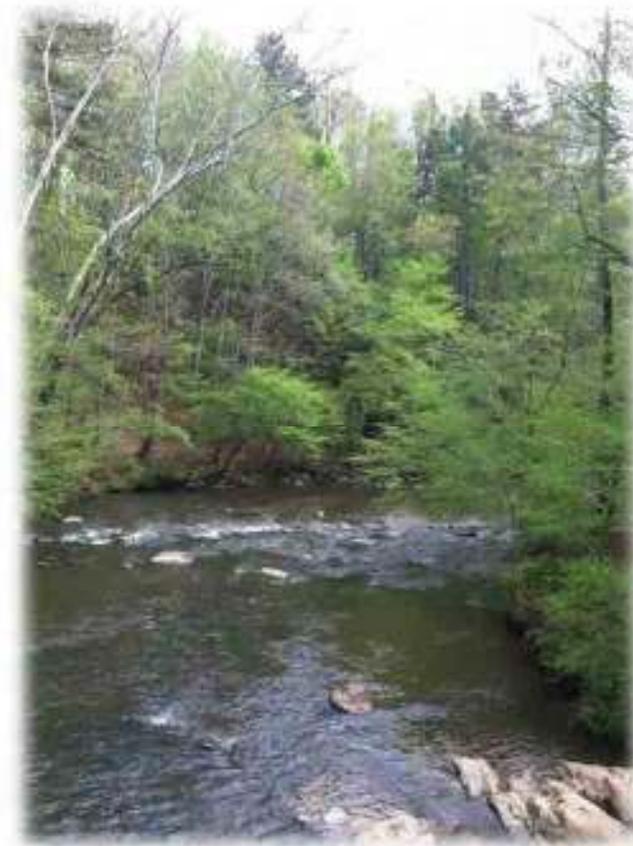
A goal of the master plan is to prioritize Planning Segments for further work toward construction and designation. A transparent approach was developed to consistently measure the segments using available information, input from scoping meetings held with potential sponsors within each segment, comments received from the public review of the draft master plan, and input from the DPR. This methodology can continually be updated to reflect changing conditions across the segments of the trail.

An explanation of the criteria and measures used to prioritize the Planning Segments is provided in Table 1.

The criteria were selected for their ability to capture variables that would affect MST implementation in each segment and are based on past experience in trail planning and discussions with the DPR. The measures are designed to award the most points to segments that are either currently moving forward or have a high implementation potential. This will ensure that resources can be targeted toward completing the MST in the most efficient manner and continued successes can be leveraged to keep development of the MST moving forward. None of the criteria are weighted, giving equal importance (up to 10 points) to each of the 13 metrics for a potential total of 130 points.

The best available information was used to provide a quantitative measure for each criterion. Public comments on the draft plan were used to further inform the criteria and measures. The results of the prioritization process are provided in Table 2. Details about how each segment was scored are provided in Appendix C.

While this approach is a useful tool for focusing resources and understanding current challenges, it should be noted that most challenges are worth overcoming for the experience and ultimate vision of the complete MST.



River view from the MST

Table 1. Explanation of Criteria and Measures used to Prioritize Planning Segments

Criteria	Metric	Basis
Percent of trail within Planning Segment that is constructed or designated	67 - 100% = 10 34 - 66% = 5 1 - 33% = 2 None = 0	Existing constructed or designated trails demonstrate local MST implementation support. Prioritizing existing and designated segments will also build upon the existing MST network and eventually close MST gaps.
Level of planning (local/regional, adopted alignments)	Adopted alignment= 10 Local or trail-specific plan = 5 Regional plan = 2 No plan in place = 0	Planning for the MST is awarded points since planning is key to identifying a detailed alignment and moving the trail forward with property easements and/or property acquisition and trail construction. An adopted alignment scores the most points given a clear path is determined for moving forward. Local plans and MST-specific plans receive the next level of points since local communities are responsible for constructing trails and since MST-specific plans include recommended routes at the local level. Regional plans are broader in scale but still demonstrate a high level of planning support for implementing the trail. Each segment is awarded the highest level of points available.
Anticipated construction activity	Some MST construction activity is anticipated in the next: 12 months - 2 years = 10 3-5 years = 5 6+ year = 2 Unknown = 0	Upcoming construction plans demonstrate local support and that trail planning and construction is a current priority. This measure differs from the "timeframe" measure in that it focuses on upcoming construction for segments of any size while the "timeframe" measure focuses on completing the entire segment.
Timeframe for completion of the entire segment	Short-term (0-5 years) = 10 Mid-term (6-10 years) = 5 Long-term (11+ years) = 2 Unknown = 0	Greater priority is assigned to segments that might be completed sooner rather than later. This will help close gaps along the MST and create a continuous network throughout the state. This measure differs from upcoming construction in that a segment may have upcoming construction plans within a segment without completing the entire segment.

Criteria	Metric	Basis
Connectivity	Completes existing MST gap = 10 Connects to existing MST, but no gap closed = 5 Does not close gap or connect to existing MST = 0	Completing gaps in the MST network is a priority given the desire to complete the entire network and to create continuous segments for people to use for longer lengths. Continuous segments will also build demand for those segments to eventually be extended. The highest level of points is awarded to segments that will close gaps between Designated Segments. A lower level of points is awarded to segments that are connected to existing Designated Segments. The smallest amount of points are awarded to segments not connected to Designated Segments. Points were not awarded for closing gaps between small designated sub-segments within a Planning Segment - only at segment start and end points.
Percent of corridor with public land available for potential MST	67 - 100% = 10 34 - 66% = 5 1 - 33% = 2 None = 0	Building the MST on public land has helped move some segments forward. Greater points are awarded to segments where public land is available near the planned route to potentially accommodate the trail. Public land includes but is not limited to state parks, agriculture research properties, gamelands, wildlife refuges, military bases and conservation properties. The percentages were estimated using the approximate amount of public land intersecting or adjacent to the 1/4 mile planned route buffer.
Large parcels (100+ acres) near the proposed corridor	Approximate portion of the Planning Segment intersecting large (100+ acre) parcels: Over 2/3 of segment = 10 1/3 to 2/3 of route = 5 < 1/3 of route = 2 Few to no large parcels = 0	Working with fewer large landholders to build the trail rather than many small landholders has been successful in some cases. This criteria awards points for segments with fewer large landholders to reflect that success. County parcel data was used to identify large property owners (100+ acres) intersecting the 1/4 mile planned route buffer. These parcels were mapped with the planned route buffer and a rough estimate was used to award points.
Implementation challenges (hydrology issues, stream crossings, major transportation facility crossings, hunting, etc.)	No challenges = 10 Minimal challenges = 5 Moderate challenges = 2 Significant challenges = 0	Implementation challenges were discussed during the scoping meetings held with municipal and county governments in the fall of 2014 as part of the master planning process and during the public review of the draft master plan. Segments with fewer challenges identified receive more points. Potential implementation challenges include hydrology issues, stream crossings, major transportation facility crossings, hunting, opposition from stakeholders and elected officials, etc. Funding support and private property challenges are not included under this criterion since other criteria capture these issues.

Criteria	Metric	Basis
Level of organized support (engineering, surveying, parks staff, staff for planning, acquisition and/or negotiating easements)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	Organized support is critical for planning for the trail and securing easements or acquiring property for trail implementation. Greater points are awarded for higher staff availability and organized support for trail implementation.
Funding resources available (dedicated funding source in place)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	Funding resources are necessary to plan, build and maintain the trail. Greater points are awarded when communities have funding available that could be used for trail construction and when section sponsors have successfully leveraged state funding sources.
Trail maintenance commitment (Are municipal, county or trails groups in place to construct and/or maintain facilities?)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	Segments with municipal, county or trail associations capable of maintaining trails receive the greatest level of points since they have the maintenance staff and/or volunteers available to construct, maintain and manage the trail.
Demonstrated demand for trail (support for recreation bonds, active interest groups, priority in local/regional plans)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 Unknown = 0	Local resident and political support is important for moving the trail forward, especially when implementation challenges are present. Points were awarded for this criteria based on the degree of resident, organization, and/or elected official support noted at scoping meetings or otherwise demonstrated.
Potential economic impact of trail (proximity to urbanized area, proximity to other attractions, connections to other trails)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 Unknown = 0	A potential positive economic impact associated with the trail can help to build support for trail completion. This qualitative measure is based on connections and proximity to developed areas, attractions, and other trails. This measure also considers the 2014 County Tier ranking as established by the NC Department of Commerce. While trails will provide a positive economic impact regardless of geography, counties that have a low tier ranking may see a more significant impact to their overall economy versus those with a high tier ranking.

Table 2. Prioritized Planning Segments

Planning Segment Name	Approximate Length	From	To
Near-Term Planning Priorities			
1 - Cherokee to Balsam Gap	24 mi	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation Lands
2 - Northeast Wilkes	25 mi	Stone Mountain State Park	Surry County
5 - Atlantic & Yadkin Greenway	13 mi	Belews Lake	Greensboro Watershed Trails
7 - Winston-Salem	30 mi	Northwest Forsyth County near Bethania	Future Piedmont Greenway near Kernersville border
10 - Haw River Trail	35 mi	Alamance County northwest border	Orange County
11 - Southwest Orange County	19 mi	Alamance County	Hillsborough
12 - Eno River	26 mi	Hillsborough (Oconeechee Mtn)	Falls Lake/Neuse River
14 - Wayne County	39 mi	Johnston County	Lenoir County
Mid-Term Planning Priorities			
3 - Yadkin River (Yadkin/Surry)	34 mi	Wilkes County	Pilot Mountain State Park
8 - Piedmont Greenway	19 mi	Winston-Salem City Limits	Greensboro Watershed Trails
13 - Johnston County	52 mi	Neuse River Greenway terminus in Clayton	Wayne County
15 - Lenoir County	39 mi	Wayne County	Craven County
17 - Southern Craven County	36 mi	Bridge Creek (South of New Bern)	Carteret County

Planning Segment Name	Approximate Length	From	To
Long-term Planning Priorities			
4 - Stokes County	32 mi	Hanging Rock State Park	Belews Lake
6 - Northwest Forsyth County	14 mi	Pilot Mountain State Park	Winston-Salem City Limits
9 - Upper Haw River	27 mi	Greensboro Watershed Trails	Alamance County Haw River Trail
16 - Northern Craven County	31 mi	Lenoir County	Bridge Creek (South of New Bern)
18 - Carteret/Ocracoke	81 mi	Craven County	Cedar Island Ferry to the Outer Banks

Geography of the MST Recommendations

It is expected that the descriptions of each segment, prioritization approach and results will serve as a tool that trail partners can use to identify strategies for moving segments toward implementation. Scores and ranks can be adjusted based on progress. Potential strategies to move each segment forward are presented in this section, along with some overall insights from this process.

Segment 1: Cherokee to Balsam Gap

- Determine resources needed to get trail construction moving forward based on plans currently in place.
- Finalize agreements with trail partners to move trail development forward for this segment.
- Determine options for potential funding sources to move trail development forward for this segment.
- Coordinate with local stakeholders and use the strong interest in completing this final gap of the MST in the mountains as a catalyst to getting this segment moving forward.

Segment 2: Northeast Wilkes County

- Provide assistance and information on coordinating MST designation of all newly constructed trail miles.
- Leverage success of trail miles built to facilitate continued development of this MST segment.
- Determine tools and options to deal with lack of large tracts available for the trail.
- Determine tools and options to address stream crossings for this segment.
- Work with the local resources of the EVTA and the Friends of MST in this area to continue to assist on developing new trail miles for this segment.

Segment 3: Yadkin River (Yadkin/Surry)

- Use the momentum generated from the development of the Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan to help move planning, development, and construction of the trail forward. This can be achieved through continued public outreach and visibility for the project.
- Work with local staff to develop trails on any municipal lands that may be within the segment. This can serve as a catalyst and help lead to development of other trails.
- Determine tools and options for dealing with road crossings, railroad crossings, and river crossings.
- With limited staff resources for planning and implementation of the trail, work with local groups such as the EVTA to help develop more trail miles along this segment.
- Support coordination among local staff, and community groups and/or non-profit organizations to provide maintenance of the trail.
- Continue to inform the public, and elected officials of the benefits of trails and the MST to tourism and economic development. This is already understood given the location in the Yadkin Valley area, and this can be helpful in gaining support for trail development.



A young hiker enjoying the trail

Segment 4: Stokes County

- Complete the updates to the Stokes County Comprehensive Plan, and Parks and Recreation Plan. Use the plans to incorporate MST-related goals and provide implementation strategies to move the trail forward.
- With the funds for the Comprehensive Plan coming from a Healthy Initiatives Grant, continue to stress the benefits of trails and outdoor recreation from a health and wellness perspective.
- Determine the tools and options for dealing with stream crossings and road crossings for this segment.
- Pursue follow up funds from the Healthy Initiatives Grant to possibly develop and construct trails as outlined in the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Work with large tract property owners to explain the benefits of conservation easements and how to establish them on their property in order to acquire the needed land for the trail.
- Coordinate between local staff and active community and/or non-profit organizations to provide support for implementation, and maintenance for the trail.
- Promote the health, tourism, and economic development benefits of the trail to continue to gain support for development of the MST.



A bridge along the MST in the Piedmont

Segment 5: Atlantic & Yadkin Greenway

- Provide assistance and information on coordinating MST designation of all newly-constructed trail miles.
- Coordinate efforts between Guilford and Forsyth counties, Stokesdale and Summerfield.
- Determine tools and options to deal with lack of large tracts and public land available for the trail.
- Determine tools and options to assist in acquiring easements for the trail.
- Leverage the current success and popularity of trail use and blueway use in the area to keep momentum strong for completion of MST segments.

Segment 6: Northwest Forsyth County

- Determine tools and resources needed to implement the regional and local/county plans for the MST for this segment.
- Given that more of the focus is on higher priority gaps in Forsyth County, using tools, resources and lessons learned from developing other segments can be helpful to develop this segment when it is time.
- Determine tools and options to deal with a lack of public land along this segment.
- Work with property owners to explain the benefits of conservation easements and how to establish them on their property in to acquire the needed land for the trail.
- With staff support in place in Forsyth County, determine if other community resources are also available to aid in implementation, development, and maintenance of the trail.

- With some funding available in Forsyth County, determine ways that funds can be leveraged through grants and other sources to maximize trail budgets.
- Determine how to increase awareness and support for trails and the MST in the unincorporated areas of Forsyth County. This could be done through increased information, web-based information, social media and public forums on trails and their overall benefits.

Segment 7: Winston-Salem

- Provide information and assistance on getting the portions of the trail that are constructed designated as official MST segments.
- Coordinate with local staff to see what resources may be available to keep construction moving forward after Tier 1 projects are completed.
- Determine tools and options to address road crossings and stream crossings for this segment.
- Determine tools and options to deal with lack of large tracts and public land available for the trail.



A paved section of the MST winds through the woods

Segment 8: Piedmont Greenway

- Provide assistance and information on getting the section of trail within the Triad Park to the Forsyth/Guilford County line designated as part of the MST.
- Continue to coordinate with local staff to keep trail construction moving forward. Leverage successes of completing sections of planned trails to facilitate construction of the next.
- Coordinate with local staff to get the alignment finalized and adopted.

Segment 9: Upper Haw River

- Complete planning for the trail in Guilford County, determining the detailed alignment so that the county can work with volunteers to complete the trail.
- Leverage and work with the new staff position created to focus on trails in Rockingham County.
- Work with large property owners to explain the benefits of conservation easements and how to establish them on their property to acquire the needed land for the trail.
- Work toward agreement for development of the trail on the public property that is available along this segment.
- Identify potential funding resources for Rockingham County through potential grants, and other possible sources.
- With lack of maintenance resources noted in Rockingham County, determine if community organizations and/or non-profit organizations can assist in providing maintenance for the segment.
- With an understanding of the tourism and economic development benefits of trails in both Rockingham and Guilford County, continue to promote those benefits to facilitate development of the trail.

Segment 10: Haw River Trail

- Work to finalize the designation of newly-constructed trail and those sections of trail for which designation has been applied.
- Determine tools and options to assist with road crossings and stream crossings.
- Leverage the current success and popularity of trail use and blueway use in the area to keep momentum strong for completion of MST segments.
- Promote the potential economic development and health benefits of trail in Alamance County.
- Leverage the support and interest of the Town of Saxapahaw and consider its potential as a trail town.

Segment 11: Southwest Orange County

- Determine tools and resources needed to implement the MST goals found in the 2014 Orange County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Work with OWASA to finalize the alignment of the route to Hillsborough and establish a timeline for construction.
- Determine tools and resources to deal with road crossings for this segment of the trail.
- Support coordination between Orange County and Hillsborough staff to maximize limited resources for planning, implementation, and maintenance of this segment.
- Once the priority of finishing the MST segment between Oconeechee Mountain and the Eno River State Park is complete, leverage success from that project to work on completing remaining gaps that would complete this segment.



A section of the trail as it passes under a roadway

Segment 12: Eno River

- Provide assistance and information on coordinating MST designation of all newly-constructed trail miles.
- Provide assistance and information on getting constructed, but not yet designated, trail miles designated as official MST segments.
- Coordinate with local staff and NCDOT on the US 70 bridge replacement project to ensure that design can accommodate the trail.

Segment 13: Johnston County

- Provide assistance and information on coordinating MST designation of existing trails in this segment.
- Determine tools and resources needed to move construction of trails forward for this segment.
- Determine how to move the trail segment from a priority among local staff, tourism boards and users, to development.
- Determine tools and options to deal with lack of public land available for the trail.
- Work through implementation challenges like how to work within the Neuse River buffer requirements, how to increase political support (link trail development to economic development and quality of life), and how to navigate working through wetland requirements for the trail.
- Leverage the current demand and popularity of trail use, and local support for trails and recreation facilities as part of the public survey for the parks and recreation master plan, to move development of the trail forward.

Segment 14: Wayne County

- Identify resources that could assist in moving trail construction forward. Grants are currently being sought and additional information and assistance in pursuing grants may help with this process.
- Work with local officials to move trail construction from a priority to a reality by providing tools and resources that have been successful in other areas where the MST has been constructed.
- Provide resources on how to work through the challenges of river crossings and wetlands.
- Provide resources on available funding options that could be pursued for developing this segment.

Segment 15: Lenoir County

- Determine resources needed to get trail construction moving forward based on plans currently in place for the Kinston Greenway Promenade.
- Use success of the Kinston Greenway Promenade project to facilitate additional trail development.
- Provide assistance and information on designating the Kinston Greenway Promenade as part of the MST. Use the designation to assist in development of extension of that trail to complete more of the overall MST segment.
- Determine tools and options to deal with lack of public land available for the trail.
- Determine tools and options to address stream crossings for this segment.
- Incorporate trail planning in current and future roadway projects.
- Use the momentum and success of the Kinston Greenway Promenade to facilitate more trail development outside of Kinston.



Trees line a wide unpaved trail section

Segment 16: Northern Craven County

- Determine tools and resources needed to implement the regional and local/county plans for the MST for this segment.
- Coordinate efforts to seek grants and other funding sources that would help leverage local funds to develop the trail in this segment.
- Work with local staff to determine how the trail can be implemented in accordance with buffer regulations for the Neuse River.
- Work with local parks and recreation staff to determine what resources are available to assist in trail development and maintenance.
- Work with large property owners to explain the benefits of conservation easements and how to establish them on their property to acquire the needed land for the trail.
- Leverage support found for trails, and their link to benefitting tourism, in the local parks and recreation master plans to move the trail forward to development.
- Determine how to increase awareness and support for trails and the MST outside the New Bern area. This could be done through increased information, web-based information, social media and public forums on trails and their overall benefits.

Segment 17: Southern Craven County

- Determine tools and resources needed to implement the regional and local/county plans for the MST for this segment.
- Coordinate efforts on how to seek grants and other funding sources that would help leverage local funds to develop the trail in this segment.
- Work with local staff to determine how the trail can be implemented in accordance with buffer regulations for the Neuse River.
- Develop support and commitment from staff at the Croatan National Forest to develop the trail within their boundaries. This could be in the form of a MOU or some other type of agreement between the appropriate parties.
- Work with local parks and recreation staff to determine what resources are available to assist in trail development and maintenance.
- Work with large property owners to explain the benefits of conservation easements and how to establish them on their property in order to acquire the needed land for the trail.
- Determine tools and resources needed to increase public awareness and overall benefits of the MST and trails in the area.

Segment 18: Carteret/Ocracoke

- Provide assistance and information on coordinating MST designation of existing trails in this segment, including the Village of Ocracoke.
- Coordinate with East Carolina University to develop MST-specific language in the Parks and Recreation Plan they are developing for Carteret County.
- Determine what tools and resources are needed to facilitate trail construction in this segment.
- Determine what funding resources may be available to move planning and development of the trail segment forward.
- Determine tools and resources needed to increase public awareness and overall benefits of the MST and trails overall in the area.



A bench along the trail provides a place for trail users to rest and enjoy the scenery

Summary

In reviewing the ranking list of the 18 Planning Segments, there are segments of the MST that are at a higher level of preparedness for trail development. The segments with the highest scores are the areas where more immediate focus should be given for trail development and designation. Based on the scoring, different approaches can be taken to help advance the process for trail development for each of the segments. These approaches can be tailored to fit the needs of each segment and can be used consistently where the same opportunities or challenges may be present.

Potential section sponsors within Planning Segments, DPR, volunteers, and the other planning stakeholders identified in the segment descriptions will need to work together to move trail planning and construction forward. One of the most effective ways the information in this plan can be used is in determining the areas where resources are readily available, identifying stakeholders, volunteer groups, task forces, and other interested parties, and fostering coordination and collaboration to develop segment plans. These segment plans would provide a much more detailed approach in developing and implementing a specific segment of the MST. Segment plans are better suited to determine things like: the detailed route alignment of a segment; clear

responsibilities for local jurisdictions, volunteer groups, and task forces that will help develop and maintain a segment; and any type of amenities along the segment. Developing this detailed information is best suited at the regional and local level. While segment plans are not required to construct, and subsequently designate, a segment of the MST, they can be important in generating the needed support, coordinating the necessary resources, and establishing clear responsibilities for constructing and maintaining the trail over time.

Once a trail is designated, or as part of preparing for designation, the segment action plans could be used to inform the creation of a trail management plan. Creation of a trail management plan would help to ensure the trail is sustained into the future and would clarify roles. The management plan could provide details about section sponsors and their partnerships with agencies, non-profit organizations, and others as applicable to operate, maintain, and market the trail. The management plan could also describe how the trail functions as a segment of the MST and required coordination with DPR.

One of the consistent challenges noted for the segments is a lack of a plan for trail development. It would be beneficial to share successes from Designated Segments to address this challenge. For example, if there are grant opportunities available that could be used to develop plans, provide the information about those grants so jurisdictions or nonprofit organizations can pursue them to develop a plan for their segment. DPR, or other trail partners can help establish MST-related goals within local and regional plans that would aid in setting the foundation for trail development.

A common challenge is also funding for design and construction of the trail. Where this is a challenge for a particular segment, providing information on the different funding sources, such as grants, bonds, and other methods, that are available to help fund trail development is recommended. With this information, local jurisdictions, and other community organizations would know how to pursue potential funds that could lead to development of MST segments.

Implementation challenges such as road crossings, stream crossings, wetlands, lack of public properties along a segment, and lack of public support will all have solutions unique to the locale. However, sharing of successful strategies in dealing with these challenges is recommended. For example, if a local jurisdiction was able to generate strong support for the trail by providing data on economic impacts, quality of life enhancement, or increased home values, that information could also be helpful to another jurisdiction facing the same challenges.

The planning tools provided in the following section are intended to begin to address these common challenges.



Trail Planning Toolbox

The MST is supported by a collaborative effort involving the DPR, Friends of the MST, sponsors of Planning and

Designated trail segments, local and regional agencies and organizations, trail clubs, as well as many volunteers. These trail partners maintain more than 600 miles of existing trail, actively construct additional trail segments, plan for development and designation of remaining trail segments, and promote awareness and use of the trail.

The information in this toolbox is intended to be used by all trail partners as support for their collaborative efforts. The tools will be made available through a trail planning toolbox in the trails section of the NCParks.gov website. For use as a web-based resource, the tools are concise, use web-friendly language and text, and provide links to other resources as appropriate.

This initial set of tools was identified in the scope for this project. The need for these tools was further confirmed through meetings with potential section sponsors within Planning Segments, discussions with DPR and the Friends of the MST, and input received through a poll on the DPR MST Master planning website. Tools provided in this plan are listed along with the challenges and opportunities they address in the matrix.

Requests for additional tools were also gathered through the master planning process. Other potential tools were identified to address common challenges or leverage common opportunities across Planning Segments. These suggested additional tools are identified in the recommendations at the end of the Trail Planning Toolbox. The intent is that additional tools will be provided through the trails section of the NCParks.gov website over time.

