



# PIEDMONT TRIAD

# STRATEGIC

# OUTDOOR

# RECREATION

# PLAN



January 2022



Revised April 2022

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**OUTDOOR RECREATION:** *Recreational activities undertaken for pleasure that generally involve some level of intentional physical exertion and occur in nature-based environments outdoors. (Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis)*

*Photo Credit Cover: Top: Chris English - Tigermoth Creative; Middle Left: Hal Boyle – Triad ECO Adventures; Middle Right and Bottom: Brianna Haferman – Piedmont Legacy Trails*

*Note: An executive summary of this document is available as a Story Map website at this link: <https://maps.ptrc.org/portal/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=1725361ba79e4992b807e447982d6abb>*



**PIEDMONT TRIAD**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Produced by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council with funding from the US Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration and assistance from the Piedmont Triad Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council

## PIEDMONT TRIAD OUTDOOR RECREATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hal Boyle	Owner, Triad ECO Adventures
Mark & Kathy Bowman	Owners, 4B Farm and Campground
Paul Carter	Owner, Yadkin River Adventures
David Craft	Piedmont Legacy Trails, Guilford County
Jenny Edwards	Former Program Manager, Dan River Basin Association
Brian Fannon	Former River Keeper, Yadkin Riverkeeper
Jimmy Flythe	Dir., Community & Government Relations, Duke Energy
Elizabeth Jernigan	Planner, City of Greensboro
Chris Jordan	Lands Program Coordinator, NC Wildlife Commission
Kelley King	Superintendent, Haw River State Park
Matt Lawson	Former Piedmont Trail Specialist, NC State Parks
Keith Martin	Former Superintendent, Mayo River State Park
Edgar Miller	Executive Director, Yadkin Riverkeeper
Palmer McIntyre	Conservation Planner, Piedmont Land Conservancy
Tammy O’Kelley	Former CEO, Randolph County TDA
Sam Parrott	Three Rivers Land Trust
Tracey Pegram	Assistant Director, High Point Parks & Recreation
Chris Phelps	Executive Director, Davidson County Tourism
Mary Joan Pugh	Trails/ National Heritage Coordinator, Randolph County
Smith Raynor	State Trails Planner, NC State Parks
Mike Reardon	Executive Director, Carolina Climbers Coalition
Robin Riddlebarger	Superintendent, Hanging Rock State Park
Theresa Savery	District Recreation Staff Office, Uwharrie National Forest
Mark Scott	Former Ex. Director, Montgomery Co. Chamber of Commerce
Will Seeley	Owner, Get Outdoors
Michael Spisak	District Ranger, Uwharrie National Forest
Todd Tucker	President, Surry County Economic Dev. Commission
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### COUNCIL VALUES

Accessibility	Connectivity	Health and Wellness
Authenticity	Conservation	Preservation
Capacity	Diversity	Stewardship
Collaboration	Equity	Sustainability

### COUNCIL VISION

The Piedmont Triad becomes an exceptional outdoor experience.

### COUNCIL MISSION

A collaboration of public and private partners for initiating, resourcing and sustaining exceptional outdoor experiences to further economic development, education, health and wellness in the Piedmont Triad Region.



**PIEDMONT TRIAD**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# STATE AND NATIONAL OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

The Piedmont Triad Regional Development Corporation recognized the need to further develop the outdoor recreation industry in the region in order to grow the economic impact of the industry and therefore create new job opportunities as well as increasing tourism revenues in both urban and rural counties.

Federal, state and community organizations and business leaders in the industry were invited to participate in the development of the Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council was established to develop the plan and began their work in October of 2018. Much has changed since the initial meeting. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated and also changed the way residents and visitors work, live and recreate. Some trails saw their usage double or triple at the beginning of the pandemic and the long-term impact to recreation habits and economic impacts are still unfolding. The Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan maps our current assets and is intended to provide a framework for local outdoor recreation advocates to leverage public and private investment in the industry. This plan focuses primarily on strategies for preserving and supporting federal and State outdoor recreation assets in the region.

The Piedmont Triad Regional Council, in conjunction with the region's Workforce Development Board and partners, is working toward recruiting a more talented workforce to NC Triad region. National research indicates that outdoor recreation ranks very high with the young, talented workers across the nation when choosing a place to live, work and play. Therefore, it is critical for our region to support and promote growth in the outdoor recreation industry.

## OUTDOOR RECREATION NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS RESEARCH & STATISTICS

The **Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR)** is America's leading coalition of outdoor recreation trade associations and organizations working to promote the growth of the outdoor recreation economy and outdoor recreation activities.

ORR members represent the thousands of businesses that produce vehicles, equipment, gear, apparel and services for the 144 million Americans who enjoy our national parks, waterways, byways, trails and outdoor spaces. The various outdoor recreation business sectors produce a combined \$778 billion output for the U.S. economy and support 5.2 million direct jobs. They educate decision makers, and the public, on balanced policies that conserve public lands and waterways and enhance infrastructure to improve the experience and quality of life of outdoor enthusiasts everywhere. Their members include such organizations as America Outdoors, American Horse Council, American



**ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS, OUTDOOR RECREATION'S ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT IS:**

**\$788 Billion**

### DRIVER OF JOB CREATION

BEA REPORTS THAT OUTDOOR RECREATION ACCOUNTED FOR:

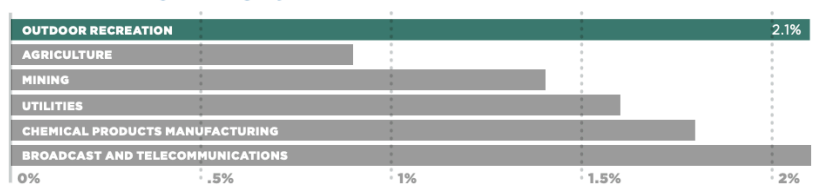
**5.2 million jobs in 2019**

### A KEY COMPONENT OF THE ECONOMY

AND ACCOUNTED FOR:

**2.1% of GDP in 2019**

### BY THE PERCENTAGES



Mountain Guides Association, American Sportfishing Association, American Trails, Archery Trade Association, Association of Marina Industries, Boat U.S (Boat Owners Association of the US), CHM Government Services, The Corps Network, DEMA, Diving Equipment & Marketing, Inter-national Snowmobile Manufacturers, Marine Retailers Association, Motorcycle Industry Council, National Forest Recreation Association, National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds, National Marine Manufacturers Association, National Park Hospitality Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation and NIC, Inc.

This organization along with the **Outdoor Industry Association**, led the way to pass the **Great American Outdoors Act** in 2020 that allocates \$9.5 billion for five years for previously neglected park maintenance. It also sets up \$900m per year to acquire land for conservation and continued maintenance. This was a sweeping, long-awaited bill to continuously fund national, state and local parks – a major boon to conservation and one of the few pieces of significant legislation the government was able to agree on in a divisive election year.

**The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA)** - The Outdoor Industry Association is also a national, membership-driven trade organization for the outdoor industry.

In collaboration with their members, they are a force for the industry in recreation and trade policy, sustainable business innovation and increasing outdoor participation. The OIA was founded in 1989 by a group of 14 visionary outdoor industry pioneers who created the association to be a unified, collaborative effort to help guide the industry. Today, OIA is the voice of the outdoor recreation industry, both locally and in Washington D.C., serving more than 1,200 manufacturers, retailers, distributors, suppliers, sales representatives, nonprofits and outdoor enthusiasts.

OIA issued the first **Outdoor Recreation Economy Report** more than a decade ago and has made significant improvements since that time. Their third edition (2017) took a broader view of the growing industry and its shifting demographics.



**US OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY**

Highlights of the 2017 **Outdoor Industry Association’s (OIA) Outdoor Recreation Economy Report** are included here. It is the largest, most comprehensive report of its kind because there was 1) 70% increase in survey responses from the previous study, 2) Results for all 435 U.S. congressional districts in addition to national, regional and state results, and 3) Seven new activities were included for the first time in the study.

**Outdoor Recreation Drives Commerce**

Every year, American consumers spend more on outdoor recreation than they do on pharmaceuticals and fuel combined. In fact, the impact of outdoor recreation on America’s economy is almost as big as that of hospital care.