Table 3. Applicability of trail planning tools to challenges and opportunities

	Abandoned RR ROW	Coordinating Easements	Detailed Alignment	Federal Property	Floodplains/Wetlands	Funding	Large Landholdings	Local Planning	Public Land	Roadway Crossings	Sidewalk/Bike Network	Staff Resources	Stream Crossings	Urbanized Corridor	Working with Landowners
The Roles of Trail Partners															
Funding Strategies & Sources															
Design Standards & Costs															
Designing Safe Trails															
Personal Safety on the MST															
Trail Signage															
Trail Amenities															
Marketing & Publicity															

The Roles of Trail Partners

The MST benefits from the strong interest, extensive support, and diversity of the trail partners. To ensure that the well-intended efforts of each partner serve to move trail planning and implementation forward, it is critical that roles are clear and communication is open. The typical roles of each trail partner are summarized in this tool. Specific information about partner roles related to publicity and marketing, signage, and safety are addressed in topic-specific tools.

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

Trail Designation

DPR facilitates the designation process for section sponsors that have applied for designation. The application is reviewed by DPR trail specialist staff, approved by the North Carolina Trail Committee, and designated by the DENR Secretary.

Planning Assistance

DPR has facilitated planning for the MST through working with Councils of Governments. In this role, DPR coordinates with trail partners on the trail's alignment. The plans help refine preferred routes and identify implementation strategies.

Trail Signage

DPR establishes uniform markers for designated trails in the State Trails System, including the MST.

Partnership/Project Development

The DPR regional trail specialists assist communities and partners with projects leading up to and through the [Recreational Trails Program](#) grant application and implementation process.

Technical Assistance

The staff at DPR, including regional trail specialists, serve as a technical resource for every aspect of trail planning, construction, and maintenance.

Section Sponsors

A section sponsor is any agency or organization that owns, holds an easement, or lease to the land the trail utilizes and that enters into an agreement with DPR to maintain their section of trail as a part of the MST. The section sponsor, in coordination with adjoining section sponsors, is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of the trail within their section, including its location, appearance, surface, uses and amenities. Section sponsors retain authority on lands under their jurisdiction. Section sponsors are encouraged to showcase places of natural, scenic, historic and cultural significance; to feature the diversity of natural communities and landscapes in the state; and to consider the needs of both long and short distance trail users. Primary roles of section sponsors are to:

- Establish the trail alignment
- Acquire the land or easements needed for the trail right-of-way
- Identify and address constraints in building and maintaining the trail

NC Trails Committee

Within DPR, the North Carolina Trails Committee was created by legislation to:

- Advise DPR on all matters related to trails, including trail needs and opportunities
- Coordinate trail development among local governments
- Assist in the formation of local trail plans

For more information about the roles and responsibilities of DPR, visit "About Us" on the NCParks.gov website.



- Acquire funds
- Promote the trail
- Coordinate trail construction
- Apply for trail designation
- Coordinate maintenance and management of the trail

Section sponsors often rely, sometimes heavily, on volunteers and other partners for many of these tasks. The experience and enthusiasm of volunteers are critical to the success of the trail.

Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail

Trail Information

Friends of the MST provides information about how to hike the entire trail through its website, maps, and trail guides. These guides use completed segments of the MST along with alternative or temporary routes. Friends of the MST also works to improve the hiking experience – identifying and opening campsites, providing temporary/alternative road and paddle routes to form connections between designated sections of the MST, and recruiting “trail angels” who can help thru-hikers on their statewide treks.

Volunteer Coordination

Friends of the MST recruits, trains, organizes and recognizes volunteers and provides them with most of the tools they need to build and maintain trail statewide as well as on other trail projects.

Fundraising

Friends of the MST raises funds to support, build and maintain the trail from a variety of sources including individuals, corporations, foundations, governments and special events. It educates and promotes the trail through its website, e-newsletter, social media, annual report, events, media outreach and other methods. It serves as an advocate for the MST.

For more information about the Friends of the MST and their work to build, promote, and maintain the MST, visit their [website](#).

Trail Clubs and Volunteer Organizations

There are many trail clubs and volunteer organizations supporting the MST across the state. The role of these partners varies across trail segments. Trail associations and State Park friends groups often organize volunteer opportunities for constructing and maintaining trails. Many section sponsors involve scout troops and other users in trail construction and maintenance. Volunteer organizations also raise funds for construction, maintenance, and improvements.

Other Trail Partners and Planning Stakeholders

Depending on the context and location of the trail there are many other agencies and organizations that may be involved in planning, construction, maintenance, or marketing of the trail. Leveraging the interest and expertise of a range of potential partners can help to move trail development forward and sustain constructed trails into the future. Some potential trail partners and stakeholders include the [NC Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation](#), [NC Division of Cultural Resources](#), [NC Department of Commerce](#), [Visit North Carolina](#), [NC Rails-Trails](#), local tourism and marketing agencies and chambers of commerce, local biking and hiking organizations, scouting troops and other interest-based organizations.

Funding Strategies and Sources

Effective and reliable funding streams for large trail networks depend on a variety of investment partnerships. The graphic identifies the most common types of trail investment. Trail projects require funding throughout their life-cycle. Communities building trails will need investment at each of the following phases; planning, design, land acquisition, construction, maintenance, programming and marketing.

Communities should seek to cultivate a mix of funding types and avoid over reliance on a single category. Increasingly private funding is becoming a more significant contributor to trail development. This funding can also be used to leverage additional funding. Private funding may include the traditional donation and sponsorship models but will likely also evolve to include crowd sourcing models. While each project will vary in the mix of funding, a healthy, sustainable trail network will include funding from each of these categories.

Paved trails are most often funded with state and federal dollars with specific reporting obligations and design criteria. The [2013 WalkBikeNC Plan](#) includes a detailed description of state and federal funding sources. While these sources may change over time with modifications to state and federal policy there has generally been funding available to municipalities and counties for paved greenway trails. Trail partners should include extra staff time and/or budget for consultants to accomplish the federal reporting, property acquisition compliance, environmental analysis, and documentation and design reviews associated with this type of funding. Projects may also require additional time to meet these requirements.

In North Carolina, **natural surface trail** funding has relied on a combination of state, federal and volunteers often organized through non-profit organizations. State funding has largely been through the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), which provides fifty/fifty matching funds to local governments for park projects that can include trails. The federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities. These funds are administered by each state.

The amount of available funding from these sources varies from year to year and one administration to another. It is recommended that communities desiring funding reach out to either NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Unit or NC State Trails Program depending on the type of trail they are building. Those agency representatives will be able to provide a current picture of the funding landscape.

Additional Resources

The following resources provide useful information about funding sources:

[PARTF](#)

[FHWA Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#)

[WalkBikeNC](#)

[NC Rail-Trails](#)





Economic Impact of Trails

In building partnerships and community willingness to invest in trails it is important to effectively articulate the return on investment as documented in other communities. There are many studies that capture these impacts. Generally, economic impacts are studied in several categories – property values, health care costs, retail spending, jobs and tourism.

Resources: [American Trails on Economics](#)

[ITRE Bridging the Gap Study](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Use of Volunteers to Reduce Costs

Volunteers have an important role in the planning and maintenance of all trail types and use of volunteers can help to reduce costs of trail development. Unlike paved trails, which require detailed design and professional construction, natural surface trails can also be constructed by volunteers. Many sections of the MST have been constructed and are currently maintained by volunteers. The Friends of the MST has a good model for educating and mobilizing trail volunteers as does the Carolina Thread Trail in the Charlotte area, the East Coast Greenway, the Carolina Mountain Club, and others.

Resources:

[Friends of the MST](#)

[Carolina Thread Trail](#)

[Carolina Mountain Club](#)

[East Coast Greenway](#)

Land Acquisition

Land acquisition funding is an important piece of the trail funding puzzle. In North Carolina the [Clean Water Management Trust Fund](#) (CWMTF) has been a significant resource for acquiring contiguous trail corridors. The CWMTF sees trails and greenways as projects that increase natural areas along streams and rivers. Local land trusts can also be strong partners in trail building. Once a trail corridors are defined local land trust can begin banking land in advance of trail construction.

Typical Design Standards and Costs

While costs can vary greatly depending on the context of the trail, average ranges for common trail types are provided for reference in this tool. For all trail types pedestrian crossing structures, such as bridges and boardwalks will increase the construction costs. The high ranges in the costs below reflect inclusion of these structures. Please note that construction cost ranges exclude property acquisition and design.

Natural Surface Trails

- Width:** Single track to 4 foot wide
- Surface:** Native soil, reinforced as needed
- Amenities:** Directional and wayfinding signage
- Design Notes:** Footpaths and backcountry trails are built to meet standards used in developing and maintaining natural surface trails on U.S. Forest Service and BLM managed property. These standards include the *USDA Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook*, 2007.
- Cost Ranges:** \$15,000-\$50,000 per mile
- Resources:** www.americantrails.org

Multi-Use Unpaved Trails

- Width:** Minimum 4 foot to 12 foot
- Surface:** Gravel or rock screenings
- Amenities:** Rest stops with bench seating, trash receptacles, mile markers, and directional, wayfinding, and safety signage
- Cost Ranges:** \$120,000-\$160,000 per mile
- Design Notes:** Not appropriate for locations that see regular flooding or include steep slopes. In these areas the trail material will be very difficult to maintain.

Multi-Use Paved Trails

- Width:** Minimum 10 foot up to 14 foot
- Surface:** Asphalt or concrete
- Amenities:** Drinking water, seating, trash receptacles, connecting trails, mile markers, trail etiquette signage, educational kiosks, art
- Design Notes:** All multi-use paved trails are built to meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines and Federal accessibility standards where applicable. The maximum desired grade is 5%, but grades up to 8.33% are allowed, and up to 12.5% in very short segments.
- Cost Ranges:** \$500,000-\$1,000,000 per mile
- Resources:** [FHWA Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#)
[National Association of City Transportation Officials](#)

Additional Resources by Trail Type

Trail type and funding source will influence the design criteria for a trail. The following resources provide useful information for specific trail types:

All Trail Types Using Federal Funding:
[Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 \(ABA\) Section 1017 Trails](#)

Paved and NCDOT Funded/ Administered Trails:
[FHWA Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#)
[National Association of City Transportation Officials](#)

Natural Surface Trails without Federal Funding:
[American Trails](#)

Designing Safe Trails

Trail character is determined by the section sponsors and land managers and will vary greatly depending on the users the trail is designed to serve. The design criteria and interest in building a certain type of trail will determine to a large extent the type and quantity of funding that will need to be acquired. The safety of a trail's users should be considered regardless of the trail type.

For each trail surface type, factors of trail width, slope, curve radii, sight distances, and other design criteria must be considered to accommodate the planned users of a trail. For example, a hard surface trail accommodates all types of users travelling at different speeds. The trail must be designed with adequate width to allow for two-way traffic so users can pass each other safely. Horizontal curves for trails must be designed to allow users to travel through the curve safely, and to provide sight lines that allow users to see on-coming travelers. The trail and clearance must be designed to permit users of all physical abilities to use it.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach which physical design is altered to influence the deterrence of criminal activity. CPTED principles of design affect elements of the built environment ranging from the small-scale (such as the strategic use of shrubbery and other vegetation) to the overarching, including building form to increase the amount of opportunity for "eyes on the space". More information about CPTED can be found at [The International CPTED Association](#).



A young hiker uses a fallen tree to cross this intermittent creek

Additional Resources

The following guidelines will be useful in trail planning and design:

Trails Using Federal Funding:

[Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 \(ABA\) Section 1017 Trails](#)

Paved and NCDOT Funded/Administered Trails:

[FHWA Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#)

[National Association of City Transportation Officials](#)

Natural Surface Trails without Federal Funding:

[American Trails](#)

Personal Safety on the MST

Exploring the MST should be an easy, enjoyable, and safe experience. All trail users have a personal responsibility to be informed, prepared, and alert to their surroundings. This includes some common-sense safety approaches and following trail rules established by section sponsors. The detailed information in this tool can be shared by section sponsors and used by all trail partners who work on and enjoy the MST, but trail users remain the best judges of their own personal safety.

Prepare for the Trail

- When packing consider appropriate footwear, maps and a compass/GPS, water, food, rain gear and extra clothing, safety items (e.g., fire, light, whistle), first aid kit, knife or multi-purpose tool, sunscreen and sunglasses and a backpack.
- Consider enjoying the trail in groups of two or more.
- Let someone know of your plans by sharing where you will be and when you plan to return.
- Be prepared for the weather, especially for conditions and temperatures that may change rapidly.
- Eliminate opportunities for theft by leaving valuables at home and locking vehicles parked at trailheads. If you do have any valuables that will be kept in your parked car, lock them in your glove compartment instead of your trunk.
- When hiking with children and pets, consider the trail conditions and the physical capacities of the kids and pets. Be sure to check whether pets are allowed before heading out for the trail. Remember that kids and pets may tire easily, will require food and water while on the trail and afterwards, and are more affected than adults by strenuous conditions. Plan accordingly for their needs.

Safety on the Trail

- Read and obey rules posted at trailheads. Trail rules are determined by section sponsors and can change from one section of the MST to another. You are responsible for knowing and following trail rules and regulations.
- Stay on managed trails and respect the property of the land owners adjacent to trail boundaries.
- Treat all trail users with respect and courtesy.
- Stay to the right and pass on the left. Always look before changing positions on the trail.
- Dogs must be leashed, as loose dogs can be hazardous to others or to themselves.
- Carry out all litter, including pet and food waste. Bring bags to collect your waste and dispose of it in a garbage can. Pet and food waste can attract wildlife.
- Stay alert. Pay attention to details of your surroundings and the people you encounter. It can be difficult to explain why something looks suspicious, but trust yourself when something doesn't feel quite right. If you see something, say something. Report any suspicious activity by calling 9-1-1.
- Look out for harmful plants like poison oak and poison ivy, as well as for wildlife. Keep a safe distance if you spot flora or fauna that may be dangerous. Never feed, approach or pet wild animals. Keep pets and kids near you on the trail at all times.

More Resources for Planning a Safe Hike

[American Trails, Safe Trails Forum](#)

[Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Experience Trails](#)

[American Hiking Society, Tips for Your Next Hike](#)

[Trail etiquette guidelines for various users \(bicyclists, runners, equestrians, etc.\)](#)



Signs provide important warnings and information



- Know when hunting seasons start and end and heed posted warnings regarding hunting activity.
- If a storm is approaching, descend from ridges, peaks and elevated areas. In mountainous areas, thunderstorms typically develop in the early afternoon, so plan to hike early in the day. If you can hear thunder, seek shelter or protection – even if the sky near you is blue.
- In an emergency, note where you are and call 9-1-1.

Trail Signage

Consistent signage for the MST is a particular challenge, because each trail section is managed by the section sponsor in accordance with their own sign and wayfinding system. Many trail sections have their own trail name or are part of other trail networks. DPR will work closely with each section sponsor to help them incorporate consistent MST signage appropriately into their own sign plan. Following are some general guidelines for signage.

Appearance and Layout:

- Use a consistent branding and logo established by the DPR, to reinforce recognition of the MST.
- Maintain an even balance of graphic content, text, and blank space on signs.
- Use varying font types and weights to provide different levels of information.
- Place logos in a uniform location on each sign type.
- Use a consistent color palette for each sign type.

Content Goals

- Identify the section names of the MST at any entrance point along that section.
- Identify the section sponsors for particular sections of trail.
- Keep text brief for informational signs and convey the most relevant information.
- Keep text, graphics, and maps consistent throughout all signs.
- Use images, maps, and artwork consistently to support the content of the sign.

Locations

Use an understanding of how the trail will be accessed and used along specific sections as a guiding principle when determining the placement of signs. Not all trail types require the same level of signage. For example, urban trails with connections and crossings will require more direction change indicators than a remote single-track trail, which may require more confirmation signs. Signs should be placed at the following locations:

- Trailheads
- Campgrounds
- Intersections
- Overlooks and at scenic resources
- Trail facilities
- Trail crossings
- Transitions between wayfinding systems of adjacent sponsors
- Road crossings
- Key roadways providing access to trail





Types

The following sign types can be used along the trail or to provide information about the trail:

- Trailhead informational signs/kiosks
- Entrance signs
- Place name signs
- Confirmation signs
- Reassurance markers and trail blazes
- Direction change indicators
- Roadway signs
- Regulatory signs
- Boundary signs
- Destination signs
- Interpretive signs

Information Kiosks

These sign types can be installed at primary trailhead locations where parking is available. Kiosks should be weather-tight to help maintain longevity of the information provided, and should avoid clutter that would make information difficult to interpret. Kiosks should provide a variety of information, including:

- General information about the overall trail
- Specific information about the trail section accessed at this entry
- Maps and graphics depicting the trail to support wayfinding
- Regulatory and safety information about the trail

Entrance Signs

Entrance signs should be placed at all primary trailhead locations along the route, both where parking is available, and at entry points along the route that are accessed via other non-MST trails. The signs should contain overall information about the trail.

Place Name Signs

Place name signs help point out important features along the trail. These signs help a trail user find their location on a map, and/or identify a specific feature or resource of importance they are encountering on the trail. These signs should be concise and primarily only contain the name of the location or feature of importance. These signs often correspond to sites that are listed on destination signs found along the route.

Confirmation Signs

Confirmation signs help to assure users that they are on the right path. These signs can be small signs with the MST logo that should be placed at consistent intervals along the trail (typically ½ mile apart), as well as at all road crossings, and intersections with other trails. The MST white circle blaze can also be used.

Reassurance Markers and Trail Blazes

While confirmation signs should be placed consistently along the entire trail route, markers and directional information are often needed with more frequency within the spacing of the confirmation signs. The most cost-effective and efficient way to provide this information is through reassurance markers

and trail blazes. These marks are not visually obtrusive and help assure the trail user that they are maintaining the proper route along the trail. A white circle blaze should be used as the uniform blaze type for the entire route of the MST.

Blazes can either be painted on their location or, if a small sign is being used for the blaze, can be nailed on. If blazes are painted, neatness and consistency is a key component to their effectiveness. Use of a stencil is preferred for painted blazes, and an exterior based paint should be used for enhanced durability.

Blazes should be placed on trees that catch the eye, and located slightly above eye level so they are easily visible when traveling in either direction. In areas where trees are not present, the blaze should be placed on posts 4'-5' in height along the route. They should be within line of sight so the next blaze is easily visible to the trail user. Blazes should be continuous and not exceed intervals of 100 yards between them. They should be included even if a directional sign is present, and they should be placed immediately beyond any road crossing or trail junction.

All sections should be developed or updated with the official blaze of the trail. All blazes, and the trees they are located on, should be routinely maintained to ensure their visibility.

Direction Change Indicators

These markers are used where it is necessary to alert a trail user to an important turn, junctions with other trails, or locations that could cause confusion. This type of marker should be visible from both directions, and only used when necessary.

A reassurance marker should always be placed in the immediate area as well so it can be seen from the direction indicator. White should be used for the direction change indicators.

Roadway Signs

Signs along roadways can provide a warning to roadway users that a trail/pedestrian crossing is ahead.

Regulatory Signs

These signs should emphasize the permitted uses of the trail while also including non-permitted uses. Regulatory signs should be placed at entry points such as trailheads, road crossings, and junctions with other trails.

Boundary Signs

Boundary signs are an optional method for marking trail limits. They can be useful where adjacent land uses make it especially important for trail users to stay on the trail.

Destination Signs

Destination signs can be located at major entry points, as well as along the trail, and should provide the name of the trail, significant destinations like scenic resources, campgrounds and trail facilities, and adjacent sections. Distance to destinations should be in miles and tenths, and directional arrows should be used if possible. If separate destination signs are not incorporated into the trail, the information should be incorporated into kiosk signs, and possibly to entrance signs.



Interpretive Signs

Interpretive signs include information about certain locations, destinations, and scenic, natural and cultural resources along the trail. The signs help to interest and educate the users of the trail about specific sites, natural trail features, and other resources. Interpretive signs should include a balance of text and graphics to convey information about the intended feature, and be made of durable materials that are weather resistant. The design of interpretive signs should be uniform across the trail and can vary in size depending on the level of information or significance of the resource being interpreted.

Sign Maintenance

Sign maintenance is essential to ensure that the trail is functioning and operating effectively. Signs along the trail are often the only link to information for the user. If this information is missing, or the sign is not well maintained, a trail user may not be receiving important information that may impact their experience on the trail. Sign maintenance is a cost associated with establishing a trail, and it can also be prioritized so that maintenance resources are distributed appropriately. Signs that are required for user safety should receive the highest priority, followed by user restriction/advisory signs, trail blazes/logos/destination and identification signs, and informative/interpretive signs.

Recommendations

Currently, a variety of signage types and appearances can be seen along many of the trails that make up the MST across the state. DPR will continue to work with section sponsors and other partners to develop specific sign guidelines that provide consistency for the MST while respecting the variety of sign needs and policies of the diverse sections that make up the MST. Initial ideas for each sign type described in the tool are provided in Appendix D. These ideas are intended to serve as a starting point for a conversation about standard signage for the MST. Feedback provided on these sample signs will be used to inform future work to establish a complete signage package for the trail.

Trail Campgrounds

Trail users planning overnight hikes and rides along the MST need access to sleeping accommodations. In areas where the trail is close to populated areas, hotels, bed and breakfasts, and cabins may be available. Along other parts of the trail, campgrounds can provide for tent camping, and some may include cabins or yurts. Section sponsors are responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of campsites and other amenities within their section of the trail. Section sponsors are encouraged to work with volunteers, who are often willing to assist. Following are some general guidelines for providing camping opportunities.

Locations

Camping areas can be designed, planned, and implemented at any time; they are not necessarily part of the trail planning process. The maximum distance between campsites should be about 10 miles in most locations. To avoid conflicts with trail users, campsites should typically be at least 50 yards from the trail. The use of existing vegetation and terrain can help create a buffer between the trail and campground. Signage along the trail should clearly indicate distances to upcoming campgrounds, and the services offered at these sites. Backcountry shelters should be located no more than 5 miles apart and these are often located fairly close to campgrounds.

Specifications and Costs

The costs associated with implementing a campground vary based on the type of camping and the types of amenities offered. Primitive, dispersed tent campgrounds offer minimal facilities. Some include signage, tent pads, and portable water, and nothing else. In dispersed camping areas, individual cathole latrines may be used by experienced hikers when no developed toilet facilities are available. Shade shelter, picnic tables, and fire rings may be provided. The proper disposal of human waste is most important. In these locations, trash must be carried out. All of these campgrounds have one thing in common: the greater number of services and products that are offered to the campers, the higher the initial costs.

Primitive campgrounds may be available free of charge to users, with availability on a first come first serve basis. Construction cost is low because of the limited amenities offered, typically being less than \$10,000. Operation and maintenance costs are also low since the campground only needs to be inspected every couple of weeks or so.

At other more **standard tent campgrounds**, wayfinding signage, potable water, garbage pickup, and toilet facilities are typically provided where appropriate. Depending upon the types of amenities provided, startup costs can run from \$10,000 to \$50,000, excluding toilet facilities. For toilet facilities, there are three basic options: (1) fully functional restroom buildings, (2) vault toilets, or (3) portable facilities. Restroom buildings that include electrical, plumbing, and heating can cost \$75,000 - \$100,000 depending upon size and finishes. It can be also include showers, but this would increase cost. These types of buildings are also frequently used at major trailheads as part of a more comprehensive plan that includes parking.

Vault toilet buildings are designed for passive ventilation that help maintain an odor-free facility. They utilize the U.S. Forest Services' Sweet Smelling Technology (SST) concept, which covers all facets of toilet building design including construction materials, maintenance, and location. Vault toilets can be

Sources and Reference Links for Campgrounds

Land, Brenda. 2003. SST Installation Guide. San Dimas, CA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, San Dimas Technology and Development Center.

[Recreation Facility Design Guidelines](#). U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation. September 2002.

[Design Standards](#). National Park Service.

[Designing Camps and Picnic Units](#). U.S. Forest Service.



either single- or double-vault; a double-vault works well because one side can be for men and one for women. Concrete waste containment vaults often have a capacity of 1,200 gallons when completely empty. Having a larger vault capacity means the restroom facilities will need to be pumped out less often than those with smaller waste containment vaults. Costs for a vault toilet can range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 with additional maintenance costs for emptying.

Porta Potties are small, portable enclosures containing a chemical toilet and they are typically intended for temporary use. They can be used at campgrounds to handle toilet needs, but they will have to be managed closely and emptied once they are full. The cost to purchase a Porta Potty is between \$1,000 and \$2,000, but maintenance costs have to be taken into consideration. It can cost as much to maintain Porta Potties on a bi-weekly basis as it does to purchase the units.

Operations and Maintenance

Regardless of what type of campground is implemented, or the types of facilities included at each campground, maintenance is critical. Poorly maintained campgrounds can result in safety and environmental problems, and also create adverse public relations. To support operations and maintenance section sponsors may consider providing a method for campground users to sign-in. This record provides data about facility usage that can assist in planning for the operation and maintenance of facilities and can be used to identify the location of hikers if needed. Before any campground is developed, a comprehensive operations and maintenance plan must be in place in order to ensure the visitor experience is a quality one.

Marketing and Publicity

Many MST section sponsors market and publicize their individual trail sections. There are benefits to marketing the MST as a whole as well. Marketing the entire trail can inspire long-distance hikers, can enhance the marketing of individual trail sections, and can support efforts to complete connecting sections. Day users and short distance hikers enjoy the idea of being on part of a statewide trail.

The MST is enjoyed by a range of trail users – from accomplished hikers who conquer the MST in its entirety, to the masses who use the trail on a lunch break, for the day, or over a weekend. Marketing and publicity efforts should provide information to this broad range of MST users. These marketing efforts could occur through the local tourism office or trail-specific efforts but may also reach a wider audience through regional promotion and at the state level through sites such as VisitNC.com.

The information in this tool is intended to guide marketing and publicity for the MST. This tool should be used by DPR, Friends of the MST, section sponsors, and trail clubs as a reference for all MST-related marketing and publicity materials and events. Recommendations to guide future efforts related to trail marketing and publicity are provided.

Roles in Marketing and Publicizing the MST

The primary roles for marketing and publicizing the MST are described in this section.

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation

- **Primary role:**
 - Disseminate information about planning for the MST.
 - Publicize successful practices for trail section sponsors.
 - Provide oversight to ensure the principles and standards for marketing and publicity are maintained.
 - Maintain the trails section of the NCParks.gov website.
- **Other roles:**
 - Support cross-promotion by sharing information with the Friends of the MST, section sponsors, and volunteer organizations about trail planning and successful practices.
 - Support cross-promotion by distributing information provided by Friends of the MST, section sponsors, and volunteer organizations through the web site and social media.
 - Support cross-promotion by providing web links to the Friends of the MST website and websites indicated by section sponsors.
 - Provide information about the MST in DPR publications and communications.
 - Work with other State agencies, including NCDOT, to display information about the MST on State properties and in promotional materials and maps.
 - Maintain current MST GIS information and make it available to trail partners.



NC Parks System logo, MST logo, and home page for the master plan website

Section Sponsors

- Incorporate information about the overall MST into public information about individual trail sections.
- Disseminate information about public meetings, surveys, and notices regarding plans in progress.

- Work with Friends of the MST to disseminate information about trail building events.
- Support cross-promotion by sharing information with the DPR and Friends of the MST about trail planning.
- Coordinate marketing efforts with adjoining section sponsors.
- Maintain information about the managed section on a local or regional website.
- Disseminate information about hiking the managed section of the MST.
- Publicize special events for the managed section of the MST.
- Work with Friends of the MST and trail clubs to publicize trail maintenance and special events.
- Work with Friends of the MST and trail clubs to share information about trail safety.

Friends of the MST

- **Primary role:**
 - Disseminate information about hiking the MST through the Friends of the MST website, newsletter, and email distribution.
 - Conduct and publicize special events for the MST.
 - Work with section sponsors to publicize trail building and maintenance events.
 - Work with section sponsors to share information about trail safety.
 - Serve as an advocate for the MST.
- **Other roles:**
 - Support cross-promotion by sharing information with DPR, section sponsors, and volunteer organizations about trail events.
 - Support cross-promotion by distributing information provided by DPR, section sponsors, and volunteer organizations through the web site and social media.
 - Support cross-promotion by providing a link to the trails section of the NCParks.gov website.



Home page for the Friends of the MST website

Trail Clubs

- Work with Friends of the MST and section sponsors to publicize trail building, maintenance, and special events.
- Work with Friends of the MST and section sponsors to share information about trail safety.

Other Partners

- There are statewide organizations that work to promote North Carolina's assets and bring tourism to the state. The [NC Department of Commerce](#) and [VisitNC.com](#) are two prominent examples. These partners can help to identify opportunities for broad marketing and promotion of the MST.

Cross-Promotion

Coordinating with partners to is essential for promoting and marketing the MST.

- Refer to and implement the recommendations for sharing information described in this tool.
- Work with visitor and tourism bureaus and section sponsors, such as local, state, and National Parks, to promote the trail and related events.
- Ensure that all news and announcements related to the MST are shared with trail partners for further distribution.

Branding and Identity

Consistent branding of the MST is critical to improve recognition among current and potential trail users. All partners with a role in marketing and publicity of the trail should maintain the following standards:

- Refer to the trail as the “Mountains-to-Sea State Trail” or by its acronym, “MST”.
- Provide links to the trails section of the NCParks.gov website and the Friends of the MST website on all publications and marketing materials.
- Use the official MST logo, available by request to DPR, on all MST marketing and publicity materials.
- Follow the standards provided in the Signage Tool (in this master plan and eventually on the trails section of the NCParks.gov website) and support implementation of a future signage package for the MST.



The trail can provide great opportunities for outdoor education

Target Markets

As a statewide trail, the MST should be accessible to and enjoyed by users with a broad range of interests and abilities. To promote and market the trail for a broad range of users, all partners should work toward:

- Providing information about the level of difficulty and accessibility of designated trail.
- Providing information about allowable uses (hiking, mountain biking, horse-back riding, camping, etc.) for designated trail.
- Recommending and distributing guides for hikes of various lengths – including short hikes that could be completed in two hours or less, day hikes, multiple-day hikes, and through-hikes.
- Identifying opportunities and developing promotional materials and tools that reach a broad range of ages and interests.

Sources of Information

The following sources should be considered and referenced as primary sources of information about the MST.

- The trails section of the NCParks.gov website.
- The Friends of the MST website (for through-hiking options).

- The individual websites noted for each Planning and Designated trail segment.

Recommendations

- Continue to enhance and update the trails section of the NCParks.gov website as the main source of information about the status and plans for the MST.
- Work with section sponsors so that they become the main source of information about planning hikes on the MST. The Friends of the MST website is also a source of this type of information.
- Work to clarify the purpose of each website, define responsibilities associated with website maintenance and updates, and create links among the websites.
- Create a communication protocol to implement and formalize the marketing and publicizing roles.
- Develop and maintain a shared database of MST partners for cross-promoting the trail. This database could include DPR, Friends of the MST, section sponsors, trail clubs, and regional and local media.
- Develop and maintain a shared database of stakeholders interested in the MST for distribution of marketing and promotional material. This database could include tourism and visitors bureaus, local officials, advocacy groups, hiking clubs, and others.
- Develop and maintain a list of events, festivals, and other opportunities where information about the MST could be shared.
- Create a “submit an event” tool on the NCParks.gov website that Friends of the MST, section sponsors, and trail clubs can use to share information about an event for publication.
- Create and maintain a calendar of events on the NCParks.gov website that includes planning events and cross-promotes events submitted by partner organizations.
- Create a formal or informal network among the sections along the MST, such as local, State and National parks. Many of the sections along the MST are well visited, but visitors may not be aware that they are on the MST.
- Develop an “event package” including the following material that can be made available to trail partners and interested stakeholders for events that they host, including ribbon-cuttings, trail work days, festivals and events:
 - Fact sheet about the MST – including the current status, location, and sources of information.
 - Fun materials intended to engage children such as a “Follow Me to the MST” bumper sticker featuring the MST blaze.
 - Post cards with information about the MST and space for providing comments or a request to be added to the distribution list and returned to DPR.
- Create a consistent scale addressing the level of difficulty that can be used on all information about hiking the MST.
- Work with the [NC Department of Commerce](#) and the public-private partnership, [Visit North Carolina](#) to identify state-wide marketing opportunities and partnerships.
- Periodically write public relations pieces and distribute them to local papers and websites.

Trail Planning Toolbox Recommendations

The Trail Planning Toolbox should be updated and expanded to address additional and new needs identified by trail partners. In addition to the topic-specific recommendations made to enhance some tools, participants in scoping meetings and the poll on the DPR MST master plan website identified the following tools that should be considered for future additions to the toolbox:

- **Support for working with elected officials** – Information sheets or other guidance to support talking with elected officials and commissioners.
- **Support for acquiring property and easements** – Guidance for working with private property owners to acquire the land or easements needed for the trail.
- **Clarify the designation process and benefits** – Clarification about when and how to have trail segments designated and the resulting benefits is needed.
- **Additional tools to leverage successes** – Use the successes in counties that have been able to complete their trail to develop examples shared through training, educational material, and peer exchanges.
- **Conduct and share a cost/benefit analysis** – Study and share the economic benefits that result from the trail. Include educational resources about the importance of trails and greenways and their impacts on communities, including real examples of economic impacts using examples from North Carolina.
- **Multiple uses** – Provide information about what uses are allowed on or adjacent to the trail and how to work to provide notification.
- **Support for partnerships and collaboration across the MST** – Create a blog, forum or other support for trail partners to collaborate and share.
- **Address liability questions** – Provide a fact sheet to address liability questions and concerns.
- **Standards or guidance for planning facilities** – Recommend spacing for facilities and address how to provide facilities in sensitive ecological areas.
- **The following tools and information were requested by responses to a poll on the MST Master plan website:**
 - Amenities planning/spacing
 - Definitions & options for procuring trail sections (easements, direct acquisition)
 - EMS Response
 - Engagement strategies to build support
 - Grant programs and opportunities
 - Guidelines for working with NCDOT (utilities, railroads, etc.)
 - Maintenance standards and trail construction standards
 - Maintenance strategies (funding, low-cost options)
 - Other funding opportunities
 - Partnerships for trail development
 - Signage standards
 - Tips for working with landowners
 - Trail types and options (width, material)



Conclusions

The MST is a project that will continue to take a great deal of coordination and collaboration to complete. The successful development of trails is dependent on citizen demand for them and interest will need to continue to be generated and driven at a grass roots level. The work on the project to date has helped to shape the trail into what it is today, and the completion of over 600 miles of the trail is a wonderful accomplishment. With ongoing planning efforts across the state, there is a growing support for trail development that will help move the MST closer to completion.

The primary goal of this master plan is to provide a framework and the needed tools and resources for trail partners in Planning Segments. Creating a unified approach to development of the MST across the state allows trail partners to have the resources and information needed in one place to move the trail forward. A logical next step is to use the information gathered for Planning Segments in this master plan to create detailed segment action plans. Segment action plans would begin to refine the planned corridor for the trail and would associate roles and timelines to the segment-specific recommendations in the master plan.

Throughout the planning process, it became clear that many of the trail partners involved in continuing the development of the trail share many of the same challenges. Topics such as obtaining funding, crossing roads, dealing with environmental challenges like streams and wetlands, gaining needed community support, and working with property owners, were identified in many of the discussions held with trail partners. This planning process also highlighted that overall, communities are supportive of trails and outdoor recreation, and see the benefits of having access to trails. The correlation of trails to improve community health, tourism, economic development, and enhance quality of life was a common theme regardless of locale. By understanding the context where MST segments are planned, the master plan can be developed with the most current information and provide the appropriate resources to assist in development of the trail.

The master plan also highlighted the need to establish uniform standards and approach to signage for the trail. The development of uniform signage for the trail will have a positive impact to the trail overall. Uniform signage provides needed information and reassurance to trail users that they are staying on their route, and also identifies where they are on the trail, and where key destination points and facilities can be accessed. This information can be critical in the event of an emergency, and helps enhance the overall user experience along the trail. A consistent logo and branding also helps to promote the trail and improve marketing efforts that can lead to increased visibility and trail use.

The creation of information about the MST that is readily transferrable to the NCParks.gov website as part of this master plan is also a key component that will help further development of the trail. The trails section of the NCParks.gov website will be updated with content about trail segments, progress on planning efforts for new trail development, resources on how to get involved in MST efforts, and links to other MST resources throughout the state. With the resources included in the Trail Planning Toolbox portion of this master plan, managing organizations will have improved access and information on funding resources that may be available, what signage standards are in place for the trail, and how to address safety along the trail. By putting these resources in one location, information that can help facilitate development of the trail will be readily available to everyone.

As with any long range planning document, the MST master plan should receive regular reviews and updates over time. Master plan documents should be fluid in nature, with the ability to be adapted as new information is available, or as goals of the plan are implemented and accomplished. Given the large geographic area the MST master plan covers, the plan should be reviewed every five (5) years, and fully updated every ten (10) years. These updates will allow the plan to stay current as the MST is continually developed.

During the five year review, the MST master plan should be evaluated to determine if changes are needed to the plan due to construction of sections, designation of sections, new planning efforts underway, delays in construction or development of anticipated sections, and any other relevant changes that would create the need to update the plan. Should updates be needed during the five year review, only those elements that need to be updated will be addressed. Should no significant changes be found during the five year review, there will be no updates to the plan.

Every ten years from adoption of the MST master plan, a full update of the plan should be undertaken. This update will include a full review of all Planning Segments, including updated discussions with local jurisdictions and other key stakeholders, a re-prioritization and scoring of those segments that still fall in the 'planning' stage, and additional public outreach. The master plan should be updated with new information gathered, and all segments should be updated accordingly. The ten year update should also include review of potential Planning Segment routes. This will allow the plan to provide the most current potential alignment for a segment and reflect any changes that may have occurred that would modify a potential alignment.

The five year review, and ten year update are meant to serve as a guide to establish consistent review and updates to the plan. However, outside of these set intervals, the MST master plan can be updated at any time during its active life cycle as determined by DPR to reflect the most current and accurate information needed to continue to guide successful implementation of the master plan and development of the MST route across the state.

This master plan is intended to be a guide and a tool that will foster communication and collaboration among partners where trail development is needed. Using the strong foundations established in the MST master plan, trail partners can be better positioned to develop their specific segment of the MST. With this type of community-based effort, the trail can continue to move closer to completion and achieve the goal set out by its founders of linking the entire state together from the mountains to the sea.



Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

- **Designated Segment** – A term used in the master plan to define a geographic boundary (approximately 20-30 miles in length) in which the majority of the MST route has been officially designated through DPR.
- **Multi-use Trail** - Multi-use trail refers to a trail or pathway that can accommodate more than one type of use. For example, multi-use trails may accommodate hikers, bicyclists, and horses. The surface type for multi-use trails will vary depending on the intended uses of the trail.
- **Natural Surface Trail** - Natural surface trails are unpaved trails.
- **North Carolina Trails Committee** - The North Carolina Trails Committee is a seven-member citizens committee appointed by the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Members advise the department and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation on all trails issues.
- **Planning Segment** – A term used in the master plan to define a geographic boundary (approximately 20-30 miles in length) in which the majority of the MST has yet to be planned with a detailed alignment, constructed or designated.
- **Section** – A portion of the trail within the jurisdictional boundaries of a **single** agency or organization, who serves as the sponsor of that section.
- **Section Sponsor** – A section sponsor is any agency or organization that owns, holds an easement, or lease to the land the trail utilizes and that enters into an agreement with the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation to maintain their section of trail as a part of the MST. The section sponsor, in coordination with adjoining section sponsors, is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of the trail within their section, including its location, appearance, surface, uses and amenities. Section sponsors retain authority on lands under their jurisdiction. Section sponsors are encouraged to showcase places of natural, scenic, historic and cultural significance; to feature the diversity of natural communities and landscapes in the state; and to consider the needs of both long and short distance trail users.
- **Segment** – In the master plan, this term is used to describe and organize information for a length of trail between two defined points within the MST planning corridor. Generally these segments are 20 to 30 miles in length, with common features of geography, topography, completion status, or other factors defining the two points. The master planning process divided the 1,000 mile trail into two types, a Planning Segment and a Designated Segment, for ease of discussion and organization of information. Each segment may contain **multiple** sections.
- **Single-track** - A narrow trail that is intended for a single use.
- **Task Force** – Much of the work to build and maintain the MST is completed by volunteers. These volunteers typically are organized in task forces that focus on an identified geographic area. The statewide Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail organizes and supports the task forces, and is able to assist a section sponsor in maintaining and managing their section of the trail.



Appendix B: Summary of Comments received on the Draft Master Plan

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
General		<p>Commenter has been using the term “segment” to refer to the 18 segments of our “current” route which allows people to complete treks across the state. These segments include both designated trail and the road and paddle routes used to connect them. We are concerned that the master plan segments will be confused with our current route segments, particularly since the number of segments are coincidentally the same. Since we have already published documents using that term, it would be helpful if State Parks could choose another term such as “section” to describe its subdivisions of the trail route.</p>	<p>We agree that the term segment has become confusing. We will use the term “segment” to refer to portions of the trail, generally 20 to 30 miles in length, with common features of geography, topography, completion status, or other factors. The master plan divides the 1,000-mile trail into Designated Segments and Planning Segments for ease of discussion and organization of information. Each segment may contain multiple trail sections.</p> <p>We will use the term “section” to refer to a portion of the trail within the jurisdictional boundaries of a single agency or organization, who serves as the sponsor of that section. A Section Sponsor is any agency or organization that owns the land the trail utilizes and that enters into an agreement with the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation to maintain their section of trail as a part of the MST. The Section Sponsor, in coordination with adjoining Section Sponsors, is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of the trail within their Section, including its location, appearance, surface, uses and amenities. Section Sponsors retain authority on lands under their jurisdiction.</p>
General		<p>Have you seen Senate Bill 486? It has a lot of possibilities for the MST and creates a new funding source for the trail and connectors.</p>	<p>DPR is aware of Senate Bill 486 and will consider how it impacts the MST and other trails.</p>
General		<p>There is no analysis of funding or staffing needs to complete, maintain and manage a trail of this size and potential and no recommendations for where funding might come from beyond a list of existing grant sources. There is no discussion of a proactive plan to develop existing and new sources of funds coordinated statewide. There is no discussion of State budget funding and no discussion of the advantages of advocating for and achieving a more certain and continuing source of funding.</p>	<p>It is impossible to know the funding or staffing needs to complete, maintain and manage a trail of this size, because each segment of the trail will be planned, built and managed in accordance with the needs and wishes of each local section sponsor. DPR will continue to seek and support sources of funding that will enable section sponsors to complete their individual sections. The web site will continue to be updated to reflect current funding sources and ideas.</p>
General		<p>The printed presentation is difficult to interpret with broad lines on a little map.</p>	<p>Broad lines are used to depict a corridor rather than a defined route. The mapping will be available on the DPR MST master plan website and will include enhanced</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			functionality to allow users to zoom and move around to areas of interest.
General		Thank you for your professional excellence in providing a content rich document and planning framework for completing the MST.	Comment noted
General		Support the plan as designed.	Comment noted
General		Great Job! Thank you for putting all this information together in one, organized place. This is a much needed plan that will, I believe, serve the state, local partners, and interested citizens quite well.	Comment noted
General		This is a nice report of the status of the planned MST as it existed several years ago. However, it doesn't appear to reflect reality and the effort made to find alternate routes to overcome significant obstacles. This is true particularly in the West as the trail goes from the GSMNP to Waterrock Knob and in the East from Falls Lake Dam to the Neusiok Trail. I feel this is more of a status report than a plan for implementation. It might be helpful if some of the people working on this plan hiked a significant portion of their planned route.	It is understood that there are places along the designated and planned route where shifts have been made for various reasons. Content will be added to the plan to address these situations. While the master plan document represents a point in time, the NCParks.gov website will be updated to reflect changes on the ground.
General		It would help if RTP grant money was released sooner	Comment noted
General		Excellent overall; glad there now will be a master plan!	Comment noted
General		On page 68 in your conclusions you acknowledge that the demand and interest for trails will need to be driven at the grass roots level. However the plan is a typical product often promoted by government that does its best to limit and relegate to the back row any significant involvement by private citizens in the planning and "ownership" of the trail. One should look to the relationship between the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the federal government for a model relationship between private and public efforts in the establishment and nurturing of a long trail. With any luck this plan will be placed on the shelf and State Parks will lose interest in the trail and private citizens will continue to move it forward as they have been doing.	DPR recognizes and appreciates the vital role of section sponsors as well as non-profit organizations, clubs, and individual interested citizens in the planning, construction, and maintenance of the trail. Every effort was made to recognize these vital roles in the master plan.
General		The draft provides no details about how State Parks will work to achieve the goals of the master plan. For example, there is no:	The master plan is focused on the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. We understand that the trail will be completed in sections which will be planned and

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) establishment of a continuing planning process that is inclusive, transparent and efficient; b) methodology for adjusting priorities as circumstances change; c) methodology for adjusting the planned or existing trail route if circumstances change; d) recommendation for resolving public confusion created by the difference between FMST’s maps which depict the current route which allows people to hike across the state now (see plan cover letter and page 51) and State Park’s maps which depict only the designated and planned routes e) ranking/suggestions from a statewide perspective, only on a segment-by-segment basis: f) suggestion for strategies or actions that could be coordinated at the state level; g) method for speeding up completion of the trail; h) determination of who will be in charge of carrying out each of the segment recommendations (pages 42-47) and what the timeline for each will be. 	<p>constructed at times different than those predicted in the master plan. The master plan document is intended to be a current summary, while the NCParks.gov website is intended to be updated as plans and information change. The limited funding and time available for the master plan contract put constraints on the amount of detail that could be included for such a massive project. It is DPR’s intention to update the NCParks.gov website after the master plan contract is concluded, thereby continuing to add information and detail.</p> <p>Regarding a and b: A recommendation will be added to update the plan every 10 years. The website will be updated on an ongoing basis, as noted above.</p> <p>Regarding c: The following language will be added on page 8 along with Segment Descriptions: The planned route shown in this master plan is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon landowners’ willingness to participate, the feasibility of road and river crossings, the participation of other agencies, and other factors important to the section sponsor. In addition, even a section of trail within a Designated Segment may need to be realigned to address environmental or maintenance issues, to include additional amenities, or for other reasons.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			<p>Regarding d: The best way to resolve confusion created by different maps is to clarify that the master plan is focused on the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail, and does not address the multiple temporary options/alternative ways that thru-hikers may choose to complete a hike across the state in the interim.</p> <p>The following text to page 8 after the two types of segments are described and prior to the segment information sheets.</p> <p>Where there are currently gaps between Designated Segments of the MST, hikers may choose to use temporary alternative routes including adjacent paddle routes or bicycle routes to complete the entire trip from the mountains to the sea. The Friends of the MST identifies alternative routes for this purpose and provides information and guidebooks to aid trail users on their website. While the Friends of the MST recognizes the significant accomplishment of those using alternative routes to cross the state and DPR recognizes the importance of providing options for those wishing to complete the entire trip now; in this master plan and in its work, DPR is focused on completion of the entire primary route of the MST hiking trail from Clingmans Dome to Jockey’s Ridge, as described on the following pages.</p> <p>Regarding h: The timeline for the segment recommendations will be guided by the planning priority (near-, mid-, long-term) based on input from the section sponsors. Flexibility in the recommendations will allow section sponsors to move forward action items as circumstances and priorities change within their region and community.</p>
General		The draft master plan fails completely to address camping facilities. All of the serious hikers of the MST are going to	DPR recognizes the importance of campsites and other amenities along the trail. The scope of this project did not

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		want to camp every 15 miles, and the lack of campsites will limit the trail's traffic and enjoyment. The availability of camping in existing parks and natural areas, and most importantly, the priority of creating camping opportunities in public areas needs to be quickly included in the final master plan. The FMST has done a great job of identifying camping areas, but it should be the NC parks department which, for example, sets the tone for making camping available at Occoneechee Mt. Camping seems to be something no one wants to talk about, but it is vital to the hikability of the MST in future years.	allow us to identify the current locations of amenities and identify the need for additional amenities. We will rely on section sponsors to consider amenities and provide information about amenities along the trail. The DPR MST Master plan website will provide a link to information provided by section sponsors. To encourage section sponsors to plan for and provide amenities, a new tool will be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox to address campgrounds.
Geography	All	FMST and other non-profit task forces are not listed as additional planning stakeholders for any of the segments. We believe they should be as citizen volunteers and staff in these organizations have valuable knowledge of the trail and user preferences that are vital for making good planning decisions.	As a statewide organization FMST is considered a stakeholder across all trail segments and was treated similarly to DPR, which is also not listed on the individual sheets. We agree that it would be useful to have both FMST and DPR listed on each sheet so that it is clear and understood that these stakeholders should be included in trail efforts.
Geography	Alternative route	Show the "blueway" segments as complete and designated, with a note that the land trail segments are not complete, but under study etc...	DPR and this master plan are focused on completion of the primary off-road hiking route extending from Clingmans Dome to Jockey's Ridge State Park. Alternative routes including paddle trails are not the focus of this plan.
Geography	Overview	GSMNP segment is not listed as one of the Designated Segments, although on page 9, it is listed.	Thank you for identifying this error. The segment names will be corrected on page 8 to: A – Great Smoky Mountains National Park B – Southern Blue Ridge C – Central Blue Ridge
Geography	Overview	Asheville Area segment is not listed as Designated Segment, although it is on page 8.	Thank you for identifying this error. The segment names will be corrected on page 8 to: A – Great Smoky Mountains National Park B – Southern Blue Ridge C – Central Blue Ridge
Geography	Planning Segments	The Outer Banks Segment is not represented at all in this portion of the plan. Why is the Outer Banks not represented? There are alternate off road alternatives in Nags Head and Dare County other than the beach. Please show a planning segment for the Outer Banks.	The Planning Segments chapter of the document focuses on areas where there is no designated trail. Within each trail segment the section sponsors may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed, and will share revised mapping with DPR when such relocations are completed. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR prior to any trail relocation that