- **OUTDOOR RECREATION PRODUCTS** including gear, apparel, footwear, equipment, services and vehicle purchases (\$184.5 billion)
- **TRIP AND TRAVEL SPENDING** including airfare, fuel, lodging, groceries, lift tickets, guides, lessons and more (702.3 billion)

**Outdoor Recreation Creates Healthy Economies**

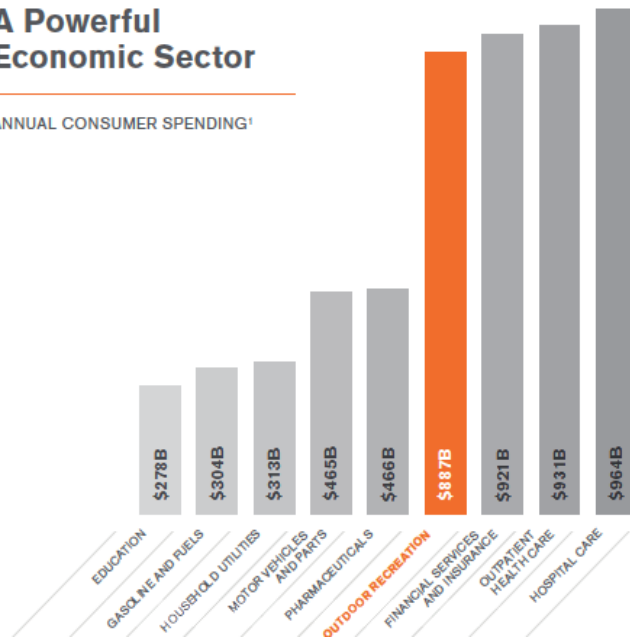
- The outdoor recreation economy generates \$124.5 billion in federal, state and local tax revenue each year. Jobs and careers in the outdoor sector are highly coveted. They attract active and healthy workers whose lifestyles inspire and uplift their neighbors. Beyond the industry itself, outdoor recreation infrastructure has proven an invaluable asset for economic development offices and chambers of commerce seeking to attract new employers.

**Towns and cities that invest in their outdoor assets attract employers and employees who value the work-life balance that outdoor access can provide.**

**Outdoor Recreation Creates Healthy Communities** - Studies demonstrate that, in addition to economic prosperity, outdoor recreation delivers personal and social benefits on which healthy, happy communities thrive. Investment in outdoor recreation may also help ease some of our nation’s financial and social burdens. A growing body of research suggests that investments in outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming could; 1) significantly reduce crime rates, 2) improve educational outcomes for elementary, secondary and post-secondary students, including attention and test scores, retention and high school graduation rates and 3) lower long-term individual and public health care costs by reducing stress and obesity rates, improving physical fitness and strengthening social bonds with family and friends.

**A Powerful Economic Sector**

ANNUAL CONSUMER SPENDING<sup>1</sup>



**SOUTH ATLANTIC**

- SPEND \$179.1 BILLION**
- JOBS 1,561,000**
- FEDERAL TAX REVENUES \$12.9 BILLION**
- STATE & LOCAL TAX REVENUES \$10.6 BILLION**

**FACT:** *The South Atlantic Region spends more on outdoor recreation than any other region in the US.*

**NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR RECREATION DATA AND TRENDS** – North Carolina was the first eastern state to establish an Office of Outdoor Recreation housed in the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. The mission is *“To Make NC the Eastern Headquarters of the Outdoor Recreation Economy.”* and the goals include:

- 1) To help businesses find, secure and intelligently utilize NC outdoor resources
- 2) To help legislators, businesses and activists focus on smart growth for the NC Outdoor Recreation Economy.

**IN NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR RECREATION GENERATES:**

**\$28.0  
BILLION**  
IN CONSUMER  
SPENDING ANNUALLY



**260,000**  
DIRECT  
JOBS



**\$8.3  
BILLION**  
IN WAGES AND  
SALARIES



**\$1.3  
BILLION**  
IN STATE AND LOCAL  
TAX REVENUE



**56%**  
**OF**  
**NORTH CAROLINA**  
RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE  
IN OUTDOOR RECREATION  
EACH YEAR

Communities across North Carolina recognize that outdoor recreation supports, contributes to a high quality of life and—perhaps most importantly—attracts and sustains employers and families. Investing in outdoor infrastructure attracts employers and active workforces, ensuring those communities thrive economically and socially.