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			would affect the trail of an adjoining section sponsors. Any trail reroute or relocation that would affect another section sponsor requires prior written approval from DPR.
Geography	Segment 01	The trail doesn't go into Cherokee. From Heintooga Road, it takes a variety of trails, goes up to Waterrock Knob and eventually to Balsam Gap. Almost all of it is now on trail now. Pg. 13 of the master plan is so old, it seems as if nothing happened since the year 2000.	We would welcome updated trail mapping/GIS data from all trail partners in areas across the state where partners are implementing planned trail. This will assist in the continual updating of the trail dataset and trail mapping.
Geography	Segment 01	I thought this route was no longer an option and this is why we have several alternate routes. The alternate routes are not marked.	This route has always been the preferred route as discussed in the Southwestern commission planning doc. At this time there are challenges associated with this route.
Geography	Segment 01	Think about alternatives if the Cherokee Nation does not allow the trail.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment 01	On page 72 there is a table which provides information about a variety of issues for each incomplete segment of the trail. Segment 1 is the planned segment from Cherokee to Balsam Gap. Under trail maintenance commitment it says that CMC has expressed interest in providing maintenance for this segment. I don't know where you got this. Carolina Mountain Club has finished building from Waterrock Knob to Balsam Gap. The two miles from Soco Gap to Waterrock Knob will be finished this year. Carolina Mountain Club is committing to building and maintaining from Heintooga Rd to Black Mountain Campground, not further west of Heintooga Road. Then the trail will be done from Clingmans Dome to Stone Mountain.	Clarification of maintenance limits noted – The table will be updated to say “for a defined portion of the segment, East of Heintooga Rd”.
Geography	Segment 01	Commenter is delighted that State Parks, the Cherokee Nation and the Blue Ridge Parkway are committed to completing this trail segment in the near-term as it will complete the MST in the mountains. We have several comments on the draft for this segment: Please note our comment about Segment A regarding the trail between Mingus Mill and the Town of Cherokee.	The clarification of maintenance limits for the Carolina Mountain Club is noted and will be corrected. The need for continued coordination between all trail partners will be addressed in the plan.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>The Carolina Mountain Club does not plan to build or maintain trail west of Heintooga Road, but FMST is eager to organize a new task force to build needed trail when State Parks and the Planning Segment Managers have finalized approval for the route.</p> <p>This is an area where additional campsites will be needed. FMST and the State Trails Program developed a proposal for the BRP in 2010 that identified potential campsites in this general area, but this proposal will need to be revisited as we understand the new proposed route is primarily along roads through the Cherokee Reservation rather directly along the parkway.</p>	
Geography	Segment 01	<p>This section was closed at the request of the BRP, and alternate routes have been pursued. This situation should be reflected. The criteria rating for this segment is flawed. One example- land owned by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation is not public land. It is not as easy to negotiate with the Cherokee Nation as it is a single landowner. Also CMC maintains a lot of the Western portion of the MST - it maintains some portions very well but others not so well. The club is able to maintain the trails best around Asheville.</p>	Segment 1 will be updated to also reflect Nation Lands under route alignment.
Geography	Segment 01	<p>On Pg. 70, the box for Trail Maintenance for this segment reads: "The Carolina Mountain Club has expressed interest in assisting with maintenance." Several aspects of this statement are incorrect. In the late 1990s, the Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) took responsibility for construction and maintenance of the MST between Balsam Gap and Heintooga Road. Construction of that portion of the MST will be completed this year and CMC will seek to have officially designated as MST as soon as the work is finished. In 2002, CMC stated that it could not accept responsibility for the MST west of Heintooga Road. That position was reiterated in 2009 and again at a meeting on May 12, 2015. CMC is proud to be responsible for 140 miles of the MST between Heintooga Road and Black Mountain Campground. We take our trail construction and maintenance responsibilities very seriously, but the area</p>	Clarification of maintenance limits noted – The plan will be updated to indicate “for a defined portion of the trail East of Heintooga Road”.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 02	<p>west of Heintooga Road is just too far for our trail maintainers to commute.</p> <p>Commenter is surprised to see this segment listed as a mid-term priority because of the community support for the trail, recent accomplishments and opportunity to designate trail on existing State Park land. Here is a summary of opportunities that we see in this segment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the recent completion of a detailed trail plan for this area b) the Elkin Valley Trails Association's impressive work to build public and government support for the trail and convince landowners to allow them to construct trail on private land c) the potential for State Parks to designate a trail route on the eastern side of Stone Mountain State Park d) An experienced FMST trail volunteer has offered to lead a volunteer task force on the Stone Mountain State Park section of the trail. That effort has been on hold awaiting a new superintendent for the park. 	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 02	<p>Northeast Wilkes, largely due to Trail Town adjustment to economic impact criteria, should probably be moved to the near term priority rank. Further, the Stone Mountain State Park Route could be an immediate candidate for designation.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 02	<p>The Elkin Valley Trails Association (EVTA) has built sections of trail over Wells Knob and at Grassy Creek Vineyard area. Byrd's Branch Campground with showers, country store, RV Hook-ups, etc. are underway. EVTA has roughed in trail from Stone Mountain to Tirap Hill Road and is completing this trail. Landowners along the entire route have been contacted with the majority of landowners favorable. Please note that a major portion of</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		the this segment is in Surry County proper and EVTA has enjoy excellent support from Surry County and Elkin proper (mostly in Surry County though part of the town of Elkin is in Wilkes County. Large horseback riding community engaged in the 14 miles of the trail.	flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 02	Commenter would like to consider purchase of several tracts in Wilkes County as parks.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment 03	Commenter is surprised to see this segment listed as a long-term priority given the recent completion of a plan for the trail in this area and the work that Surry and Yadkin counties have been doing to acquire land and easements for the trail. They also have a strong task force in the Elkin Valley Trails Association which can help build and maintain trail in this area.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 03	Commenter has obtained multiple easements (handshake and/or signed) from Elkin to the Mitchell River on the Surry side. Jonesville has developed but not opened two miles of trail on the Yadkin side. Hopefully the two trail committees will work together and have primary route designations on both sides of the Yadkin River to eliminate competition. Potential industrial farming chicken house smells near Pilot Mountain. EVTA works closely with the Surry County and the Surry Parks and Recreation Department, Dan White. EVTA works closely with the Town of Elkin and it Parks and Recreation Dept, Adam McComb.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add floodplains/no rise studies	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add topography	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add rail crossings	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Yadkin River State Trail – paddle trail – consider duplicate access for MST.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Abandoned RR – Elkin is a Rail-Trail project.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 03	Leveraging work of EVTA and Sauratown Trails – get them to work together.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Landowners are supportive.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Leverage interest in paddling on the Yadkin River	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Leverage work of Mt. Airy, Dobson, and Pilot on trails – eventual greenway connector to MST.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Leverage the success of the Piedmont Triad COG in planning trails	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	The Piedmont Triad COG study (Mark Allred) shows interest in trails.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	A partnership between two counties and organizations would move this to mid-term.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Trout fishing and wine tourism industry plus Historic Rockford increase the potential economic impact.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Elkin and Jonesville are potential segment managers.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add stakeholder – Rockford Historic Preservation Society – well-established partner	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add stakeholder – Yadkin River Keepers	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add stakeholder – Yadkin Valley Heritage	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add stakeholder – EVTA	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 03	Add stakeholder – Sauratown Trails Association	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 04	Although commenter agrees that this entire segment is a challenging one to complete, there are three focused projects of relatively low cost that could significantly improve the experience of MST hikers and provide great economic benefit to the Town of Danbury and Surry County. When these projects are complete, it will be easy for a hiker to do a multi-day trek on the MST from Hanging Rock State Park to Pilot Mountain State Park with starting and ending points in the Town of Danbury and the Town of Pilot Mountain. The three projects are:	<p>These comments are appropriate to consider in segment action or regional plan rather than in the master plan.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Parks could acquire land to bring the Hanging Rock State Park boundary to the town limits of Danbury. • The Town of Danbury and Stokes County with assistance from FMST and other county non-profits could build a pedestrian bridge over the Dan River in Danbury's Moratock Park. • Friends of the Sauratown Mountains could build new trail in Hanging Rock State Park to bring MST hikers through the park directly to the quiet town streets in Danbury rather than out to busy NC 89/8 if State Parks acquires the land described in 21a above. 	<p>that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p>
Geography	Segment 04	<p>The map shows an outdated route along Indian Creek inside the park and continuing along the Dan River into the Town of Danbury. Both DPR and FMST have been working for a while now to directly connect Hanging Rock State Park and the Town of Danbury with a trail on park property.</p>	<p>The planning corridor shown represent the best available data at the time of the master plan. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p>
Geography	Segment 04	<p>A new trail is already approved in the HARO master plan although one parcel needs to be added to the park to make this connection. The Friends of Sauratown Mountains has already agreed to construct this trail once we have secured the additional parcel need. The route on your map would be along the finger of park land that is partially obscured by "Hanging Rock SP" and the Friends of Sauratown Mountains will be the segment manager for this as well as other MST within the park boundaries.</p>	<p>The planning corridor shown represent the best available data at the time of the master plan. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.
Geography	Segment 04	As we discussed previously, the Friends of Sauratown Mountains is a 501 (c) (3) and has a MOA with both PIMO and HARO as the Friends group for both parks. Since Segment 4 will include trail within the park, FSM should also be shown as a potential segment manager.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 04	We would also be willing to work on the trail between the towns of Danbury and Walnut Cove to a point where the trail can connect with the former A&Y railroad bed.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 04	Add floodplains/no rise study	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 04	Potential shift from Hanging Rock into Danbury	The planning corridor shown represent the best available data at the time of the master plan. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data.
Geography	Segment 04	Consider leveraging the paddle access points along the Dan River	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 04	Identify additional planning stakeholders – Walnut Cove, etc. to move things forward.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 05	Better coordinate efforts between county, Stokesdale, and Summerfield on A & Y. Is it MST? Then let's move on as such.	This will be noted as a Recommendation for this segment.
Geography	Segment 05	Better coordinate efforts between Stokesdale/Summerfield and county on A&Y Greenway	This will be noted as a recommendation for this segment.
Geography	Segment 05, 08, 09	We suffer because of uncertainty of route(s). It means we have so many things to work on but are they the right pieces to work on?	The multiple developing and expanding trail systems in this area will be noted as a challenges and coordination between adjoining section sponsors will be necessary into the future.
Geography	Segment 07	Greenway funding challenges	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 07	Active cycling community in Forsyth County	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 07	Leverage active work of Bethania Trails system	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 08	The score for this segment is high. The Greenway between High Point & Greensboro has been worked on since 1980 and is yet to be completed. The cities tend to get their portion done, but outside the cities the demand and use is much lower - it will be a more difficult challenge than indicated	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 08	Additional challenge – major roadway crossings	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 08	I-73 being built now. Crossing could be an issue. There is a pedestrian tunnel closer to Summerfield being built into the project.	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 08	Add major road crossings	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 08	Some wetlands	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 08	Support for trails in county and municipalities	Thank you for this additional information. It will be considered in updates to the information for this segment.
Geography	Segment 09	Table 2, Page 40-41: Note that segment 9 is also included within the Haw River Trail and is an area of collaboration for the Haw River Trail Partnership - perhaps this increased the planning priority for segment 9.	This information will be used to update the segment information sheet and scoring.
Geography	Segment 09	I do not support the alternative route which would extend along Reedy Creek. While this would be a great trail, should be completed and may serve as a great "current route" option, I would hope that the MST designated trail would connect to Haw River State Park and follow the Haw River Trail. This connection with Haw River State Park is in line with the original vision of the MST.	The preference and commitment of the MST route moving along the Haw River Trail and connecting with Haw River State Park is noted.
Geography	Segment 09	Finish spur from Northern Guilford High School to HRSP. Connectivity, ROW almost done, little interest by County to do anything.	Comment noted

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 09	Opportunities – it seems easy to connect since the trails in this area are existing/in process at Haw River State Park.	The potential connections are noted as opportunities for this segment.
Geography	Segment 09	Opportunities – Adding an additional county would be good for expanding the scope of the project.	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment 09	Opportunities – Rockingham is a Tier 1 county and it would be great to add this resource to the county.	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment 09	Also note that The Haw River Trail Partnership should be added under "Additional Planning Stakeholders".	Thank you for this additional information. The plan will be revised accordingly.
Geography	Segment 09	Note that The Haw River Trail is planned to extend along the Haw River from Haw River State Park in Guilford and Rockingham counties through Alamance County to Lake State Park in Chatham County. Suggested edits: Under Description and following "To:", the words "Alamance County Haw River Trail" seems to suggest that the Haw River Trail is only in Alamance county - perhaps remove "Haw River Trail" and keep only "Alamance County". Also, clarify in the description with the following or similar sentence "This segment extends from the Greensboro Watershed Trails north in Rockingham County along the Haw River Trail to Alamance County."	Thank you for these suggestions. We will revise the description following "To" to read "Alamance County line at the Haw River. The Description will be revised as suggested.
Geography	Segment 09	Actively looking at connecting MST and Beaches to Bluegrass trail (VA)	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment 09	Please have Guilford County staff finish the spur from Northern H.S. to HRSP with help of volunteers.	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment 09	We are glad to see the MST on the shores of the Greensboro Watershed Trail, however it would be even better when it connects to the Haw River State Park, if it would also connect to the projected trail system on the maps that would connect Reidsville's Greenway to Lake Reidsville's dam. That....would be the greatest!! The Piedmont Triad Regional Council and the Dan River Basin Assoc. have an interest in seeing the trail being connected to existing and mapped trails planned for the future. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council and Greensboro trail groups have a great set of plans for viewing.	This information will be added to the Opportunities identified.
Geography	Segment 09	Designated staff person in Rockingham County working on trails	The scoring will be revised based on this information.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 09	Determine route for Eastern Guilford County so county can work with volunteers on these sections. Hines Chapel to NE Park.	Identifying the detailed alignment will be noted as a challenge for this segment.
Geography	Segment 10	Regarding Anticipated construction activity: Note that the Town Of Haw River has completed construction of the Red Slide Park (see #5 above). Current construction is underway by Alamance County Recreation and Parks and the Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail to compete an approximate 4-mile section that will connect to designated MST trail at Stoney Creek Marina to constructed HRT trail at Red Slide Park.	This information will be used to update the segment information sheet and scoring.
Geography	Segment 10	Regarding economic impact: The Haw River Trail, specifically the Paddle trail (blue trail), has provided much ecotourism and draws in visitors from across the state. As the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan area continues to grow, the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea trail will provide health benefits to the community. Also, note that the town of Saxapahaw is very supportive of the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea trail and is well suited as a “trail town”.	This information will be used to update the segment information sheet and scoring.
Geography	Segment 10	Regarding connectivity: The Haw River Trail is planned to connect Haw River State Park to Jordan Lake State Park	The scoring for connectivity measures whether the trail segment would connect two Designated Segments of trail.
Geography	Segment 10	Would a County Wide rec department or plan be a way to staff or fund the Rockingham County portion?	County-wide recreation departments and regional (county-wide or COG) plans have been successful in moving forward other segments of trail and may be an option to consider locally.
Geography	Segment 10	Note that Figure 3 (pg 9) does not reflect the designated sections of trail. The map shown for segment 10 indicates the planned corridor of the Haw River Trail/ Mountains-to-Sea Trail does not follow the River near the town of Ossippee. This is incorrect; the yellow line should follow the river to Shallow Ford Natural Area. The yellow line south of Shallow Ford Natural Area is Correct. I am not certain what the green “open space” just south of Shallow Ford Natural Area is representing.	Designated Segments of trail are shown in green on Figure 3. The planning corridor shown represents the best available data at the time of the master plan. In any case where there are section sponsors with an updated planned route please forward this information to DPR to assist in updating and maintaining accurate database record as shifts in the planned route occur. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. The open space is a USDA Conservation Easement and will be labeled.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 10	FMST's Alamance Task Force builds and maintains trail in this segment.	The Alamance Task Force will be added as Planning Stakeholders
Geography	Segment 10	Note that The Haw River Trail is planned to extend along the Haw River from Haw River State Park in Guilford and Rockingham counties through Alamance County to Jordan Lake State Park in Chatham County. Therefore, The Haw River Trail is part of both Segment 9 and Segment 10. To date (5/15/2015) three sections of the Haw River Trail are designated: 1) Great Bend Park at Glencoe to Stoney Creek Marina (~3 mi), 2) Shallow Ford Natural Area segment [section] (~1 mi), 3) Swepsonville River Park section (~1 mi). Additional constructed, but not designated sections include: 1) the Glencoe section from Indian Valley Paddle Access to Great Bend Park at Glencoe (~1 mi) located north of Burlington and 2) Red Slide Park section from Highway 70 to Highway 49 located in the town of Haw River (~0.75 mi). I recently requested and received information regarding designation of the Haw River Trail in Saxapahaw. I will also submit an application for designation of the section currently under construction from Stoney Creek Marina to Red Slide Park (~4 mi) as well the two open sections mentioned above, called "Haw River" and "north of Burlington under "Constructed Trails". I believe the latter two sections were submitted for designation a year or so ago but were not approved at that time. Please review the words under "Constructed Trails:" and "Designated Segments within Planned Segments".	This information will be used to review the segment information sheet and scoring.
Geography	Segment 10	Consider revising the description for Segment 10 to clarify the extent of the Haw River Trail (see above) and the connection with Reedy Creek. Suggestions: After "From" replace "Alamance County northwest border" with "Haw River Trail at the Guildford-Alamance County line". Consider revising the description with: "This segment joins the Haw River Trail at the Guildford-Alamance County line and extends south along the Haw River Trail to Cane Creek and follows Cane Creek North into Orange County." Under Opportunities: Note that the Haw River	This information will be used to update the segment information sheet and scoring.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>Paddle trail is now complete through the extent of Alamance County from Brooks Bridge Paddle Access in Guilford County to the Alamance-Orange-Chatham County line (the southernmost Paddle Access in Alamance County is located at Old-Greensboro Chapel Hill Highway). Note also that the Alamance County recently approved a trails plan for the entire county which includes the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea Trail as top priority and planned trail connections along additional waterways as second priority. Under Challenges: Consider adding road crossings, specifically Highway 70 (Three Governors Bridge).</p>	
Geography	Segment 10	<p>Under "Geography of the MST Recommendations" on Page 45, please consider the following: The first bullet seems irrelevant given that I recently received information from NCDPR regarding designation the Haw River Trail Partnership is in regular communication with staff of NCDPR. Bullet two is necessary, funding for bridges is a challenging issue; as is design and logistics (including funding) for large/long bridges (>22ft). Road crossings can also be a problem of time and funding if collaboration with NCDOT is needed. Bullet three is necessary. Consider also adding a bullet to reflect the tourism and economic development benefits in Alamance County. The Haw River Trail, specifically the Paddle trail (blue trail), has provided much ecotourism and draws in visitors from across the state. As the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan area continues to grow, the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea trail will provide health benefits to the community. Also, note that the town of Saxapahaw is very supportive of the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea trail and is well suited as a "trail town".</p>	<p>This information will be considered in updates to the Recommendations.</p>
Geography	Segment 10	<p>Ask for GIS limits of new trail section under construction.</p>	<p>Updated data has been requested.</p>
Geography	Segment 10	<p>Consider acquiring Alston Quarter property at Alamance/Orange County line.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>I would say the County priority is focusing on completing gaps between Hillsborough Riverwalk and ERSP and then Hillsborough Riverwalk and Occoneechee Mountain SNA and Orange County Seven Mile Creek Preserve. All in near term (3-5 years).</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			<p>prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation to further subdivide Planning Segment 11. This segment is approximately 19 miles – the goal was to consider Planning Segments in lengths of 20-30 miles. For a statewide plan, it is not feasible to further prioritize sub-segments within a Planning Segment. However; the intent of the prioritization is to identify where substantial progress can be made within a Planning Segment in the near-term, mid-term, or long-term. This does not mean that the entire segment would be complete in the identified period. It is anticipated that the detailed information provided for Segment 11 will result in a change to the priority for this segment.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	It may be helpful to identify a few strategic divisions within this segment in order to characterize them differently due to different levels of priority and circumstances. Example 11a, 11b, 11c.	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation to further subdivide Planning Segment 11. This segment is approximately 19 miles – the goal was to consider Planning Segments in lengths of 20-30 miles. For a statewide plan, it is not feasible to further prioritize sub-segments within a Planning Segment. However; the intent of the prioritization is to identify where substantial progress can be made within a Planning Segment in the near-term, mid-term, or long-term. This does not mean that the entire segment would be complete in the identified period. It is</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			<p>anticipated that the detailed information provided for Segment 11 will result in a change to the priority for this segment.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>Commenter is surprised by the low ranking of this segment because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the substantial amount of public land, b) staff and funding support from Orange County to lead efforts, c) substantial community and local government support, d) commitment for trail maintenance from FMST's Orange County Task Force, and e) the location of this segment between two segments ranked as near-term priorities. 	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>Although a significant portion of the trail within this Segment 11 has not been delineated, there has been a considerable amount of effort to identify the alignments for two sub-sections of this segment. There are opportunities for extending the trail from Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area to Orange County's Seven Mile Creek Preserve. This three-mile segment has been identified as a high priority for Orange County, and, as such, could be considered a "near-term" planning priority. Likewise, a proposed eight-mile section of the trail would pass through land owned by the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) near its Cane Creek Reservoir. OWASA is supportive of the MST running through this land as long as it would not compromise water quality and the security of the reservoir and the adjacent land owners. We hereby request that NC State Parks reconsider the scoring for Segment 11 and perhaps divide this corridor into sub-segments with differing levels of planning priority – portions of which could be identified as near-term or mid-term.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation to further subdivide Planning Segment 11. This segment is approximately 19 miles – the goal was to consider Planning Segments in lengths of 20-30 miles. For a statewide plan, it is not feasible to further prioritize sub-segments within a Planning Segment. However; the intent of the prioritization is to identify where substantial progress can be made within a Planning Segment in the near-term, mid-term, or long-term. This does not mean that the entire segment would be complete in the identified period. It is anticipated that the detailed information provided for Segment 11 will result in a change to the priority for this segment.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>...When we moved here last year, we immediately heard about one neighbor who was adamantly opposed to the MST through public lands at the back of our</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>neighborhood. We were thrilled at the prospect, and sought to learn more. Indeed, we were excited to learn of the possibility. IN the past year, the majority of this neighborhood is not only excited, but proactively working to see the MST segment through public lands in our "backyards" be a top priority. Indeed, the wooded and pastured landscape is ideal, as even in walking these trails, homes and private property would be scarcely noticed. I am afraid that if this is NOT a priority, the acquisition of land at a later date would be much more difficult. This area (in my opinion) is one of the most beautiful in the Piedmont, and a trail for hikers would make it appropriately accessible to those for whom walking is a primary means of celebrating Creation. I also see that this region would have a number of volunteers (my husband and I among them) to work on the trail. Please move this section up as high as is possible on your priority list.</p>	<p>potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>... I encourage the planning committee to move the SW Orange segment to the near term priority. There is considerable support in our neighborhood for this section of the MST and it would provide a much needed source of recreation for this part of the county. Routing the MST through available OWASA public lands would provide an opportunity for the public to experience the natural beauty and serenity of this area and help ensure that timber management options for those areas visible from the trail would maximize aesthetics and forest cover to protect water quality, and the flora and fauna associated with mature hardwood forest. Neighborhood support for the MST through OWASA lands has certain caveats which include it being a footpath (no bicycles, motorized vehicles, horses), open dawn to dusk with no overnight camping or fires, and the county being able to provide suitable locations for access to the trail which do not impact the two private roads serving the subdivisions in the area (Thunder Mountain Road and Mt Mitchell Road). The distances of the proposed trail route to nearby residences are large and for the sections I have walked in</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		the Fall when the leaves were off the trees, I was unable to see any residences served by the two private roads. For areas beyond our immediate neighborhood, there is a need to move the priority to near term because there are currently many large tracts of undeveloped private land through which the trail could be routed but it will be more difficult to negotiate these over time as parcels are sold and subdivided.	
Geography	Segment 11	This segment needs to move to near-term priority. Some of the land already is in public hands (OWASA). County staff is equipped and ready to expedite the planning process. The highest priority of our recently completed master park plan based on resident comments was more walking and hiking trails. We can work with residents to allay fears and counter fear tactics.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	... I support the alignment trail through the Cane Creek Reservoir properties. Care must be taken to work with adjacent land owners to provide ingress and egress from the OWASA Cane Creek properties that are palatable and sensible, and which are acceptable to the Township residents.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	I am specifically commenting on the southwest Orange County segment. This segment has been given a low priority for development, and I speak against that low priority. The OC segment has significant public lands and has strong support from a number of people whose property is adjacent to, very close to, the proposed trail, particularly the segment of the trail over the property of the Orange Water and Sewer Authority. I propose that the trail through southwest Orange County be place in the near term priority rank.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	...Several years ago we were told by our staff that we were waiting for the State Master Plan before working on the details of our plan. Now, surprising to me, the draft Master Plan shows the Southwest Orange segment us as a	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent

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		<p>long-term priority with the lowest number of points, in part because staff noted that another segment in Orange County is of highest priority. I have spoken to others of my colleagues, and we certainly do not want to be categorized as a long-term priority. We are committed to working on the plan. With the direction by the Board of County Commissioners, staff will work on projects designated as high priority. In the plan I see other segments with challenges in coordinating easements across private lands but they are rated as a mid-term priority -- such the Atlantic and Yadkin greenway. Many of the other long-term priorities do not have staffing resources. Orange County has the staffing resources.</p>	<p>prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>It seems that the priority placed by Orange County staff on one segment is a reason for a low rating on several criteria. This presumes lack of interest which is not the case.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>... I believe there is significant local interest in moving forward on the SE segment of the trailing including the sections that include OWASA property.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.</p>
Geography	Segment 11	<p>The assessment which resulted in this segment being assigned a Long Term planning priority does not accurately reflect the realities of the MST opportunities in Southern Orange County. This section consists of 3 sub-segments: (a) the OWASA reservoir lands (b) the section between Buckhorn Road and Orange County's Seven Mile creek preserve, and (c) the section from seven mile creek to Occoneechee Mt. St. Natural Area. Planning for the trail</p>	<p>Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be</p>

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		corridors for sub-sections (a) and (c) are well-underway, and should be designated near term. Sub-section (b) has no natural corridor and will take much longer to acquire trail route easements or land ownership. In the interim, the lack of a designated trail route is impeding progress.	flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	<p>These comments relate to the scores assigned to Segment 11. Percent of trail constructed or designated: The upper and lower ends of this section have been designated by Orange County. This is over 50% of this section. Score should be 8. Level of planning: This is scored correctly. Anticipated construction activity: The timeline has not been established because agreement with OWASA is contingent on connectivity at both ends. Once a route is designated, a timeline can quickly be established. Score should be 5. Timeframe for completion: Orange County staff priority reflects what is near completion. The upper and lower segments can be completed within 5 years. Orange County and the FMST can propose a road section connecting the two. Score at least a 2. Connectivity: Segment 11 connects the two sections west and east of this segment, which are "near term". Score should be 10. Percent of corridor with public land: Not only is 45% of this section on public or institutional land, but agreements in principle with the owning organizations are already in place. Large parcels near the corridor: While individual parcels may be less than 100 acres, more than 1/3 of the acreage belongs to OWASA, OC, or other conservancy groups. Score should be 5. Implementation challenges: None of the challenges listed is a show-stopper. Rt. 54 poses a challenge, but not a problem. Neighborhood opposition is a non-issue. OWASA agreement could be finalized in 2015. Score should be 5. Level of staff support: Orange County staff support has been underrated. With commitment from the OC BOCC all necessary planning resources would be available. Score should be 10. Funding resources available: Correct. Trail maintenance commitment: Orange County Parks and Rec has agreed in its master plan to provide maintenance for the trail segments in Orange County. Score should be 10. Demonstrated demand for trail: The upper end of the</p>	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.

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		segment 11 is a priority because finalization is within reach, but the demand for the completion of this trail section is a high priority for the Parks and Rec council and the FMST. Score should be 10. Potential economic impact of trail Completion of this section would have a high economic return for both Hillsborough and Saxapahaw, both strategically situated to be "trail towns". Score should be 10.	
Geography	Segment 11	Connect ERSP to Hillsborough Riverwalk to Occoneechee Mountain SNA to Seven Mile Creek Preserve.	This information will be used to update the Opportunities description for this segment.
Geography	Segment 11	Also, on page 6 of the draft master plan, the map includes text about Orange County's draft master plan. This should be updated to note that it is included in the adopted Orange County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (adopted November 2014).	This information will be updated.
Geography	Segment 11	Lack of camping areas	This challenge is better addressed in a small area plan and has not been considered at the state-wide scale.
Geography	Segment 11	Trailheads and parking in the Apple Creek Dam area	This challenge is better addressed in a small area plan and has not been considered at the state-wide scale.
Geography	Segment 11	A repeat of the comment made on "timeframe for completion". Why is one staff priority a reason for being rated low on two criteria?	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	The county and OWASA are prepared to work on the alignment. I understood that we were waiting for the state Master Plan. This segment is the only one to receive 0 points, yet the challenges do not seem that different from others who received at least 2 points.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	Not only does the very recently approved county Parks and Recreation Master Plan identify the MTST, but the	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		highest rated statement was the one endorsing a trail system which links various parts of the county.	specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	We do have the appropriate level of staff support at the county level to do the necessary planning.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	There are a few privately owned properties on the map shown as Institutional because they are encumbered by conservation easements held by OWASA. The conservation easements don't open the land for public recreational use, so perhaps the labeling should be modified in some fashion to reflect this situation.	Thank you for this information. It will be considered in updates to the map.
Geography	Segment 11	The OWASA lands are a great trail route that could quickly be made usable. Also Seven Mile Creek.	Thank you for this information. It will be considered in updates to the Opportunities.
Geography	Segment 11	We can develop a timeline for construction on the OWASA property with direction from our board. OWASA has previously expressed its commitment to this project.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	The recent opening of Riverwalk in Hillsborough, to which the MTST connects, has already been shown to be an economic boom. The completion of the Southwest Orange segment would greatly enhance the economic boom, especially with a hotel being planned, etc. There is no mention of how the section through OWASA lands is an attraction for canoeing.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be

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			flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	Planning priority should be short term to reflect Orange County PARC master plan (2015). Needs to be near term.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	The segment contains two very different areas: OWASA reservoir lands – in progress, and Buckhorn Road to Seven Mile Creek – on road only.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	The staff priority on the segment between Occoneechee Mountain and Eno River State Park does NOT exclude the Southwest Orange segment from being prioritized.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.
Geography	Segment 11	Other segments receive 10 points because they have staff and they maintain their greenways. Why does Orange County only receive 5 points when we do maintain our parks? The Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail has already indicated they would also provide trail maintenance assistance.	Thank you for providing this detailed information. One of the goals of the public comment period was to gather specific information that could be used to validate and potentially adjust the scoring and subsequent prioritization of Planning Segments. This information will be considered in the revisions to the plan. Please also note that the prioritization approach is intended to be flexible and can be adjusted as progress is made or the context changes.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 12	<p>a. The map for this segment shows a portion of trail between Falls Lake and US 501 (Roxboro Road) as “Planned Route.” This portion has already been constructed, and the segment managers with FMST assistance are preparing an application for designation of this trail as MST.</p> <p>b. FMST’s Eno River Task Force builds and maintains this segment.</p> <p>c. Hillsborough and Orange County have informed NCDOT of the planned trail location under US 70.</p> <p>d. Specific needs for this segment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. For State Parks to acquire the three remaining tracts of land/easements within Eno River State Park needed to complete the trail from Pleasant Green Road to the US 70 bridge. Several years ago the landowner of one of these tracts offered to donate the easement, but State Parks has not yet acted to accept it. ii. Once the land is acquired, FMST’s Eno River Task Force will organize volunteers to build the remaining trail as it has done in other areas of Eno River State Park. iii. A safe way to cross the Eno River at or near Pleasant Green Road must be developed either through construction of a new pedestrian bridge or by retro-fitting the existing road bridge. 	<p>a. The map will be adjusted to reflect this segment as constructed.</p> <p>b. The FMST will be listed on all segment sheets rather than individual task forces.</p> <p>c. This information will be added under Challenges.</p> <p>d. Regarding the specific needs identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. DPR’s land protection specialist continue to work with prioritized needs within the State Parks system to make connections. ii. This information will be added to Opportunities. iii. This information will be added to Challenges
Geography	Segment 12	Check the Eno River State Park - most recent property acquisitions for the park are not shown.	This layer will be updated.
Geography	Segment 13	The Triangle Greenways Council has a Summer Internship project for 2015: Preparation of a "mock" National Recreational River certification nomination for the Neuse River from Falls Lake dam to Goldsboro. Points of contact with Raleigh, Clayton, Smithfield, and Goldsboro have been solicited for participation.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment 13 Segment 14	A land trail along the Neuse from Smithfield to Cliffs of Neuse State Park is more feasible than may be commonly believed due to relatively high banks and well drained soils. There is use of adjacent lands by hunters with ATVs.	This information will be considered in updates to the segment information sheet and scoring.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		Consider OHV/ATV interests in the area as possible allies and partners in trail planning, operation and maintenance. Also consider adding paddle trail access enhancements and overnight camping opportunities along the entire Neuse River corridor from Raleigh to New Bern. I have paddled the Neuse from Raleigh to New Bern and found it to be a unique experience with potential for expanded marketing and use.	
Geography	Segment 13	I hope the Bentonville Battle Grounds will be included.	The Bentonville Battle Grounds will be added as an Additional Planning Stakeholder.
Geography	Segment 13	The Triangle Greenways Council has conserved a 79 acre property on the northeast side of the Neuse River in Johnston County, immediately downstream of US 70. [REID# 1405401] It was secured from the NCDOT for MST purposes; and the TGC intends to transfer it to a local government entity for such management.	This will be noted as an opportunity. The Triangle Greenways Council will be added as an Additional Planning Stakeholder.
Geography	Segment 13	Floodplains	This will be noted as a challenge.
Geography	Segment 13	Paddle trail	This will be noted as an opportunity in the text.
Geography	Segment 14	<p>Commenter is delighted that State Parks, Wayne County and Goldsboro are committed to making substantial progress on this segment in the near-term. There seem to be discrepancies between the information on page 33 of the draft MST master plan, the list of MST designated segments, and the recommendations for the MST in the more detailed 2014 Goldsboro MPO Bike/Ped/Greenway plan. We have the following questions/comments to help us understand more about the proposal in this area:</p> <p>a) We are confused about what trail has been designated in Goldsboro: The map on page 33 of the draft MST master plan shows that an on-street segment of the MST has been designated through downtown Goldsboro. Our copy of the list of designated segments lists a 1991 designation of 8.7 miles of trail in Waynesborough Park and on a Goldsboro Greenway (which we believe is the Stoney Creek Greenway).</p>	<p>There was a shift in the trail from the 1991 designation.</p> <p>Within each trail segment the section sponsors may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed and as land acquisition creates new opportunities, and section sponsors will share revised mapping with DPR when such relocations are completed.</p> <p>There will always be a need for coordination between multiple partners and section sponsors to determine the detailed planning and alignment of the route as opportunities and constraints change over time.</p> <p>The most up to date layers for the planned corridor for the MST were requested from Goldsboro.</p> <p>The interest of FMST in supporting Wayne County Greenways will be noted.</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>b) The MPO plan identifies the trail through downtown Goldsboro as Section 2 of the route, and it states that the trail will be 4.9 miles of shared-use, paved greenway and 3.5 miles of on-road segment. Is this proposed route different than the route shown on the map as designated?</p> <p>c) The MPO plan shows that the western end of the route would begin at Bentonville Battlefield. The draft MST master plan does not show Bentonville as a proposed location along the trail. Does the map in the master plan mean that it is not anticipated that the trail will go to Bentonville?</p> <p>d) As Goldsboro and Wayne County acquire land and easements for natural-surface trail in Sections 1 and 3, FMST would be happy to assist volunteers of Friends of Wayne County Greenways to build and maintain this section of trail.</p>	
Geography	Segment 14	Great that you have decided to include Wayne County in the plan. We have been praying that the trail would come through this area, which will be highly supported by the community. Wayne County, although stagnant for years, is now getting on board with alternative forms of transportation and recreation, e.g., cycling and pedestrian.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment 14	Thank you for this report. I am supporter of the MST and greatly encouraged by the "near term" status of the Wayne County portion of the MST. I hope that the connection of Waynesboro Historic Village, Stoney Creek Park and Greenway, and Cliffs of the Neuse State Park will be good for the local hikers as well as thru hikers. The "urban" section through Goldsboro will provide access for thru hikers to re-supply (food and gear), receive mail, and use the "open" internet at the public Library. Our local Hospital and several civic organizations are excited at the opportunity for exercise provided by the connection of our growing greenway to the MST. This means manpower for the construction efforts.	Comment noted

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 14	The ECRPO would be interested in coordinating. Could work with the GMPO.	This will be identified as an opportunity. ECRPO will be added as a Planning Stakeholder.
Geography	Segment 14	Floodplain	This will be used to update the Challenges.
Geography	Segment 14	Paddle trail	This will be used to update the text for the Opportunities.
Geography	Segment 15	I'm commenting on the Lenoir County portion of the Neuse River corridor. Spot on about connecting with/enhancing the Kinston Promenade! How about extending it with an eight mile boardwalk through the Neuse floodplain back to Kennedy Home, like the boardwalk that runs through Corkscrew Swamp in Florida? Could be a great tourist draw and jobs producer for a horribly blighted area... FEMA funds might be available.	This information could be considered in the determination of a detailed alignment for this segment.
Geography	Segment 15	Tie in GTP? Leverage multiple uses...	Comment noted
Geography	Segment 15	<p>Commenter is delighted to see that State Parks, Lenoir County and Kinston are committed to moving forward with this segment. We have two questions/comments to help us understand the status of the trail in this area more fully:</p> <p>Several years ago, the Lenoir-Kinston Parks & Recreation Department staff showed...a parks plan that proposed an MST route in Lenoir County that followed a creek rather than the Neuse River because the department doubted that the route was feasible along the Neuse River outside the City of Kinston. The draft MST master plan shows the route along the river. Does the MST master plan override that Lenoir-Kinston parks plan?</p> <p>As Kinston and Lenoir County acquire land and easements for natural-surface trail, FMST would be happy to organize a task force to build and maintain this section of trail.</p>	<p>The planned route is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon the section sponsors within each segment.</p> <p>Thank you for the additional information - Follow-up related to the status of a more detailed trail alignment and park plan- will be added as a next step.</p> <p>FMST's commitment to organize a task force will be noted as an opportunity.</p>
Geography	Segment 15	Could we integrate with future highway projects/areas that will be less congested because of future projects?	The Recommendations for Segment 15 will include a note to consider opportunities for the MST as roadway projects move forward in this area.
Geography	Segment 15	Floodplain	This will be added as a challenge.
Geography	Segment 15	Paddle trail	The vision for the MST is an off-road hiking trail, not a paddle trail.
Geography	Segment 16	Urban trail, paddle trail	It is noted that the corridor is urbanized. The vision for the MST is an off-road hiking trail, not a paddle trail.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment 17	The Havelock Bypass is slated for construction in 2017 and ends approximately where the trail planning corridor crosses 70 at Croatan National Forest.	The proposed Havelock Bypass will be added to the map and noted as a challenge. Considering the Havelock Bypass in trail planning will be noted in the Recommendations.
Geography	Segment 17	Add Havelock Bypass (pre-construction)	The proposed Havelock Bypass will be added to the map and noted as a challenge. Considering the Havelock Bypass in trail planning will be noted in the Recommendations.
Geography	Segment 17	Consider the trail in further planning of projects on US 70	The proposed Havelock Bypass will be added to the map and noted as a challenge. Considering the Havelock Bypass in trail planning will be noted in the Recommendations.
Geography	Segment 18	Open Ground Farm is not a realistic option. Consider following the Outer Banks Scenic Byway, North River, Whalebone Junction.	Changes to the planned route will need to be made through a planning process. The detailed alignment is noted as a challenge, due to a large landholding in this area. The planning corridor shown represent the best available data at the time of the master plan. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. There will always be a need for coordination between multiple partners and section sponsors to determine the detailed planning and alignment of the route as opportunities and constraints change over time. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data.
Geography	Segment 18	Clarify the description – is the Neusiok trail in Segment 17 or 18?	The Neusiok Trail is within Segment 18. The Segment Details for Segment 17 will be revised as follows: Constructed Trails: None. The eastern terminus of the trail is at the constructed Neusiok Trail, which is part of Segment 18.
Geography	Segment A	Although our list of designated segments shows that the trail has been designated from Clingmans Dome to the Town of Cherokee, the Great Smoky Mountain National Park has not signed the trail east of Mingus Mill where the trail ends. It is not clear...whether GSMNP and the Cherokee Nation consider the road in this area the trail.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment A	There are alternate routes through the GSMNP that should be fairly evaluated.	Comment noted

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment B	A great segment, but maintenance is lacking as you move away from Asheville in either direction.	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment B	The route shown for the MST on the map on Page 13 is incorrect. That map shows the route of the no longer used Alternate MST that followed the Art Loeb Trail south of the Blue Ridge Parkway over Pilot Mountain to Davidson River Campground.	This route will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate.
Geography	Segment B	The designated route alignment is incorrect. The most recent designated route follows the Blue Ridge Parkway south of Asheville from Pisgah Inn to the Middle Prong Wilderness. This currently designated route is marked, maintained and widely publicized as the MST.	This route will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate.
Geography	Segment B	The designated route alignment is incorrect. The most recent designated route follows the Blue Ridge Parkway south of Asheville from Pisgah Inn to the Middle Prong Wilderness. This currently designated route is marked, maintained and widely publicized as the MST.	This route will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate.
Geography	Segment B	The route shown for the MST on the map on Pg 13 is incorrect. That map shows the route of the no longer used Alternate MST that followed the Art Loeb Trail south of the Blue Ridge Parkway over Pilot Mountain to Davidson River Campground. The current designated route of the MST is shown in Trail Profiles and Maps From the Great Smokies to Mount Mitchell and Beyond, and on the National Geographic map of Pisgah Ranger District.	This route will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate.
Geography	Segment C	From west to east, the maintainers in this segment are: Carolina Mountain Club, Mt. Mitchell State Park, NC High Peak Trails Association, FMST's Central Blue Ridge Task Force and FMST's Tanawha Task Force. This page also states that NCDPR "maintains trails . . . in Grandfather Mtn. State Park", which is a true statement. However, it does not maintain any of the MST in the park.	This information will be used to update the Trail Maintainers/Volunteers section.
Geography	Segment D	This is very good segment, especially considering the limited public land buffer along the BRP in this area. The trail is also maintained well in this segment.	Comment noted.
Geography	Segment D	"Southern Ashe Task Force" should be South Ashe Task Force.	This will be corrected.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment D	As for all other segments, FMST should be listed as an Additional Planning Stakeholder in the same way that another non-profit (Middle Fork Greenway) is listed here. Under maintenance, maintainers should be listed as “FMST Watauga Task Force”, “FMST Southern Ashe Task Force”, “FMST North Ashe Task Force”, “FMST Tanawha Task Force” and “FMST Alleghany Task Force.” The draft plan lists Boy Scout Troop 299 as a co-maintainer of the Alleghany section. They were involved in constructing the trail but are no longer active in maintenance in any sustained way.	As a statewide organization, FMST is considered a stakeholder across all trail segments and was treated similarly to DPR, which is also not listed on the individual sheets. We agree that it would be useful to have both FMST and DPR listed on each sheet so that it is clear and understood that these stakeholders should be included in trail efforts. This information will be used to update the Trail Maintainers/Volunteers section.
Geography	Segment D	Although trail construction is complete, campsites are needed for overnight backpackers. FMST, State Parks and the Blue Ridge Parkway are working on an MOU to establish some of the needed campsites, but more work will be needed to find additional sites where the Blue Ridge Parkway does not have enough land for a sustainable site. In 2010, State Parks and FMST developed a proposal for the location of all the needed campsites.	DPR recognizes the importance of campsites and other amenities along the trail. The scope of this project did not allow us to identify the current locations of amenities and identify the need for additional amenities. We will rely on section sponsors to consider amenities and provide information about amenities along the trail. The DPR MST Master plan website will provide a link to information provided by section sponsors. To encourage section sponsors to plan for and provide amenities, a new tool will be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox that address amenities.
Geography	Segment E	I fail to understand why you show trail in PIMO in green as designated but trail in HARO in purple as constructed. Existing trail in both parks should be both designated and constructed.	Current information indicates that the trail within Hanging Rock State Park has not been officially designated.
Geography	Segment E	Additionally, you show the planned route coming out of HARO as going to the Dan River and then following the river into Danbury. This is a very outdated route. Currently the MST continues from the Visitor Center to Hanging Rock Park Road and then follows a road route to Danbury. Since it is a road route it is undesignated. There is a constructed trail that continues to the Dan River and is entirely on park property. There is a new trail already approved by DPR that will be a reroute; it leaves the HARO visitor's center, goes up the existing Hanging Rock trail, and then will follow a ridgeline on park property into the town of Danbury.	The planning corridor shown represent the best available data at the time of the master plan. The planning corridor is not set in stone and may be adjusted as further local and regional planning work is undertaken. DPR will continue to work to update GIS data.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment E	Although the trail in this segment has been designated, the route along the Sauratown Trail has been changing because some private landowners who have entered into short-term leases to allow the trail on their properties have changed their minds. This segment will need considerable attention to ensure that the continuous trail in this segment is not severed. We hope that State Parks will also assess whether the trail should be shifted to incorporate the new Vade Mecum property into the route.	Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.
Geography	Segment E	Map – consider adding the YMCA youth camp and Mountain Top youth camp	Private resources are not being shown on the map.
Geography	Segment E	You have listed the Sauratown Trails Association as a resource under plan your trip but not the Friends of Sauratown Mountains. We are the Friends group for both parks and the designated segment manager.	Comment noted – this group will be added as a resource
Geography	Segment E	I believe you have the mileage listed incorrectly at 31 miles. The Sauratown Trail between the two parks is roughly 22 miles. A couple years ago we dedicated 12 miles in PIMO. There is also several miles in HARO.	The constructed but not designated trail in Hanging Rock State Park is not included in the Designated Trail Length. We will double-check the designated miles.
Geography	Segment E	Dotted lines are actually DOT gravel roads being used as trails.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment E	Work is ongoing to adjust the alignment of the trail on the east side of the state park.	Comment noted
Geography	Segment E	Check Hanging Rock State Park in GIS layer – open space is actually part of the park.	This layer will be updated
Geography	Segment F	The Watershed trails stop at F without continuation noted on trail.	The Watershed Trail is shown as stopping at F. The continuation is marked as proposed trail.
Geography	Segment F	We are glad to see the MST on the shores of the Greensboro Watershed Trail, however it would be even better when it connects to the Haw River State Park, if it would also connect to the projected trail system on the maps that would connect Reidsville's Greenway to Lake Reidsville's dam. That....would be the greatest!!	Comment noted
Geography	Segment F	The segments seem scattered or disconnected. Having a bit of trouble understanding the layout for this segment and how it starts and ends.	Comment noted