In the **North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan (2020-2025)** developed by NC State Parks, it is stated that the most popular activities in North Carolina are visiting a beach or lake, walking for pleasure, visiting parks and historic sites, hiking on trails, freshwater fishing, viewing scenery, fishing from a boat, nature viewing and swimming. In addition, at least 10 percent of residents participate in activities such as canoeing, picnicking, bird watching, bicycling, and tennis. In addition when surveying recreation managers, the top 5 reported needs are 1) unpaved trails for walking and hiking (59%) 2-4) paved trails for walking, hiking, skating or biking (52%), picnic shelters (52%), multi-use fields (52%) and 5) splashpad/sprayground.

US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS 2019 NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR RECREATION DATA

The following data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis shows a snapshot of outdoor recreation economic impact for 2019.



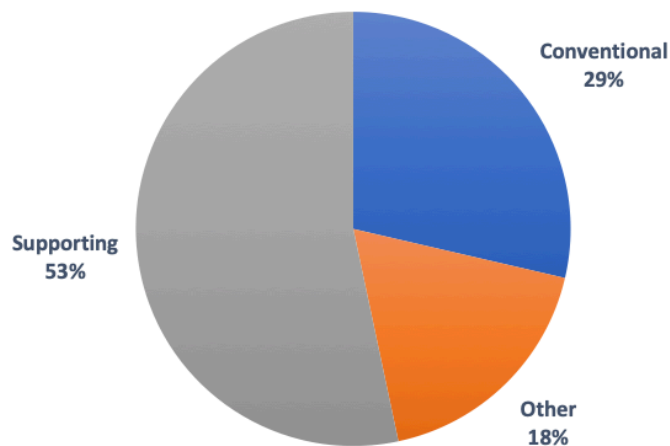
2019 - North Carolina

Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account (ORSA)

Value Added (GDP)		Employment		Compensation	
ORSA Total	Share of State	ORSA Total	Share of State	ORSA Total	Share of State
\$12.1 Billion	2.0%	151,661 Jobs	2.5%	\$5.8 Billion	1.8%

Value Added by Select ORSA Activity (\$ 000s)				
Activity	2017	2018	2019	State Rank
Boating/Fishing	608,999	631,663	678,049	8
RVing	325,860	342,639	371,710	12
Motorcycling/ATVing	212,362	219,398	240,925	12
Equestrian	199,736	222,842	230,960	10
Hunting/Shooting/Trapping	149,460	155,054	181,238	19
Climbing/Hiking/Tent Camping	111,753	118,206	121,782	7
Snow Activities	53,399	55,615	58,851	23
Bicycling	38,700	39,641	41,794	15
Recreational Flying	18,998	18,805	19,720	20

Value Added Composition of Outdoor Recreation Activities

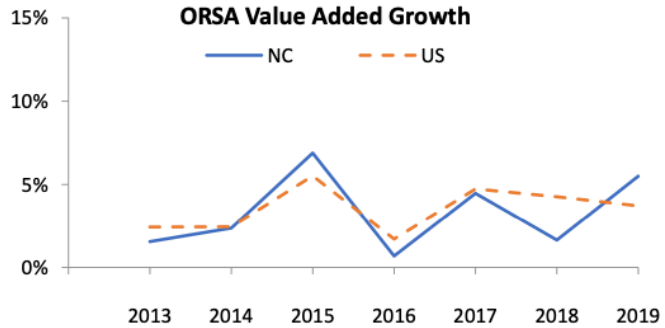


**Conventional ORSA** activities include traditional outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, boating, and hunting.  
**Other ORSA** activities include those activities that take place outside, such as gardening and outdoor concerts.  
**Supporting ORSA** activities, are those that contribute to the core activities and include such things as construction, travel and tourism, local trips, and government expenditures.