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment G	I really appreciate the way that the draft plan succinctly summarizes the designated segments. These one-page overviews may be very beneficial even for use on the trail's public website. Great job!	Comment noted
Geography	Segment G	This segment is "completed" and reported as such. Its narrative should not end there, but a different set of criteria would be needed to deliver meaningful information. For example: (1) how was it accomplished outside the Mountain Region, (2) how does a greenway differ from a trail, (3) what role did nonprofit land trusts play [directly or indirectly], etc?	It is agreed that this detailed information would be useful, but it is outside of the scope of this effort. These are possibilities that could be considered as future additions to the Trail Planning Toolbox.
Geography	Segment G	Although trail construction is complete in this area, campsites are needed for overnight backpackers. FMST has developed a proposal, submitted to the land managing agencies along Falls Lake, for location of those sites and all have been authorized and built now except one needed in the general vicinity of State Park's Yorkshire Center. The City of Raleigh has identified potential sites and has requested support in developing an online reservation for those sites. The Town of Clayton has expressed interest but has not yet identified locations. As we do for the campsites on the western end of the trail along Falls Lake, FMST is willing to build, maintain and monitor all campsites along this segment of trail.	DPR recognizes the importance of campsites and other amenities along the trail. The scope of this project did not allow us to identify the current locations of amenities and identify the need for additional amenities. We will rely on section sponsors to consider amenities and provide information about amenities along the trail. The DPR MST Master plan website will provide a link to information provided by section sponsors. To encourage section sponsors to plan for and provide amenities, a new tool will be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox that address amenities.
Geography	Segment G	Check the mileage for the Neuse River Greenway [Raleigh & Clayton]. Raleigh's section has been reported to be ~28 miles. Clayton's section has been reported to be 5+/- miles.	The mileage will be verified.
Geography	Segment H	We would like to know about adding optional routes to the draft plan. For example, paved pathway alternatives are currently available in four Hatteras Island villages. Also, the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway Committee for Dare County is working on an informal or natural surface path between villages in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.	Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Geography	Segment H	I have been contacted by constituents that would like to have Roanoke Island considered to be an optional loop for the MST as the trail leads north toward Jockey's Ridge. Roanoke Island has a significant system of multi-purpose paths and trails that connect historic areas of interest with downtown Manteo. How can locals interested in pursuing inclusion in the MST planning process be involved? I understand there is a firm contracted to carry forward the design of the trail - will public input be sought for the Outer Banks leg?	Designation of the MST route is complete along the coast in the area of Nags Head and Cape Hatteras Sea Shore reaching towards the trail terminus at Jockey's Ridge State Park. We would encourage any trail development that would create a connection with the MST and increase recreational opportunities for those utilizing a trail system.
Geography	Segment H	Although the master plan shows this segment as complete, it has the most dangerous bridge crossings on the entire trail. The master plan also does not address the issue of how sea level rise might affect the trail route in this area.	Comment noted. It was not within the scope of this plan to address crossings or environmental issues affecting Designated Segments of trail.
Geography	Segment H	On Hatteras Island, the designated route from the Hatteras ferry terminal is to Ramp 55 in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore to the Frisco Campground, then along Open Ponds Trail to the British Cemetery. From the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, hikers slug through sandy beach to mid-way in Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge where the trail goes around North Pond to the Pamlico Sound and then back to the beach to the Oregon Inlet Bridge. The route crosses the Oregon Inlet Bridge to the beach at Ramp 4 then to a rail around Bodie Island Lighthouse and then back to the beach to meet a multi-use path in Nags Head at Ramp 1 in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.	<p>This information will be considered for the Description of Segment H.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p> <p>The 1981 historic designation route is described as follows: Passes seaward of 7 small towns, leaves beach to pass through Buxton Woods, limited section used 8-10'wide grass shoulder, 3 miles on Bonner Bridge(4' shoulder), ferry crossings, camping approx. every 9 miles. The 2001 designation for the Town of Nags Head is as follows: Follows the beach, Nags Head multi-use path in right of way NC-12, west along Hollowell Street</p>
Geography	Segment H	The route is unclear for the OBX segment- Where does the segment run? Along Highway 12? There is also an extended shoulder on Hwy 12 and in portions of Dare	This segment runs along the beach and, within Nags Head, follows a multi-use path in right of way NC-12, west along Hollowell Street.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>County there is now a bike path. Once you reach Nags Head, there are also bike paths that would take you to Jockey's Ridge.</p> <p>Need to list Dare County as a Trail Maintainer.</p> <p>Also suggest linking into the OBX Tourism and Town of Nags Head websites for "Planning Your Trip". Under "Trail Maintainers/Volunteers", Town is not capitalize.</p> <p>What trails in our jurisdiction are designated as Mountains to Sea?</p>	<p>Dare County is included under Planning Stakeholders. The information provided will be added under Trail Maintainers/Volunteers and Plan Your Trip.</p> <p>The Town of Nags Head is listed as the section sponsor for the stretch of trail from Whalebone Junction at Cape Hatteras National Seashore to entrance to Jockey's Ridge State Park.</p>
Geography	Segment H	Under Trail Maintainers and Volunteers add the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge.	This information will be added to the plan.
Introduction		The Background and Plan Purpose defines MST as a "hiking trail", a term reportedly dating back to the 1970s. Does the state of NC remain committed to this single-use vision, or is it time to broaden the trail's reach and service by envisioning MST as a multi-use/shared-use path? The American Tobacco Trail, NC's most popular greenway, serves thousands of people who walk, run, bike, push baby strollers, and teach their children how to ride a bike and share a thoroughfare. A shared-use facility benefits each trail user's health and well-being, as well as boosting transportation options and tourism potential. Our investment in the MST should be substantial enough to garner these returns on investment, while serving the greatest possible number of North Carolinians.	The description of the vision will be elaborated to note that the primary vision for the MST is an off-road hiking trail, but that the MST takes many forms as it crosses the state depending on the context and needs of stakeholders. Each section sponsor is developing trail to meet the needs of their community and often more than one type of use is being incorporated into planning and development.
Introduction		This is the first place in the report when the term "task force" is used. We recommend that the plan explain the history and make-up of task forces, and also explain the role of FMST since 1997 in sponsoring the vast majority of them and supporting those that are sponsored by separate non-profits.	This detail will be added.
Introduction	Plan Goals box	Side bar listing plan goals should include THE OVERARCHING GOAL which is best stated at the bottom of page 5, "Develop a sustainable Trail and maintain it over the long term."	Comment noted, but the box is specifically focused on the goals of this plan.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Introduction	Plan Goals box	<p>In addition to the planning phase there must be emphasis on the acquisition, development, designation, marketing, operation and maintenance phases of the trail's life. It would be instructive to outline the life phases of the trail something like this:</p> <p>Planning Stage: 1.Planning 2.Acquisition 3.Development Opening Stage: 4.Designation Operating Stage: 5.Marketing 6.Operation 7.Maintenance</p> <p>Adding a tool to describe the life phases of the trail will help focus on the process and commitment necessary to "develop a sustainable trail and maintain it over the long term". The most difficult and enduring work really begins after designation!</p>	<p>The emphasis of the content of this document is on the planning phase, but it is agreed that it would be useful to explain the different phases of trails. This information will be added.</p>
Master plan process		<p>Individual would like to receive a copy of the master plan.</p>	<p>Comment noted – the commenter is on the mailing list and will receive notice when the final master plan is available.</p>
Master plan process		<p>The trail is called Mountains-to-Sea Trail and yet, you've ignored the mountains - over 300 miles from Clingmans Dome to Stone Mountain SP. You've also ignored Friends of the MST and didn't make them an active part of the process. Not a good idea. Public lands need all the friends they can get. And FMST is responsible for building and maintaining the whole trail. Other parks (like Great Smoky Mountains National Park) have a cooperative relationship with their Friends group. They embrace them, not ignore them.</p>	<p>The development of the MST will require collaboration, cooperation and a multitude of partnerships across the state to plan, build, and maintain the trail. The mountain region has work diligently to plan, develop, and build trail over the years, as seen in the large proportion of completed and designated trail. A focus on the Planning Segments is key to moving towards completion of the trail. We look forward to working with all partners to move towards the goal of completing the trail across the entire state in the future.</p>
Master plan process		<p>The Outer Banks is totally excluded from this plan. Since it is where the trail ends and was the first piece of property donated to the program, it should be better represented in this plan. There are alternate off road paths through out Dare County and Nags Head other than the beach. I seriously doubt that people will actually hike along the 82 miles of soft sandy shoreline. I think it would be wiser to provide an alternate that people can actually safely travel that is not soft beach sand. I only learned of this planning effort through the list serve when a draft was made available.</p>	<p>The Planning Segments are focused where there is not currently designated trail. Since the trail is designated in the Outer Banks, it is not addressed as a Planning Segment.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.
Master plan process		The master plan is good with ranking, prioritizing, etc. but it doesn't seem like you've talked to anyone who have actually hiked the trail. It's as if with GPS and high quality maps, you don't have to ground truth anymore. I wonder if you talked to Tom Earnhardt about ground truthing. http://www.hikertohiker.net/2015/02/08/friends-of-the-mst-annual-meeting-2	Ground-truthing the entire trail was not possible given the state-wide focus and scope of this project. As updated GIS data becomes available, it will be used to keep the website current.
Master plan process	Coastal Crescent	Although the open house in Kenansville held on March 16th was the most highly-attended public outreach event of the master planning process, the meeting and the input provided by participants is not mentioned anywhere in the draft master plan.	The topic of the Kenansville meeting was the Coastal Crescent Trail and other regional trail needs, and was not directly related to completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. Results of that meeting and recommended action steps will be posted to the website soon.
Master plan process	Coastal Crescent Trail	Why isn't the Coastal Crescent Trail included in the Master Plan? It is imperative to include this in your plan so segments through the affected communities can be eligible for federal or state funding.	The topic of the Kenansville meeting was the Coastal Crescent Trail and other regional trail needs, and was not directly related to completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. Results of that meeting and recommended action steps will be posted to the website soon.
Master plan process	Coastal Crescent Trail	I saw no mention in the plan of the Coastal Crescent alternate route that has been developed by FMST. I recall answering questions in your questionnaire about this route, and I know that others provided comments at your public meetings in support of the route being included in the master plan. Please provide information regarding the Coastal Crescent route, specifically, what was the basis for it not being included and how did public input factor into that decision. Thanks!	The topic of the Kenansville meeting was the Coastal Crescent Trail and other regional trail needs, and was not directly related to completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. Results of that meeting and recommended action steps will be posted to the website soon.
Master plan process	Coastal Crescent Trail	None - because it seems that the alternate route has been left off the master planning map. I do not understand why certain counties are always gaining financial and technical assistance at the expense of the smaller - Eastern Counties. We pay taxes to the state and have many things bikers and hikers might want to see if giving the opportunity! We have shown a strong interest in the MST	The topic of the Kenansville meeting was the Coastal Crescent Trail and other regional trail needs, and was not directly related to completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. Results of that meeting and recommended action steps will be posted to the website soon.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		and want to see it become a permanent option on the trail - meaning it needs to be in the master plan and have funding attached.	
Master plan process	Comment period	The period between release of the draft master plan (the evening of April 28), the public meetings (May 4 to 7) and the closing date for comments (May 15) was less than three weeks. This timeframe has been too short to allow for meaningful public comment from the large number of MST supporters statewide.	Although the master plan document will be completed soon, we will continue to add content and detail to the NCParks.gov website. Suggestions and ideas will always be welcome.
Master plan process	Comment period	Also, 15 days is not enough time for a thorough study of this draft plan.	Although the master plan document will be completed soon, we will continue to add content and detail to the NCParks.gov website. Suggestions and ideas will always be welcome.
Master plan process	Comment period	The public review period was too short.	Although the master plan document will be completed soon, we will continue to add content and detail to the NCParks.gov website. Suggestions and ideas will always be welcome.
Master plan process	Meeting locations	... very upset that you ignored the western part of the state. Yet, you mention that the state thinks we're going to build trails west of Heintooga Road. That's the problem when you write a plan without actually talking to maintainers and hikers and without being there.	Cost considerations led us to focus the public meetings on the incomplete segments of the trail, since the focus of the master plan is the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. All comments were welcome from all trail partners and an online survey was developed to support this purpose.
Master plan process	Meeting locations	Public meetings were held only in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain although the trail runs from the mountains to the Outer Banks.	Cost considerations led us to focus the public meetings on the incomplete segments of the trail, since the focus of the master plan is the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. All comments were welcome from all trail partners and an online survey was developed to support this purpose.
Master plan process	Meeting locations	The geographic location of the four public meetings did not afford convenient opportunities for the western third of the state. Public meetings in the Boone and Asheville area would have been a simple courtesy and a way to show appreciation to the many Designated Segment partners who have developed and maintained the MST, in some cases for decades.	Cost considerations led us to focus the public meetings on the incomplete segments of the trail, since the focus of the master plan is the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail. All comments were welcome from all trail partners and an online survey was developed to support this purpose.
Master plan process	Meeting locations	Think about open house meetings west of Winston-Salem	Cost considerations led us to focus the public meetings on the incomplete segments of the trail, since the focus of the master plan is the completion of the MST as a continuous

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			off-road trail. All comments were welcome from all trail partners and an online survey was developed to support this purpose.
Master Plan Process	Survey	The listing of the designated segment letters and descriptions in the online survey are not consistent with the depictions contained in the master plan. Segment A is the Great Smoky Mountains and Segment B is the Southern Blue Ridge.	Thank you for identifying this error.
Prioritization		The planned MST segment prioritization scoring section is not easy to decipher.	Comment noted
Prioritization		Neither the legitimate concerns of local landowners, whose issues presumably can be addressed in a rational way, or the demagoguery of one individual, should stop this important public project.	Comment noted
Prioritization		I do not have adequate information to comment on these criteria	Comment noted
Prioritization		No consideration has been given to the availability or quality of road-walk connections between trail corridors. I have walked many of the world's great trails and all of them take to public roads from time to time. Nobody minds this, and in fact, a walk along a rural road can be a great break from woodland trails.	The vision of the MST is a completely off-road hiking trail. For the long-term completion of the trail, on-road routing will likely be a last resort and will need to be supported by the section sponsors.
Prioritization		Some tool to evaluate camping opportunities on each segment ought to be included.	DPR recognizes the importance of campsites and other amenities along the trail. The scope of this project did not allow us to identify the current locations of amenities and identify the need for additional amenities. We will rely on Section sponsors to consider amenities and provide information about amenities along the trail. The DPR MST Master plan website will provide a link to information provided by Section sponsors. To encourage Section sponsors to plan for and provide amenities, a new tool will be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox that address amenities.
Prioritization	Anticipated construction activity	Need to be conservative	Comment noted. The construction activity rankings will be reviewed.
Prioritization	Connectivity	Questionable criteria - every mile counts - it all needs connected	Comment noted.
Prioritization	Connectivity	Somewhat important but doesn't mean you prioritize/build exclusively from one point to the next.	Comment noted.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Prioritization	Demonstrated Demand for Trail	Very subjective. Try using objective measures of existing trails or some objective measure of trail capacity such as miles of trail per 1,000 population in the trails market area.	These ideas will be considered in updates to the scoring approach.
Prioritization	Demonstrated demand for trail	Build it and they will come	Comment noted
Prioritization	Economic Impact	Too subjective with unfounded urban bias. Small towns and rural areas probably benefit most in terms of small increases that may equal a large impact such as new trail related businesses, often small businesses. Award higher points to "Trail Town" initiatives equal to urban proximity. People enjoy small town visits to escape from urban life...and the further away the better for most.	The Trail Town initiative will be considered as the economic impact criteria is re-evaluated.
Prioritization	Funding Sources	Very subjective.	Comment noted
Prioritization	Funding Strategies and Sources	Mostly raised locally and grants	Comment noted
Prioritization	General	Also, plan states they are equally weighted, but different scores are used for the criteria (0, 2, 4, 6 8, 10 vs 0, 2, 5, 10) - they should be the same.	The scales will be re-evaluated.
Prioritization	General	There appears to be a flaw in the criteria or at least in the assignment of scores. Need to dig deeper is assigning values.	Best available information gathered through meetings for each segment was used for the scores. This information is being validated through the public review process and the scores will be updated with further details provided.
Prioritization	General	What about a criteria for camping?	This tool is being used for Planning Segments. A criteria for camping would be better suited for Designated Segments.
Prioritization	General	What about a criteria for volunteer support?	Volunteer support is important and is captured both under Trail Maintenance Commitment and Demonstrated Demand for Trail.
Prioritization	General	The Outer Banks is not represented in this prioritization. There are alternative off road paths other than the beach.	The prioritization is for Planning Segments only – places where there is no designated trail. There is a complete designated trail in the Outer Banks, so this area was not included in the prioritization.
Prioritization	Implementation Challenges	Money for bridges	Comment noted
Prioritization	Implementation Challenges	Needs a caveat that some challenges, even severe, are worth overcoming for the excellence of the recreation experience or uniqueness of the resources accessed and or protected. This criteria would have possibly eliminated	This caveat will be added to the explanation of the prioritization process.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		such highlights as the Linville Gorge Wilderness and Linville River crossing.	
Prioritization	Large parcels near the corridor	Just because it is a large parcel doesn't necessarily mean the negotiating for an easement is easier	Comment noted
Prioritization	Large parcels near the Corridor	Very important as above re timbering but also long term priority runs risk of subdivision and restrictions preventing route	Comment noted
Prioritization	Level of planning	Consider quality of planning	Comment noted
Prioritization	Level of Staff Support	This is very valid. And DPR should apply the same criteria to the MST State trail operating staff requirements, thereby setting the example for all other MST partners.	Comment noted
Prioritization	Level of Staff Support	The rankings in this category indicate that only paid government staff were counted in the assessment. Staff and volunteers from nonprofit organizations interested in the trail are another demonstrated resource and should be included in these rankings.	Staff and volunteers from nonprofit organizations are important and are considered in the maintenance commitment for the trail and demonstrated demand for the trail. We will review the scores across this category.
Prioritization	Percent of corridor with public land	This is not always a plus	Comment noted
Prioritization	Percent of Corridor with Public Land	Very important--if a segment is classified as long term priority, timbering could occur which would adversely impact aesthetics	Comment noted
Prioritization	Potential Economic Impact	I would be interested in having a better understanding of the basis for the economic impact criteria.	The economic criteria will be reconsidered.
Prioritization	Potential Economic Impact	It is unclear how assessments in this category were made. It seems that the highest rankings were given to trail in the biggest urban areas (Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and the Triangle) with the exception of Goldsboro which also received a ranking of 10. An alternative ranking would focus on the economic potential for rural, low-income communities. The dollar value might not be as large, but the impact for those struggling communities which have fewer economic opportunities may be more significant.	The economic criteria will be reconsidered.
Prioritization	Potential economic impact of trail	Important	The economic criteria will be reconsidered.
Prioritization	Timeframe for completion	This is usually underestimated	The timeframe for completion values will be reviewed.
Prioritization	Trail Maintenance Commitment	Very subjective. Include State and Federal agencies with municipal or county partners capable of maintaining trails.	This category will be reviewed. This criteria includes government partners as well as volunteers and non-profit organizations.
Prioritization	Trail maintenance commitment	Talk to hikers about trail maintenance	Comment noted

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Recommendations		DPR and FMST should jointly conduct regular meetings of partners on a regional basis, especially to share operational, marketing and maintenance experience with newly designated segments.	Comment noted
Recommendations		In order for the master plan not to become a static document it must lead to detailed action plans based on specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and timely goals.	It is anticipated that the next actions for each segment may be different. The idea for an action plan will be considered in the Recommendations. Moving forward Recommendations will take the joint effort of DPR and all trail planning partners.
Recommendations		The Planning Segment recommendations contained in this section, assuming they represent comprehensive partner endorsement and effective public review, can become the basis for individual segment action plans. Each of the various recommendations should be subjected to thorough goal setting using the process for writing S.M.A.R.T. goals. S.M.A.R.T. Goals Guidelines may be found at: http://topachievement.com/smart.html . This goal setting, action planning guideline could be included in the MST master plan in a topical tool on the subject, "Developing an Action Plan from General Segment Plan Recommendations." The summary of this MSTMP section on page 47 acknowledges the priorities for immediate trail development and designation. In order for segment partners to proceed effectively they must come together and formulate an Action Plan that moves from planning to development and operation of a sustainable trail that can be maintained long term. As effective action plans are developed and implemented, representative examples can be included in the toolbox.	The recommendation to create segment action plans will be added to the Recommendations section of the plan.
Recommendations		The next step following designation should be the development of a General Management Plan for that segment which details interagency partnerships, collaborative methods for operation, marketing and maintenance, and partner commitments of funding, staffing and resources to assure that the highest quality trail experiences and natural resource conservation is sustainable for the long term.	This idea will be incorporated in the Recommendations section of the plan. The General Management Plan (GMP) for each designated segment would likely fall to the section sponsor to complete as needed, if not already written prior to designation.
Recommendations		The Geography of the MST Recommendations provides a valuable draft list of action items, but it lacks specificity	The recommendations following the Geography of the MST will be revised to indicate that the potential section

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		and fails to assign responsibilities, timeframes, and needed resources. It is not clear whether the list includes new action items, and there are no suggestions of how to proceed more efficiently and quickly than what is being done now. What staffing and resources will State Parks provide? What alternatives might be available to create a more effective process (e.g. allocating roles to FMST or other volunteer organizations)? Who should be assigned to the various tasks listed? What general timetables should there be for each task (or who should be responsible for creating those timetables at the appropriate time)?	sponsors and planning stakeholders (revised to include FMST and DPR) will need to work together to move forward action items. The planning priority identifies the general timeframe. A new recommendation to create segment action plans will capture the need to identify roles and specific timelines for each recommendation.
Tools	Conservation and Lease Agreement	Consider the EVTA approach to obtaining easements, working with volunteers, etc.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Conservation and Lease Agreement Templates	Consider talking with The Haw River Trail Partnership about our "trail easements" which are not conservation easement but do provide recreational use of the property in perpetuity and are frequently used when working with private landowners to develop the Haw River Trail.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Conservation and Lease Agreement templates	A "conservation" easement is unusable. We are building a trail, use a "trail" easement.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Conservation and Lease Agreement templates	The easement, under the "duration section", should have something to the effect: "if the trail is relocated or no longer used, the easement is null and void". Although a master plan is needed to go forward, it should be like the trail, able to move, grow, change and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Conservation Easement and Lease Agreement Templates	Simple trail easement preferred to conservation easements.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Conservation easement and lease agreement templates	Look at the flexibility in the EVTA and Appalachian Trail easements. The proposed easement template will create issues related to farming.	A variety of examples and templates will be added to the website soon.
Tools	Design Standards	The USDA Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook, 2007 is an accepted standard in use by many federal land managers and is specifically listed in the Blue Ridge Parkway draft MOU with FMST and DPR.	This will be considered as a potential additional resource for this tool.
Tools	Design Standards and Costs	Are accurate based on trails I have worked on in the past.	Comment noted

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Tools	Design standards and costs	Construction costs are listed, but not maintenance costs. http://www.railstotrails.org/build-trails/trail-building-toolbox/trail-building-and-design/surfaces/ It's hard to claim that a trail is multi-use or shared-use if it's only 4' wide or if made of gravel. 8' is a minimum width, and stone dust is a minimum surface treatment. For paved trails, concrete is most unforgiving on human bones, joints, and faces; asphalt is preferable.	This information will be considered in updates to the tool.
Tools	Design Standards and Costs	It is not clear whether the quoted cost ranges include land acquisition. Especially for the natural surface trails, it might be useful for planning to indicate what portions of that total cost might be provided by volunteers at little cost. Use of volunteer labor significantly reduces the cost. Most of the existing sections of the MST were built by volunteers at substantially lower per mile cost than those shown on this page.	This information will be considered in updates to the tool.
Tools	Funding Strategies and Sources	NC Rail-Trails would like to be listed among the other resource organizations.	This information will be considered in updates to the tool.
Tools	Funding Strategies and Sources	What is a natural surface trail?	This information will be added to a glossary of terms.
Tools	Funding Strategies and Sources	Carolina Thread Trail is specifically mentioned as providing a good model for educating and mobilizing volunteers...we request that the MST master plan cite FMST as the model. FMST now educates and mobilizes between 700 to 1000 volunteers each year. In 2014 alone these volunteers donated more than 29,000 hours of volunteer time to build and maintain more than 460 miles of the MST.	Friends of the MST is cited as the first model under this category. The desire is to provide the users with multiple models to draw from.
Tools	General	This is a useful concept for presenting information and keeping it updated. Again, this function has to be operationalized in order to be current, expanding and available. DPR should provide or facilitate provision of this capability indefinitely through the State Trails Program staff.	DPR intends to maintain and update the website.
Tools	General	Put on website and index it	The tools will be made available through the website.
Tools	General	It looks thorough and good.	Comment noted.
Tools	Marketing and Publicity	This section is very once-over-lightly when it comes to some key/professional doers of marketing and publicity, apart from the core trail partners. The expertise of the	This information will be considered in updates to this tool.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>CVB industry and the destination marketing power that an organization like Visit N.C. could bring to bear in marketing and promotion with tourists is too succinctly summarized here. Having attended the Trail Towns Conference/read documents emanating from the Friends of the MST, much more detailed info on exactly how to partner with the destination marketing industry would be helpful to make real impact. Suggest meeting with staff of Visit N.C. and/or major local tourist offices to better understand how our industry works, then you could detail a process or set of tools that could immediately/effectively be applied by core partners in starting to strategically market the segments already designated if not the concept of hiking the whole trail.</p>	
Tools	New tool	Campsite planning.	An additional tool will be added to the trail planning toolbox that addresses planning for campsites.
Tools	New Tool	<p>Designated segment managers: the requirement for a formal agreement between the managing agency and the volunteer service organization is prudent and achievable. The current MOU being developed between the Blue Ridge Parkway and FMST can serve as a model. These or other sample agreements should be added to the toolbox for guidance.</p>	<p>If the MOU with the Blue Ridge Parkway is completed in time it will be added as an example to the Tools section of the master plan. If it is not possible to add this as an example to the plan, it will be provided on the website at a later date.</p>
Tools	New Tools	<p>The conceptual framework for the life phases of a trail helps avoid too much emphasis on planning and not enough emphasis on operation and maintenance. Probably the primary source of failed trails is inattention to the long term commitment required for a high quality, sustainable trail. The steady deterioration of the Yadkin River Trail over the past 30 years demonstrates the effect of long term deferred operational and maintenance actions.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The life phases will be addressed in the introduction to the plan.</p>
Tools	New Tools	<p>The Master Plan provides an excellent framework for advancing planning efforts to further completion of the 400+ remaining miles of trail. The expansion of topical aides in the toolbox, such as sample MOUs will build the capabilities of planning segment partners in completing detailed route plans.</p>	<p>Thank you for recommending this new tool. It will be considered as information is added to the Trail Planning Toolbox over time.</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Tools	New tools	Tools to coordinate with NCDOT regarding road crossings and signage.	There is a current project addressing signage with NCDOT. Once available, the results of this study may be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox.
Tools	New tools	Provide tools to build support for the trail	Thank you for recommending this new tool. It will be considered as information is added to the Trail Planning Toolbox over time.
Tools	New tools	Put the Falls Lake Memorandum of Understanding between FMST, DPR, WRC and USACE in tool box as useful model for multi-agency agreement for trail marketing, operations and maintenance.	If the MOU with the Blue Ridge Parkway is completed in time it will be added as an example to the Tools section of the master plan. If it is not possible to add this as an example to the plan, it will be provided on the website at a later date.
Tools	New tools	Add Tables of all costs and their benefits, not just construction costs. Benefits should include the \$2.94:1 ratio of health care return on bike-ped investment, as well as transportation and tourism benefits.	We will consider what additional cost and benefit information can be provided now. This information may be added to the Trail Planning Toolbox over time.
Tools	New tools	Add A set of definitions, starting with "trail", perhaps one of the most nebulous words in the English language. Is it a narrow, dirt hiking path? Is it a multi-layered, shared-use greenway?	A glossary will be added to the plan.
Tools	New tools	Address primitive camping areas for backpackers	A new tool will be added that addresses trail amenities.
Tools	Personal Safety	Pg. 58 focuses on the “dangers” on the MST, mostly suspicious people. Why are nonhikers so afraid of the woods? Why scare potential hikers? The Personal Safety section starts and ends with fearing other hikers. But you get some things right: <i>Stay to the right and pass on the left. Always look before changing positions on the trail. Dogs must be leashed, as loose dogs can be hazardous to others or to themselves. Carry out all litter, including pet and food waste. Bring bags to collect your waste and dispose of it in a garbage can. Pet and food waste can attract wildlife.</i>	The introduction to the tool will be revised. The content of the tool focuses appropriately on all aspects of trail safety.
Tools	Publicity and Marketing	The plan recommends that the name of the trail be changed to “Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.” Commenter does not support this change because we believe that it makes the name, which is already challenging because of its length, unwieldy. We like and support, however, the new design for trail signs which includes the name Mountains-to-Sea at the top with North Carolina State Trail below it.	The official full name of the state trail is the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail – this is not a change; however DPR recognizes that state parks and trails are commonly not called by their full official name and has reflected this through use of the MST acronym throughout the plan and the focus on Mountains-to-Sea in the logo.

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Tools	Publicity and Marketing	<p>The plan recommends that DPR and FMST both provide links to each other's website on all publications. Regarding the DPR MST website, will it include all off road and on road "current" sections or be limited to designated sections only? If it only includes designated sections, commenter is concerned that the website will confuse hikers by not providing information about the FMST connecting routes that allow people to hike and paddle across the state (see comment 1d above)...</p>	<p>The best way to resolve confusion created by different maps is to clarify that the master plan is focused on the completion of the MST as a continuous off-road trail, and does not address the multiple temporary options/alternative ways that thru-hikers may choose to complete a hike across the state in the interim.</p> <p>To address previous comments, the following text will be added to page 8 after the two types of segments are described and prior to the segment information sheets.</p> <p>Where there are currently gaps between designated segments of the MST, hikers may choose to use temporary alternative routes including adjacent paddle routes or bicycle routes to complete the entire trip from the mountains to the sea. The Friends of the MST and additional trail advocates have identified alternative routes for this purpose and provides information and guidebooks to aid trail users on their website or in published documents. While the Friends of the MST recognizes the significant accomplishment of those using alternative routes to cross the state and DPR recognizes the importance of providing options for those wishing to complete the entire trip now; in this master plan and in its work, DPR is focused on completion of the entire primary route of the MST hiking trail from Clingmans Dome to Jockey's Ridge, as described on the following pages.</p>
Tools	Publicity and Marketing	<p>The recommendations do not assign responsibility or discuss staffing and funding. The bullet under recommendations assigns segment managers to be the main source of hike planning information, which is problematic for long distance hikers crossing multiple segments.</p>	<p>A recommendation has been added to create detailed segment action plans addressing specific responsibilities and timing of the recommendations. The staffing and funding of each of these recommendations is outside of the scope of this plan. In addition, section sponsors should have the flexibility to determine the appropriate path forward given their priorities and resources. The FMST is also listed as a source of information about trails.</p>
Tools	Role of Trail Partners	<p>Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail: In addition to the three roles presented, an additional role as the "Principal Statewide MST Citizen Advocacy Group" should be added. FMST goes far beyond providing information, volunteer coordination and fundraising. This growing</p>	<p>This will be considered in plan revisions.</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		organization is the major citizens' forum for promoting proactive visionary actions needed to complete the MST, this master plan being an example of FMST's leadership in promoting the need for a plan and working with DPR to secure the necessary funding.	
Tools	Role of Trail Partners	Succinct summary of the partners closest to the trail; however, several agencies are mentioned as "non-partners" that probably could be officially covered as partners / ought to be in an ideal world, such as the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, N.C. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Partnership of N.C. and/or Visit North Carolina. I would encourage the core trail partners to be bolder by including them and giving them proposed roles at the very least in marketing and publicity for the trail.	This suggestion will be considered in plan revisions.
Tools	Role of Trail Partners	It is unclear how Planning Segment Managers are designated. In most areas, no one entity is filling all the roles listed. Will State Parks be creating a process to encourage entities to formally commit to these roles? In the event that no entity does commit to any or all, what is State Parks strategy for moving the trail forward?	Clarifications will be added to this portion of the tool.
Tools	Role of Trail Partners	Below is a suggested revision of the description of FMST's role: Trail Information – FMST provides information about how to hike the entire trail through its website, maps, and trail guides. FMST also works to improve the hiking experience – identifying and opening campsites, providing road and paddle routes to connect sections of completed trail, and recruiting “trail angels” who can help thru-hikers on their statewide treks. Volunteer Coordination –FMST recruits, trains, organizes and recognizes volunteers and provides them with most of the tools they need to build and maintain trail statewide as well as on other trail projects. Fundraising, Promotion and Advocacy – FMST raises funds to support, build and maintain the trail from a variety of sources including individuals, corporations, foundations, governments and special events. It educates and promotes the trail through its website, e-newsletter, social	This information will be used to update the description of FMST's role.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		<p>media, annual report, events, media outreach and other methods. It serves as an advocates for the MST. For more information about Friends of the MST and its work to build, promote and maintain the MST, visit www.ncmst.org.</p>	
Tools	Roles of Trail Partners	<p>Third paragraph on page 4 refers to MST being an official unit of the state parks system. Yet there is no designated staff or budget in DPR devoted solely to coordination and management of trail planning, development, operations and maintenance. Every other state park has a Superintendent and staff responsible for these functions and so must the Mountains to Sea State Trail. With over 600 miles of designated, marketed, operating and maintained State Park Trail it is time to provide an operating unit within the park operations section. Please consider adding this recommendation to the Roles of Trail Partners tool under "North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR)".</p>	<p>The State Parks Act (GS 113-44.9) defines the types of units in the State Parks System to include State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, State Rivers and State Lakes. Mountains-to-Sea is a State Trail, not a State Park. Whereas a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail represents a partnership among multiple agencies, landowners, volunteers and local governments, working together to implement a shared vision. Sections of a State Trail on state park property may be managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, but trail that cross property controlled by others will continue to be built, maintained and managed by those other landowners.</p> <p>This does not mean that a State Trail is less important than a State Park; it is simply a different management strategy. The state parks system includes 74 units, of which 41 are operated. The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail is one of 33 non-operated units. The non-operated units are managed in different ways: as satellites of operated units, as leases to other managers, as partnerships of various kinds.</p> <p>We do not anticipate ever managing the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail as an operated unit. Partly, it seems unlikely that we would ever have enough staff and budget to manage a 1,000-mile trail. But largely, we do not think that would be a successful strategy for completion of the trail. We believe it is important for each partnering land manager to retain control of their own lands and of the trail section they have agreed to sponsor. This strategy will lead to completion of a continuous off-road trail, and will help to ensure the long term viability of the trail.</p> <p>We agree that additional DPR staff to work on the trail would be advantageous. Ideally, we would like to have at</p>

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
			least one staff person devoted to each of the four state trails. For now, we must work with the staff we have, but we will continue to increase our capabilities whenever possible.
Tools	Trail Signage	The MST logo is visually interesting but reads Mountains-to-Sea North Carolina State Trail, whereas throughout all other materials, the trail is called MST (a trail that happens to be in N.C.). I wonder how the logo tests with consumers; it seems to me confusing to call a trail already made up of a confusing number of segments by several different names in different places. I would think sticking with one name/one acronym consistently everywhere would test better and be a way to optimize marketing, publicity and public understanding/recognition/cohesive memory.	Comment noted.
Tools	Trail Signage	Are there any trails that have place name signs, confirmation signs and trail blazes on them? Three (3) inch circle without logo would be simple and more cost effective.	Please see the text under “Locations” in this tool. It notes that not all trail types require the same level of signage.
Tools	Trail Signage	Confirmation signs - My interpretation was that trail blazes would help the trail user ensure they are maintaining the proper route along the MST.	Confirmation signs are marked with the trail name and are used in addition to, but less frequently than trail blazes.
Tools	Trail Signage	Reassurance signs - The three (3) inch circle without logo would be simple and cost effective.	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Reasonable standards presented for variety of installations.	Comment noted.
Tools	Trail Signage	I like all the sign ideas. Subtle and clean.	Comment noted.
Tools	Trail Signage	Signs should encourage creativity, not uniformity. They could all incorporate a 3 inch dot into unique designs	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	How to mark road crossings	This will be considered in plan revisions.
Tools	Trail Signage	In the Appearance and Layout section, it states that segment managers and DPR should coordinate on the appearance and layout of signs. It would be helpful to designate specifically who will serve this role for DPR.	Comment noted – specific assignments will not be added to the master plan as these can be determined on a case-by-case basis.
Tools	Trail Signage	In the final sentence of Recommendations, the draft plan states that future work will be undertaken to complete a signage package for the trail. Is there an anticipated process and timeframe for this work?	This effort is a priority for DPR and will be completed as soon as resources are available.

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
Tools	Trail signage	Seems like overkill to expensive, vandalism could be a problem	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Trail blazes should be 3" circle without logo (you have option of painting also)	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Use KISS principle	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Trail head ideas are good	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Consider the use on a 6" x 6" post - use 5" width for sign	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Should consider using the signage used on the BRP along Segment D	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Good	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail signage	Good for high use or visibility issues	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Tools	Trail Signage	Regarding the signage plan as it relates to the section of Segment A that runs through Great Smoky Mountains National Park: I would anticipate that...agency partners will determine the specific signage that is used within the boundaries of GRSM. We support the use of directional MST signage, similar to what we have now, that will affix to our current trailhead and intersection trail signs. However, blazing the trail is outside our standard policy. All signage that we use to mark the designated MST will need to adhere with our GRSM Backcountry Management Plan and signage standards.	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed. This is a great demonstration of the need for a balance between a consistent/branding signage package and the flexibility of a signage package to meet the unique requirements of differing MST section sponsors across the trail.
Tools	Trail signage	Could be cost prohibitive	This input will be considered when a complete signage package is developed.
Trail management		DPR - In addition to the topical roles enumerated for the Division of Parks and Recreation, the master plan should spell out what it means for the MST to be an Operating Unit of the State Parks System as provided for in the 2000 legislation. Here the Division must spell out its commitment to managing the MST as any other state parks system unit including staff and budget in the Operations Section. Now is the time for DPR to begin building the operational organization that will move the MST from the	The State Parks Act (GS 113-44.9) defines the types of units in the State Parks System to include State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, State Rivers and State Lakes. Mountains-to-Sea is a State Trail, not a State Park. Whereas a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail represents a partnership among multiple agencies, landowners, volunteers and local governments, working together to implement a shared vision. Sections of a State Trail on state park property may be managed by the

Category	Sub-Category	Comment	Response
		conceptual planning phase to a sustainable long term operational phase.	<p>Division of Parks and Recreation, but trail that cross property controlled by others will continue to be built, maintained and managed by those other landowners.</p> <p>This does not mean that a State Trail is less important than a State Park; it is simply a different management strategy. The state parks system includes 74 units, of which 41 are operated. The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail is one of 33 non-operated units. The non-operated units are managed in different ways: as satellites of operated units, as leases to other managers, as partnerships of various kinds.</p> <p>We do not anticipate ever managing the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail as an operated unit. Partly, it seems unlikely that we would ever have enough staff and budget to manage a 1,000-mile trail. But largely, we do not think that would be a successful strategy for completion of the trail. We believe it is important for each partnering land manager to retain control of their own lands and of the trail section they have agreed to sponsor. This strategy will lead to completion of a continuous off-road trail, and will help to ensure the long term viability of the trail.</p> <p>We agree that additional DPR staff to work on the trail would be advantageous. Ideally, we would like to have at least one staff person devoted to each of the four state trails. For now, we must work with the staff we have, but we will continue to increase our capabilities whenever possible.</p>
Trail management		The Plan does not address the aspects of MST as a unit of State Parks. Other State Park units have a Superintendent who participates in budgeting and other planning discussions within DENR. Other State Parks have an annual budget, mostly funded from the general State appropriated funds.	The State Parks Act (GS 113-44.9) defines the types of units in the State Parks System to include State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, State Rivers and State Lakes. Mountains-to-Sea is a State Trail, not a State Park. Whereas a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail represents a partnership among multiple agencies, landowners, volunteers and local governments, working together to implement a shared vision. Sections of a State Trail on state park property may be managed by the

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Trail management	Changes to designated trail	Keep the route flexible as it is being developed to allow for minor modifications.	The planned route is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon landowners' willingness to participate, the feasibility of road and river crossings, the participation of other agencies, and other factors important to the sponsors within each segment. In addition, even a Designated Segment of trail may need to be relocated to address environmental or maintenance issues, to include additional amenities, or for other reasons.

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			<p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p>
Trail management	Changes to designated trail	We would like information about changing the designation and the plan. Spelling out how changes will be handled is important.	<p>The planned route is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon landowners' willingness to participate, the feasibility of road and river crossings, the participation of other agencies, and other factors important to the section sponsors within each segment. In addition, even a Designated Segment of trail may need to be relocated to address environmental or maintenance issues, to include additional amenities, or for other reasons.</p> <p>Within each trail section the section sponsor may add or relocate portions of the planned or designated trail as needed. When this occurs, section sponsors should share revised mapping with DPR. The section sponsors must coordinate with DPR and sponsors of adjoining sections prior to the realignment of any trail that would impact connections to adjoining sections. Any trail realignment that would affect connections to adjoining sections requires prior coordination and written approval from DPR.</p>
Trail management	Changes to designated trail	It is very important to incorporate a methodology that allows changes to the proposed route and to the "permanent" trail once it is built. This is a concept that is difficult to apply to a "state park". But, the trail is not static, it will move and change.	<p>The planned route is a guide for the general corridor of the trail. The ultimate route of the built trail will depend upon landowners' willingness to participate, the feasibility of road and river crossings, the participation of other agencies, and other factors important to the section sponsors within each segment. In addition, even a Designated Segment of trail may need to be relocated to</p>

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Trail management	Funding	How is the state going to fund the trail?	It is impossible to know the funding or staffing needs to complete, maintain and manage a trail of this size, because each segment of the trail will be planned, built and managed in accordance with the needs and wishes of local section sponsors. DPR will continue to seek and support sources of funding that will enable section sponsors to complete their individual sections. The web site will continue to be updated to reflect current funding sources and ideas.
Trail management	Staffing	Most state park master plans contain an element of operational and maintenance prescriptions. The issue of DPR organization and staff support for MST planning and operations needs more thorough discussion in the master plan.	<p>The State Parks Act (GS 113-44.9) defines the types of units in the State Parks System to include State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, State Rivers and State Lakes. Mountains-to-Sea is a State Trail, not a State Park. Whereas a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail represents a partnership among multiple agencies, landowners, volunteers and local governments, working together to implement a shared vision. Sections of a State Trail on state park property may be managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, but trail that cross property controlled by others will continue to be built, maintained and managed by those other landowners.</p> <p>This does not mean that a State Trail is less important than a State Park; it is simply a different management strategy. The state parks system includes 74 units, of which 41 are operated. The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail is one of 33</p>

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Trail management	Staffing	We need a superintendent for the MST.	<p>The State Parks Act (GS 113-44.9) defines the types of units in the State Parks System to include State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, State Rivers and State Lakes. Mountains-to-Sea is a State Trail, not a State Park. Whereas a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail represents a partnership among multiple agencies, landowners, volunteers and local governments, working together to implement a shared vision. Sections of a State Trail on state park property may be managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, but trail that cross property controlled by others will continue to be built, maintained and managed by those other landowners.</p> <p>This does not mean that a State Trail is less important than a State Park; it is simply a different management strategy. The state parks system includes 74 units, of which 41 are operated. The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail is one of 33</p>

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Appendix C: Scoring Details for Planning Segments

Planned MST Segment Prioritization Scoring

A		B		C		D		E		F		G		H		I		J		K		L		M		N									
Prioritization Criteria and Measures				Segment Scores & Comments																															
				Mountain Region																															
				1 - Cherokee to Balsam Gap						2 - Northeastern Wilkes						3 - Yadkin River (Surry/Yadkin Co)						4 - Stokes County						5 - Atlantic & Yadkin Greenway						6 - Northwest Forsyth County	
Criteria	Metric	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments								
7	Percent of trail within planning segment that is constructed or designated	67 - 100% = 10 34 - 66% = 5 1 - 33% = 2 None = 0	5	Approximately half of this trail is constructed.	5	The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan notes parts of the trail are complete or under construction near Elkin and Wells Knob. EVTA also completed trails at Grassy Creek Vineyard and is working on trail from Stone Mountain to Trap Hill.	2	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate that none of this trail segment is complete; however there are 2 miles of unopened trail in Jonesville.	2	Portions of this trail through Hanging Rock State Park are constructed.	0	Planning is underway to finalize the Atlantic & Yadkin (A&Y) Greenway route but no segments beyond its existing terminus have been constructed.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate none of this trail segment is complete.																					
8	Level of planning (local/ regional, adopted alignments)	Adopted alignments= 10 Local or trail-specific plan = 5 Regional plan = 2 No plan in place = 0	5	Trail specific plans are in place.	10	The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan establishes the future MST route in this segment.	10	The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan addresses this segment as do several Surry and Yadkin County trail and park plans.	5	Stokes County is updating their Comprehensive Plan which focuses on the MST and trails. Funding for the plan is provided by a Healthy Initiatives Grant. A Parks and Recreation Plan is also underway.	5	The exact alignment of this segment of the MST is being finalized through the ongoing A&Y Greenway planning.	5	Local and regional plans addressing the MST include the Forsyth County Greenway Plan (2012) and the Piedmont Triad Regional Council's regional trail inventory/plan.																					
9	Anticipated construction activity	Some MST construction activity is anticipated in the next: 2 years = 10 3-5 years = 5 6+ Years = 2 Unknown = 0	0	Working towards agreement with NCDPR.	10	The Elkin Valley Trail Association (EVTA) is currently constructing portions of the MST (Stone Mountain Trail).	0	There is potential for future trails to be accommodated at proposed local parks in Jonesville near the Yadkin River and near I-77. However, future construction activity is unknown.	0	No anticipated construction activity was identified during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process.	5	The ongoing planning involving the MPO, Stokesdale, Summerfield and Greensboro will likely result in the construction of all or a portion of this segment. Design work for a portion is planned for the near future.	0	No anticipated construction activity in northwest Forsyth County was identified during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process.																					
10	Timeframe for completion of the entire segment	Short term (0-5 years) = 10 Mid term (6-10 years) = 5 Long term (11-20 years) = 2 Unknown = 0	0	Working towards agreement with NCDPR.	10	The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan indicates the trail is moving forward and EVTA is actively constructing trails. Given the current status of the trail, a short term completion time frame is anticipated.	2	The Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain Master Plan indicates trail planning is moving forward. However, construction and property acquisition in this segment has not moved forward and the timeframe to complete the entire segment is unknown.	0	The anticipated timeframe for completion of the Stokes County segment is unknown. The Comprehensive Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan may help move the MST forward due to the plan's trail and health focus.	5	Establishing land ownership easements to have the trail on their property is likely to prevent trail construction in the short-term.	0	There is no apparent emphasis on moving this segment forward, especially given higher priority gaps in Forsyth County.																					
11	Connectivity	Completes existing MST gap = 10 Connects to existing MST, but no gap closed = 5 Does not close gap or connect to existing MST = 0	10	This segment would complete an existing gap between designated MST trail segments on both sides.	5	The segment connects to the MST within Stone Mountain State Park.	5	This segment connects to the designated MST segment at Pilot Mountain State Park.	5	This segment would connect to the existing MST at Hanging Rock State Park.	5	This segment would connect to the existing A&Y Greenway northern terminus between Greensboro and Summerfield.	5	This segment would connect to the existing MST at Pilot Mountain State Park.																					
12	Percent of corridor with public land available for potential MST	67 - 100% = 10 34 - 66% = 5 1 - 33% = 2 None = 0	10	There is public land in the area along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Great Smoky Mtn. National Park. Other land in the area is owned by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.	2	Approximately 15% of the planned route could potentially be accommodated on public land in the corridor.	2	A limited amount of municipal landholdings is available for the MST.	0	There is no public land available for the trail.	0	There is no public land available for the trail.	0	There is no public land available for the trail.																					
13	Large parcels (100+ acres) near the proposed corridor	Approximate portion of the planned segment intersecting large (100+ acre) parcels: Over 2/3 of segment = 10 1/3 to 2/3 of route = 5 < 1/3 of route = 2 Few to no large parcels = 0	10	Large landholdings are present along the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Great Smoky Mtn. National Park, and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.	0	There are almost no 100+ acre parcels around this segment. The few large parcels are near Stone Mountain State Park.	5	Roughly half of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are distributed evenly across the planned route.	5	Roughly half of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are distributed evenly across the planned route (Parcel data not available. Used Online Map Viewer).	0	There are almost no 100+ acre parcels near Stokesdale.	0	There are only a few scattered 100+ acre parcels.																					
14	Implementation challenges (hydrology issues, stream crossings, major transportation facility crossings, hunting, easements, community support, etc.)	No challenges = 10 Minimal challenges = 5 Moderate challenges = 2 Significant challenges = 0	2	Working towards agreement with NCDPR.	2	This segment follows Elkins Creek and Wells Knob. Bridges and stream crossings could present challenges. Land owners are reportedly supportive of the trail.	2	Potential challenges in this segment are river crossings, road crossings, rail crossings, and floodplains.	2	Potential challenges in this segment include road crossings, stream crossings, and potentially crossing Belevs Lake.	5	Gulfford County is doing a follow up study on the railroad trestle stability over Belevs Lake. The other main implementation issue is acquiring easements from private land owners.	2	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include stream crossings and a lack of local support in unincorporated Forsyth County.																					
15	Level of organized support (engineering, surveying, parks staff, staff for planning, acquisition and/or negotiating easements)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	5	There is collaboration among resources for the Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mtn. National Park, Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, and NCDPR.	5	Wilkes County and the EVTA are actively working on moving the trail forward. Elkin is also supportive.	5	Yadkin and Surry counties have some staff for planning and implementation support. The EVTA, a volunteer based community group, also operates in the area. Strong partnerships among interested agencies and organizations could move this segment forward.	5	Stokes County has some staff for planning and implementation support but lacks a dedicated parks and recreation department. The Friends of the Sauratown Mountains are willing to work on the trail between the towns of Danbury and Walnut Cove.	10	Between Guilford County, Greensboro, Summerfield, Stokesdale and the MPO there are many agencies moving this project forward.	5	Forsyth County has staff that can focus on trail planning and implementation.																					
16	Funding resources available (dedicated funding source in place)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	0	None currently identified.	2	During the scoping meeting held for the master plan it was noted that Wilkes County has provided funding in the past to assist the EVTA but that funding is anticipated to be a challenge in the future. Future funding will likely come from grants.	2	During the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process it was noted that funding appears to be a barrier in both Yadkin and Surry counties.	2	A lack of funding was noted as a challenge during the scoping meeting held as part of the master planning process.	10	The MPO has discretionary funding that has previously gone towards paved trails. Greensboro has available bonds for greenways.	5	During the scoping meeting held as part of the master planning process it was noted that Forsyth County has some funding available for trail development and planning.																					
17	Trail maintenance commitment (Are municipal, county or trails groups in place to construct and/or maintain facilities?)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	10	The Carolina Mountain Club has expressed interest in assisting with maintenance for a defined portion of this segment east of Heintoooga Road. Friends of the MST is ready to organize a task force for other portions.	10	Civic groups such as the EVTA in Wilkes County are involved in maintaining trails.	5	While some regional trails groups could offer maintenance support, no particular entities were identified during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process. The Yadkin and Surry county governments are just beginning to focus on trails.	2	There is a Friends of MST group active with Hanging Rock State Park/Sauratown Trail that could potentially help maintain this segment. No other groups that could potentially provide maintenance support were identified during the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process.	10	There are existing agreements in place for trail maintenance between Greensboro and Guilford County. Summerfield and Stokesdale are aware that they will need to plan for maintenance of the A&Y Greenway.	5	This segment is primarily in unincorporated Forsyth County. Forsyth County would likely manage this segment.																					
18	Demonstrated demand for trail (support for recreation bonds, active interest groups, priority in local/regional plans)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 None = 0	10	All trail planning partners are very interested in closing this final gap in the mountains. This has been demonstrated by ongoing collaboration.	10	The EVTA, the Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor (YVHC), and Overmountain Victory Trail Association and the Yadkin River Greenway Council all promote trail planning in Wilkes County. The EVTA is active in trail building and there is an active horseback riding group supporting a portion of the trail.	10	Trail and park planning efforts have identified support for the project. Local leaders also see the MST as generating additional tourism for the Yadkin Valley region.	5	Local planning efforts are highly focused on trails and tourism in Stokes County. Planning support for the minor Forsyth section was not mentioned during the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process.	10	Greensboro, Summerfield and Stokesdale are all working together to move this greenway forward. The demand is high since it will extend the popular existing A&Y Greenway to Summerfield and Stokesdale.	2	During the scoping meeting held as part of the master planning process it was indicated that most of the support for trails and greenways in Forsyth County is within Winston-Salem and Kernersville.																					
19	Anticipated economic impact of trail (proximity and connections to developed areas, other attractions, other trails, county tier designation)	High = 10 Medium = 5 Low = 2 Unknown = 0	10	Attractions draw tourists to this area. This segment would connect to a network of trails. There are no urbanized areas in close proximity. Cherokee County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	10	The Stone Mountain State Park draws tourists to this area. A connection from the park to the Town of Elkin could be provided. The economic benefit has been noted in plans and the scoping meeting. Wilkes County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	10	Pilot Mountain State Park draws visitors to the area, but the town of Elkin is not in close proximity to this attraction. This segment would connect to designated MST but there are no other trail connections. Yadkin County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development. Surry County was listed as a Tier 3 county, so the trail could have a very significant impact to the overall economy.	5	Pilot Mountain State Park and Belevs Lake draw visitors to this segment and there could be a connection to the A&Y Greenway. Stokes County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	5	This segment would connect to the Greensboro Watershed Trails and would provide a connection from Stokesdale and Summerfield to Greensboro. Guilford County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.	5	Pilot Mountain State Park draws visitors to this segment and a connection could be made to the Town of Bethania. Forsyth County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.																					
20	TOTAL SCORE		77		81		60		38		70		34																						