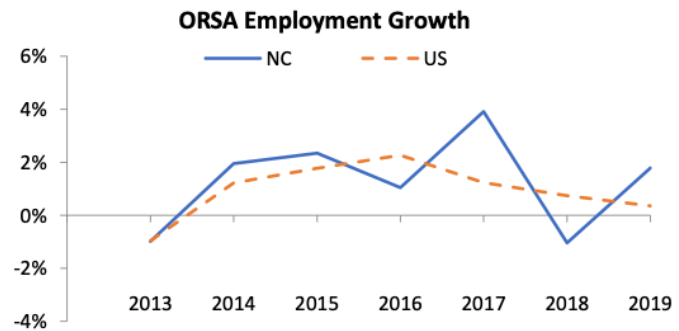




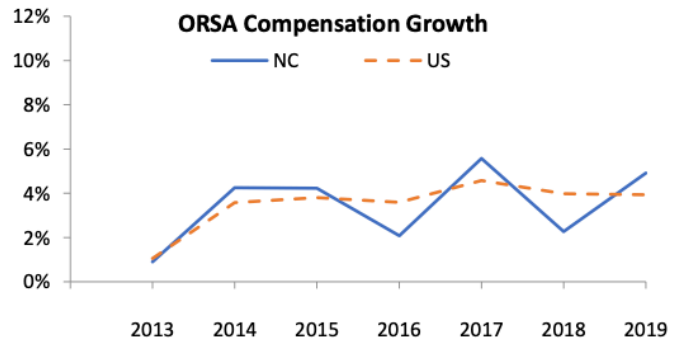
In 2019, North Carolina ranked 10th among all states in ORSA value added, and 11th among all states in ORSA value added growth. Since 2018, ORSA value added has grown 5.5 percent in North Carolina, compared with an increase of 3.7 percent for the U.S.



In 2019, North Carolina ranked 7th among all states in ORSA employment, and 11th among all states in ORSA employment growth. Since 2018, ORSA employment has grown 1.8 percent in North Carolina, compared with an increase of 0.4 percent for the U.S.



In 2019, North Carolina ranked 12th among all states in ORSA compensation, and 15th among all states in ORSA compensation growth. Since 2018, ORSA compensation has grown 4.9 percent in North Carolina, compared with an increase of 3.9 percent for the U.S.



Average compensation per wage-and-salary job in North Carolina's ORSA industries was \$38,157 in 2019, compared with \$65,442 for all salaried jobs in the state.

**ORSA Value Added (VA)** consists of the gross output of an industry less its intermediate inputs; the contribution of an industry to gross domestic product (GDP).

**ORSA Employment** consists of all wage-and-salary jobs where the workers are engaged in the production of ORSA goods and services.

**ORSA Compensation** consists of the remuneration (including wages and salaries, as well as benefits such as employer contributions to pension and health funds) payable to employees in return for their ORSA work during a given year.

## PIEDMONT TRIAD OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY

The Piedmont Triad is located in the part of the state that is referred to as the Piedmont plateau. It is a hilly region and includes some of the North Carolina’s largest cities. Elevations in the Piedmont vary from 300 to nearly 3,000 feet above sea level. There are a few isolated mountain ranges (e.g. Sauratown and Uwharries), mostly on the western and southern portion of the region. The Piedmont lies within the Southeastern mixed forests eco-region.

It is a 12- county region with approximately 1.7 million people. There are 63 municipalities that comprise the Piedmont Triad Regional Council’s region.



There are nearly 169,000 acres of public land in the region, providing a sizeable footprint for growth in the outdoor recreation industry. There are three resident river basins in the region: The Roanoke (Dan and Mayo), Cape Fear (Deep and Haw River) and Yadkin/Pee-Dee (Mitchell, Fisher, Ararat, and Uwharrie).

The region is home to several nationally designated parks and trails. The Blue Ridge Parkway, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, Chinqua Penn Trail, Guilford Courthouse Military Park and the Uwharrie National Forest and Uwharrie National Recreation Trail are all located in the region.

### PIEDMONT TRIAD OUTDOOR RECREATION FOUNDATION INVENTORY

Public Lands	Acres	Square Miles
<b>Federal</b>	60,502	94.5
<b>State</b>	57,928	90.5
<b>Local</b>	28,796	334.61
<b>Private Easements</b>	21,562	33.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>168,789</b>	<b>553.31</b>

The Appendix includes a detailed listing of outdoor recreation assets. In addition, the [Piedmont Triad Outdoor Recreation Story Map](#) provides detailed maps with attributes of facilities across the Piedmont Triad. The following lists some highly utilized outdoor recreation assets by County. Due to GIS data and rounding errors, some totals may not sync exactly.

**PIEDMONT TRIAD OUTDOOR RECREATION FOUNDATION INVENTORY BY COUNTY**

County	Trail Mileage (Land)	Trail Mileage (Blueway)	Public River Accesses*	Acres of Lakes (With accesses)	Acres of Public Parks	Public Parks	Acres of Preserved Land (not parks)
Alamance	69.6	37.6	16	2,190	1,922	50	3,048
Caswell	35.2	9.5	1	271	17,839	5	2,406
Davie	9.0	53.89	3	0	304	14	5,270
Davidson	15.0	59.86	3	8,595	1,440	33	6,879
Forsyth	92.4	28.72	2	933	6,089	99	1,302
Guilford	243.0	4.5	1	4,554	11,066	220	11,021
Montgomery	122.0	26.59	5	5,847	42,703	3	7,240
Randolph	91.0	13.4	2	2,667	12,205	31	7,561
Rockingham	64.7	60.37	12	1,842	51,589	35	4,063
Stokes	82.5	50.86	5	2,333	7,215	4	2,705
Surry	110.5	96.03	18	0	4,314	16	14,617
Yadkin	7.9	51.39	4	145	296	7	1,967

\*does not include boat ramps on lakes if not part of a river blueway trail.

**NATIONAL PARKS, TRAILS AND FORESTS**

**Blue Ridge Parkway**

The Blue Ridge Parkway was the first national rural parkway to be conceived, designed, and constructed for a leisure-type driving experience. Its varied topography and numerous vista points offer easy public access to spectacular views of central and southern Appalachian rural landscapes and forested mountains. It connects the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. Much of the view shed seen from the Blue Ridge Parkway is of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in Virginia and of the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests in North Carolina.

The Parkway is the highest and longest continuous route in the Appalachian area. Along its 469-mile length, it provides scenic access to crests and ridges of five major ranges within the central and southern Appalachian Mountains, encompassing geographic and vegetative zones that range from 649 feet at James River in Virginia to 6,047 feet at Richland Balsam in North Carolina.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is located on the border of Surry County at Cumberland Knob, where construction of the Parkway was started in 1935 as a part of President Roosevelt’s Civilian Conservation Corps mission. It was therefore the first recreation area to be opened to the public and is still a favorite destination for both locals and visitors. (Source: <https://www.brpfoundation.org/explore-blue-ridge-parkway/>)

**Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail**

This corridor highlights the Overmountain Men’s 330-mile hike through the backcountry of Appalachian Mountains to confront British forces at Kings Mountain. There are several routes tracing the paths that the patriot militia took as they mustered to Kings Mountain. One of those routes begins in Elkin, in Surry County. Of the 330-mile long National Historic Trail, the 225 miles of trail that travel through North Carolina have been authorized as the state trail.

### Guilford Courthouse National Park

There are 2 miles of natural surface hiking trails, with an interior paved road with limited vehicle traffic is 2.25 miles long, which includes a sidepath for bicycles and pedestrians. This park is a Revolutionary War battlefield that commemorates the Battle of Guilford Courthouse between Major General Nathanael Greene's militia and Continental army versus Lord Charles Earl Cornwallis British and Hessian army, on March 15, 1781. (Source: <https://www.nps.gov/guco/self-guided-walking-tour.htm>)

### Chinqua Penn National Trail

This trail is 1.7 miles long meanders around the former Chinqua Penn Plantation between Reidsville and Wentworth in Rockingham County. The trail was created in 1997 by the NC State Upper Piedmont Research Station for the benefit of the public. Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail have partnered with the Research Station to care for the trail since 2010. Other nonprofits sharing in this effort are the Dan River Basin Association and the Rockingham County Naturalist Club. Generous grant support from the Reidsville Area Foundation has funded grading and gravel for the parking lot and trail improvements, as well as the solar-ventilated composting toilet at the trailhead. In June 2015, the Trail was selected to join America's National Trails System by the Department of the Interior that recognizes existing trails that link communities to recreational opportunities on public lands and in local parks across the nation. (Source: <http://www.chinquapenntail.org/>)

### Uwharrie National Forest and Uwharrie National Recreation Trail

There are approximately 52,000 acres of National Forest System lands in Montgomery, Randolph and Davidson Counties. The Uwharrie National Forest is the only National Forest in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina. The Uwharrie National Forest includes the Uwharrie Ranger District Office, located at 789 Biscoe Road, Troy, NC 27371.