Planned MST Segment Prioritization Scoring

O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
2	Piedmont Region											
3	Piedmont Region											
4	7 - Winston-Salem		8 - Piedmont Greenway		9 - Upper Haw River		10 - Haw River Trail		11 - Southwest Orange County		12 - Eno River	
5	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments
6												
7	5	Approximately 34% of this segment is constructed but not designated.	2	A small section of the trail within Triad Park at the Forsyth/Guilford County line is complete.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate that none of this trail segment is complete. While trail planning has occurred just north of the Greensboro Watershed Lakes, no trails are constructed and open to the public.	2	Approximately 20% of the Haw River Trail is constructed or designated.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate that none of this trail segment is complete.	5	Approximately 45% of the MST is designated or constructed in this segment. The largest gap is near and within Eno River State Park.
8	10	The detailed MST alignment in Winston-Salem will follow Muddy Creek Greenway and Salem Lake Greenway.	5	The Piedmont Greenway Plan is roughly a decade old. However, the corridor and alignment have been updated in MPO plans. Kernersville also updated their Parks, Recreation and Greenways Plan in 2013. The MPO is updating their Bike-Ped plan.	5	The Piedmont Triad Regional Council completed a trail plan for Rockingham County. Guilford County is working on planning for the trail north of the Watershed Lakes. This segment is included as an area of collaboration for the Haw River Trail Partnership.	10	The approved detailed trail alignment is the Haw River Trail. Alamance County recently approved a trail plan.	5	The 2014 Orange County Parks and Recreation Master plan addresses the MST. Although a significant portion of the trail within this segment has not been delineated, there has been a considerable amount of effort to identify the alignments for two sub-sections of this segment.	5	Durham and Orange County both have parks, recreation and open space plans that address the MST.
9	2	Winston-Salem's Greenways Plan shows small extensions of the Muddy Creek Greenway (to the south) and the Salem Creek Greenways as programmed/funded.	5	Kernersville is moving forward with property acquisition and construction could be expected in the next 3-5 years.	0	While Guilford County has worked on planning for the trail north of the Watershed Lakes, indicating interest and activity to move this segment forward, challenges related to staff departures have slowed planning and the timeframe for construction activity is unknown.	10	The Town of Haw River has recently completed construction of trail at Red Slide Park. Construction is underway for a 4-mile section of trail that will connect to the MST at Stoney Creek Marina.	5	Orange County is focusing on completing gaps between Hillsborough Riverwalk and the Eno River State Park and then Hillsborough Riverwalk and Occaneechee Mountain SNA and Orange County Seven Mile Creek Preserve. Construction activity in these areas is expected within the next 3-5 years.	10	Hillsborough and Durham both have trail construction underway.
10	2	The 2012 Greenways Plan indicates Tier 1 projects should be completed in the next 5-7 years. This includes extending the Muddy Creek Greenway and the Salem Creek Greenway. This will leave a gap in the bottom of the segment near Clemmons.	5	Kernersville, Oak Ridge, and Greensboro see the projects as a top priority but this trail segment is not expected to be completed in the short term as the route is still being finalized.	0	Rockingham County noted in scoping meetings their lack of resources to move this segment forward in the short or mid term.	5	Local governments are working together with the Haw River Trail Coordinator to acquire property and construct segments.	2	While some of this segment is anticipated to be complete in the near- to mid-term, the entire segment is not anticipated to be complete for the long term.	5	The Hillsborough and Durham portions of the MST are anticipated to be complete in the short term. There is a portion of the MST in the Eno River State Park that is complete but not designated. Plans are underway to designate this segment.
11	5	The sizable lengths of the Muddy Creek Greenway and Salem Creek Greenway could close a gap when all of segment 7 is completed.	5	This segment will connect the Salem Lake Greenway in Winston-Salem to the A&Y Greenway/Greensboro Watershed Trails in Greensboro.	5	This segment will connect to the designated Greensboro Watershed Trails.	0	This segment does not connect to existing MST segments or close gaps.	5	This segment would connect to existing MST segments in Hillsborough.	5	This segment connects to the completed Falls Lake/Neuse River MST segment.
12	0	There is no public land available for the trail.	2	Approximately 15% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land in Triad Park and the Greensboro Watershed Preserve. Some of the trail will also use sidewalks in downtown Kernersville.	2	Approximately 20% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land including the Greensboro Watershed property available north of the lakes and the Haw River State Park in Rockingham County.	2	Conservation easements are available in the corridor to accommodate the Haw River Trail/MST.	5	Approximately 45% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land including OWASA property and the Seven Mile Creek Preserve. Agreements are also in progress for some sections across private land.	10	Approximately 80% of this segment is on public land including Eno River State Park, West Point on the Eno, and the Durham County Property.
13	0	There are very few 100+ acre parcels along the corridor.	0	There are very few 100+ acre parcels along the corridor.	5	Roughly two-thirds of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels, particularly along the Haw River in Rockingham County.	5	Roughly less than half of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are evenly distributed across the planned route corridor.	5	Roughly a quarter of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are near the OWASA property and south of I-40/85. More than 1/3 of acreage belongs to OWASA, Orange County, or conservancy groups.	2	Roughly less than a quarter of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are near Falls Lake State Recreation Area and Eno River State Park.
14	2	There are several major road crossings and potential stream crossings.	2	It was noted during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process that the alignment of the Piedmont Greenway recently changed to move to the north as reflected in the MST Master Plan's mapping. Road crossings and wetlands are additional challenges.	5	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include staff resources in Rockingham County and river crossings.	2	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include road crossings and stream crossings.	5	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include: road crossings, and a lack of a finalized alignment between OWASA and Hillsborough.	5	Road crossings were the primary challenge noted during the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process, particularly US 70. However, a US 70 bridge replacement is anticipated to accommodate the trail. Private property and river crossings are additional constraints.
15	10	Winston-Salem and the MPO have staff resources for trail and greenway planning.	5	The Piedmont Land Conservancy is leading a planning process that involves local and regional stakeholders.	10	Guilford County has staff support. Rockingham County recently created a staff position that will work on trails. The Haw River Trail partnership is also collaborating on this segment.	10	The Haw River Trail Coordinator position is dedicated to the project and works with municipal and county staff to move the project forward. The Alamance Task Force builds and maintains trails in this area.	10	Orange County has some staff support for open space planning. Hillsborough has trail and greenway planning support but only a small portion of this segment is within their jurisdiction.	10	Orange and Durham Counties and Eno River State Park have staff support for planning and implementation. Friends of the MST's Eno River Task Force builds trails in this segment.
16	10	During the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process available funding resources were discussed. A parks and sidewalk transportation bond was also passed in November 2014.	10	Multiple partners are engaged in this segment with available funding resources.	5	Guilford County has funding resources but Rockingham is currently lacking funding.	5	Municipalities in Alamance County have been successful in securing funding to move the project forward. However, funding for property acquisition was noted as a barrier during the scoping meeting held for the master planning process.	10	Orange County has a Capital Improvement Program for trail funding for 5-10 years. This funding source is subject to change.	10	Orange and Durham Counties and Eno River State Park have funding resources for trail implementation.
17	10	Winston-Salem maintains an existing network of parks and greenways.	10	The municipal partners involved can all provide maintenance support (Kernersville, Greensboro, Oak Ridge).	5	Guilford County has maintenance staff for their parks and contracts with Greensboro for trail maintenance outside of county parks. Rockingham County currently does not have trail maintenance resources.	10	Alamance County and municipalities maintain any portion of the Haw River Trail that is within their jurisdiction. The Alamance Task Force builds and maintains trails in this area.	10	Orange County currently maintains their own park facilities and has agreed in the adopted master plan to maintain sections in Orange County.	10	Orange County and the Eno River State Park currently maintain parks and trails. The trail is constructed and maintained in Durham County through a memorandum of understanding with the Friends of MST. Hillsborough maintains the trail within their jurisdiction.
18	10	Participants at the scoping meeting noted local support. Existing trails, planning and funding also demonstrate support.	10	During the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process it was noted that this is a priority greenway project for the region given that it will connect Greensboro, Kernersville and Winston-Salem.	5	Rockingham County appears interested in the project from a tourism and economic development perspective. Guilford County wants to move the project forward either along Reedy Creek or via Rockingham County. Plans, activity and input from the scoping meeting indicate that this segment is a lower regional priority than the A&Y Greenway and the Piedmont Greenway.	10	The Haw River Trail and blueway are becoming increasingly popular in the area. Funding the Haw River Trail coordinator position also demonstrates local support.	10	Feedback from staff was received during the public meetings that focus is on completing gaps between Hillsborough Riverwalk and ERSF and then Hillsborough Riverwalk and Occaneechee Mountain SNA and Orange County Seven Mile Creek Preserve. A recent master planning process identified high demand for trails.	10	Local staff noted this is a high priority trail project given it connects to the Falls Lake/Neuse River segment and will complete the MST in the heart of the Triangle region.
19	5	This segment would connect existing greenways and the planned corridor provides access to the urbanized area of Winston-Salem. Forsyth County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.	5	This segment would connect to the Greensboro Watershed Trails and would provide a connection from Winston-Salem, Kernersville, Oak Ridge, and Summerfield to Greensboro. Forsyth and Guilford Counties are Tier 3 counties, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.	10	This segment would serve the urbanized area of Greensboro and would connect the Greensboro Watershed Trails and Haw River Trail. Guilford County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant. Rockingham County was listed as a Tier 1 county, so the trail could have a very significant impact to the overall economy.	10	This segment would serve the growing Burlington-Graham area and would connect to small segments of existing trail. Alamance County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development. Paddle trails have already brought tourism benefits to the area.	5	This segment would provide a connection to Hillsborough and connects small segments of existing trail. Orange County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.	5	This segment would provide a connection from Hillsborough to Durham, would connect to an existing network of trails, and provides access to Eno River State Park and Falls Lake. Both Orange and Durham Counties are Tier 3 counties, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.
20	71		66		57		81		77		92	

Planned MST Segment Prioritization Scoring

AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK	AL	
2	Coastal Region											
3	Coastal Region											
4	13 - Johnston County		14 - Wayne County		15 - Lenoir County		16 - Northern Craven County		17 - Southern Craven County		18 - Carteret/Ocracoke	
5	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments	Score	Comments
6												
7	2	The completed River Walk in Smithfield accounts for about 5% of the entire segment.	2	Approximately 17% of the MST is designated in Wayne County.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate that none of this trail segment is complete.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate none of this trail segment is complete.	0	GIS data and input collected during the scoping meeting held for the master plan indicate that none of this trail segment is complete. The Neusiok Trail intersects this segment but is only utilized as the proposed MST in the Carteret County segment.	5	Trail is complete in this segment within Croatan National Forest and along the Cedar Island - Ocracoke Ferry route.
8	10	Johnston County has a regional MST plan (2006), a Johnston County Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the alignment is along the Neuse River corridor.	10	The MPO recently completed a bicycle and pedestrian plan that adopted an official MST alignment along the Neuse River and through downtown Goldsboro.	5	There are local design plans in place for the Kinston River Walk.	5	There are both regional MST plans and local/county parks and recreation plans for Craven County, and New Bern. East Carolina University (ECU) is currently completing a county parks and recreation plan.	5	There are both regional MST plans and local/county parks and recreation plans for Craven County and New Bern. East Carolina University is completing a county parks and recreation plan.	5	East Carolina University is creating a parks and recreation master plan for Carteret County. There was also a past MST regional plan.
9	0	No construction activity was identified during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process. While Clayton is seeking grants to extend the Neuse River Trail, the status of the trail is still unknown.	0	No construction activity was identified during the scoping meeting held as part of the MST master planning process. Grants are being sought for the trail but the status of the MST is still unknown.	5	Segments of the Kinston River Walk will be constructed in 2-5 years.	0	No construction activity is anticipated in this segment at this time.	0	No construction activity is anticipated in this segment at this time.	0	No construction activity is anticipated in this segment at this time.
10	0	The timeframe for completion is unknown. Completing the trail from Smithfield to Clayton is a priority for planners, tourism boards, and users, but needs additional momentum to continue moving forward.	0	While the MST is a priority in the county, there is no timeline established for completing the MST yet.	0	While the Kinston River Walk is moving forward, the rest of the corridor is anticipated for the longer term, given that detailed planning has not occurred.	0	The planned route is along the Neuse River but may need to shift to the south due to wetlands. No segments are close to being constructed, indicating a long term completion horizon.	0	No segments are close to being constructed indicating a long term completion horizon.	0	No segments are close to being constructed indicating a long term completion horizon.
11	5	This segment would connect to the Neuse River Trail.	0	This segment does not connect to existing MST segments or close gaps.	0	This segment does not connect to existing MST segments or close gaps.	0	This segment does not connect to existing MST segments or close gaps.	5	This segment connects to the designated MST trail in Carteret County (Neusiok Trail).	5	This segment would connect to the designated Outer Banks segment.
12	2	Approximately 5% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land at the Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center.	2	Approximately 15% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land including Cliffs of the Neuse State Park, the NCSA Cherry Research Center and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.	0	Minimal public land is available in the corridor.	5	Approximately 55% of the corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land including several properties from the NC Land and Water Conservation Trust and other conservation entities.	10	The Croatan National Forest landholdings cover approximately 80-90% of the corridor.	2	Approximately 30% of the planned corridor could potentially be accommodated on public land including Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge and Croatan National Forest.
13	10	Over two-thirds of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are evenly distributed across the planned route corridor except for Smithfield and Clayton. The Triangle Greenways Council has conserved a 29-acre property on the northeast side of the Neuse River in Johnston County for MST purposes.	10	Over three-quarters of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are evenly distributed across the planned route corridor.	10	About three-quarters of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. Large parcels are evenly distributed across the planned route corridor.	10	Most of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels.	10	Almost all of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels.	10	Almost all of the planned route is intersected by large (100+ acre) parcels. This segment has several very large parcels, more so than any other segment.
14	2	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include: Neuse River buffer requirements, political support, the lack of a parks and recreation department at the county level, and wetlands in the area of the Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center.	2	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include river crossings and wetlands.	2	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include stream crossings and planning for trail implementation outside of Kinston.	0	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include the Neuse River Buffer Rules and wetlands.	0	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include: Neuse River Buffer Rules, shifting staff at Croatan National Forest, hunting at Croatan National Forest, no public land allowed at Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station, wetlands, major road crossings, and needed coordination among stakeholders.	0	Potential implementation challenges for this segment include: a very large private land owner concerned about the impacts to agriculture operations (Open Grounds Farm), shifting staff at Croatan National Forest, wetlands, and water crossings.
15	5	Smithfield and Clayton have staff support but Johnston County currently does not have a parks and recreation department.	10	Goldsboro/MPO and Wayne County have staff support for planning and implementation. The Eastern Carolina RPO is interested in coordinating on this segment.	10	Kinston and Lenoir County have a joint Parks and Recreation Department with staff for planning and implementation. Friends of the MST is interested in organizing a task force for trail building.	10	New Bern and Craven County have staff support for planning and implementation.	10	New Bern, Havelock and Craven County have staff support for planning and implementation.	10	Carteret County has staff support for planning and implementation.
16	5	Johnston County collects an open space fee that could potentially go towards the project (\$1 million collected). However, there are concerns over geographic equity within the county. A parks and recreation bond has also been considered but not put to a vote.	5	Funding was discussed as a challenge during the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process. However, Goldsboro has had success navigating NCDOT and Federal funding programs.	10	NCDOT planning funds have been leveraged and funding is underway for the Kinston River Walk. Future funding is a challenge. Capital improvement funds are also an option.	5	During the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process it was noted that Capital Improvement Funds and grant funds are potential resources.	5	During the scoping meetings held as part of the MST master planning process it was noted that Capital Improvement Funds and grant funds are potential resources.	5	During the scoping meeting held as part of the master planning process, funding resources were noted as a challenge. However, it was also noted that capital improvement funds are potentially available in addition to Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.
17	5	Smithfield and Clayton have trails they maintain but Johnston County currently does not have a Parks and Recreation Department.	10	Goldsboro maintains parks/recreation facilities and would partner with Wayne County to manage the trail portion within Wayne County, which lacks a parks and recreation department. In addition, there is an active group that supports the construction, maintenance, and awareness of trails in Wayne County, Friends of Wayne County Greenways.	10	Kinston and Lenoir County have a joint Parks and Recreation Department that is equipped for trail maintenance. Friends of the MST is interested in organizing a task force for trail maintenance.	10	Craven County and New Bern both have parks and recreation departments.	10	Craven County, Havelock and New Bern each have parks and recreation departments.	10	Carteret County, Croatan National Forest and Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge all currently maintain trails or other parks and recreation facilities. The Carteret Wildlife Club, a civic group, is also active in the area.
18	10	Local staff noted the there is significant demand from trail users to extend the Neuse River Greenway Trail from Clayton to Smithfield. The importance of trails and recreation facilities was reiterated through responses to a public survey for the parks and recreation master plan.	10	Wayne County is very motivated to implement the MST and coordinate with adjacent counties. During a scoping meeting held in Wayne County it was noted that completing the MST through Wayne County is one of the highest priorities among agencies and elected officials. There is very high public demand for the MST - especially from the Wayne County Memorial Hospital and the Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.	5	There is demonstrated local support for the future Kinston River Walk. Planning for the MST outside of Kinston is not a local priority yet.	5	Trails were identified as a top priority in local parks and recreation plans. Trails are supported as they are expected to bolster existing tourism in the region. Support for moving the trail forward in New Bern was said to be higher than the rest of Craven County in the Master Plan primary scoping meetings.	2	Trails were identified as a top priority in local parks and recreation plans. Trails are supported as they are expected to bolster existing tourism in the region. However, there is little public awareness of the MST in southern Craven County.	2	While trails and trail related tourism are a priority for the County there is little public awareness for completing the MST.
19	5	This segment would connect the Raleigh area to Clayton and Smithfield. Johnston County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.	10	This segment would connect to existing trail, directly services Goldsboro, and provides access to the Cliffs of the Neuse State Park. Wayne County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	5	While completion of the segment would serve Kinston, it would not connect to an existing trail network or attractions. Lenoir County was listed as a Tier 1 county, so the trail could have a very significant impact to the overall economy.	5	While completion of the segment would serve New Bern, it would not connect to an existing trail network or attractions. Craven County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	5	The Croatan National Forest and the Neuse River attract visitors to this area. The segment would provide a connection to these attractions and serve Cherry Point. Craven County is listed as a Tier 2 county, and economic impacts could be fairly significant to the overall economy from trail development.	5	The Outer Banks are a major draw of visitors. This segment would connect to the designated Outer Banks segment and the Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge. Carteret County is a Tier 3 county, and while the trail would provide economic benefits, the overall impacts to the economy may not be as significant.
20	61		71		62		55		62		59	



Appendix D: Initial Ideas for MST Signs

Mountains-to-Sea State Trail Signage Package Ideas



**Segment - xxxx Greenway to Highway
xxx**

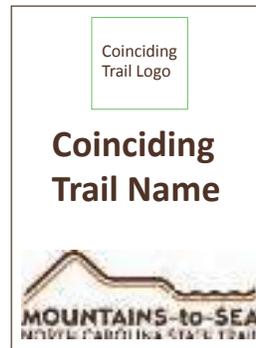
**Trail information- appropriate for the
area and segment manager.**

**Entrance Signage- idea -
16"x7"**
White lighter background
to stand out in parking area

**Add on options- segment
name and information
16"x __"**
White lighter background to
stand out in parking area



Logo
Examples

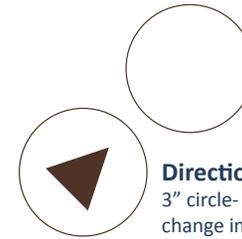


Optional
Add-on

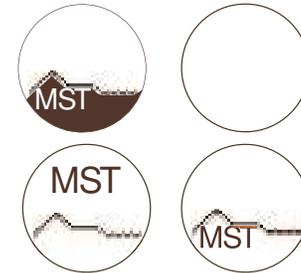
Optional
Add-on

Junction Signage - 6"x 8"

***Need flexibility in size
in order to fit into and
enhance existing trail
signage packages



Directional Change
3" circle- series of two indicating
change in direction- with a
reassurance marker visible from
where these dots occurs



3" circle options - with logo or without



5" circle



Reassurance Markers



Confirmation Sign - 4x6
transition to white 3"
circular blaze concept



Destination signs 4x16

***Longer as needed to fit destination description if separate from
the main entrance signage...

Brown background to be less visually intrusive in a natural setting if
used as a stand alone sign

Mountains-to-Sea State Trail Signage Package Ideas

Place Name/Resource/Feature

Place name signs - 4x16 - Size adjusted to meet naming needs

<p>Segment Manager</p> <p>Coinciding Trail Logo</p> <p>Town of xxxxxxxx xxxxx</p>	<p>Segment Maintainer</p> <p>Coinciding Trail Logo</p> <p>Friends of xxxxx xxxxxxxx</p>	<p>Segment Volunteers</p> <p>Coinciding Trail Logo Organization</p> <p>Coinciding Trail Logo Organization</p> <p>Coinciding Trail Logo Organization</p>
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Segment Managers/Trail Maintainers-Volunteers-Optional Add-ons



Boundary Signage - 4x6 - none are circular



Boundary Signage - 8x6 - Larger boundary option- none are circular



camping



potential future need: agricultural district



hiking



Coordinate with areas of 4x4 access



bicycle



coordinate with areas of paddle option



equestrian



Regulatory Signs
icons that are permitted and/or not permitted uses - or district/area awareness important to include as uses/areas shift across the trail. Additional icons can be

non-permitted uses would utilize a strike through similar to this example across a regulatory sign



gameslands- layout should coordinate with NC Wildlife Resources Commission Signage
easement optional signage

Mountains-to-Sea State Trail Signage Package Ideas



NCDOT- Std. Sized pedestrian crossing signage
with add-on to identify crossing as MST. (Similar to
the example above - approval needed from NCDOT -
figure updated to hiker symbology)