At the district office you can obtain information about the area, pick up brochures, camping information, trail passes, shooting range passes, and permits. You can also obtain a Senior Access Pass, Disabled Access Pass, District and Birkhead Mountains Wilderness maps, and USGS topographical maps.

Primitive dispersed camping is allowed throughout the Forest, except in those areas that are posted "No Camping". These sites can be found along most of Forest Service roads and trails. Please remember when using these sites to be careful with campfires and carry out your trash and debris. Please leave your campsite in good clean condition so that others who follow you may also enjoy the Forest. The Uwharrie National Forest



*Uwharrie Trail (Credit: Brianna Haferman)*

provides hundreds of miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and motorized vehicles. There are a total of 143 miles of trail and the **Uwharrie National Recreation Trail** is the longest at 25+ miles, a connection to the Birkhead Wilderness offers a 40+ mile hike. It offers the only public motorized trail system in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina known as the Badin Lake OHV Trail Complex. It is also the only public motorized trail system that allows all types and sizes of motorized vehicles to use.

In addition to all of the trails that are available on the Uwharrie National Forest there are 5 developed campgrounds and 1 developed group campground. One specialized campground is Canebrake Horse Camp that people can camp with their horses at their campsite and ride directly onto the equestrian trails. Each campsite at Canebrake Horse Camp has electric hookup and there is a dump station and flush toilets and showers. There is also the large King's Mountain Point Day Use Area that is directly on the east shores of Badin Lake (Narrows Reservoir) that provides 4 accessible fishing piers, 34 picnic sites, a picnic pavilion that can be reserved, horseshoe pits and a disc golf course.

The Uwharrie National Forest provides great areas for motorized and non-motorized boating recreation too. People can canoe and kayak on the Uwharrie and Little Rivers using the access points managed by the North Carolina

Wildlife Resources Commission. Additionally, people can access Badin Lake with motorized and non-motorized boats at Cove Boat Ramp and non-motorized boats can launch at King’s Mountain Point Day Use Area.

The Uwharrie National Forest is part of the 2 million acres of public lands managed in partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) for public hunting, trapping and fishing, and are designated as Game Lands. In addition to the appropriate basic annual hunting license, a Game Lands Privilege license must be obtained to hunt on the Uwharrie National Forest. Information concerning seasons, bag limits, and special Game Lands Restrictions are found in the annual N.C. Inlands Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest, available where licenses are sold. Additionally, the Uwharrie National Forest and the NCWRC work in partnership to provide a safe target shooting facility known as the Flintlock Valley Shooting Range. This outdoor shooting range has a 100-yard rifle range and a 25-yard pistol range that is universally accessible. This is the only location target shooting is allowed on the Uwharrie National Forest.

The Birkhead Mountains Wilderness is approximately 5,160 acres and provides areas with limited human management on the land. There are opportunities for more solitude in this area because you can only access it on foot. Dispersed camping and hunting is allowed within the wilderness and it is further away from the heavy recreation use of the Badin Lake Area so it is quite a bit quieter. Groups must be 10 or less within the wilderness area. (Source: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/nfsnc/recarea/?recid=48934>)

### **NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS**

The State of North Carolina has 4 State parks in the Piedmont Triad. There were a record number of visitors to the entire State system totaling 22.8 million in 2021. Pilot Mountain was one of 10 parks that had over 1 million visitors.

#### **Hanging Rock State Park**

Since its creation as a 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps project, Hanging Rock State Park has offered the best of a traditional outdoor experience with 73-site campground, picnic grounds, stocked lake for swimming and canoe rentals and more than 20 miles of hiking trails that climb onto spectacular views and weave alongside clear streams and waterfalls. The peak is 2,579 feet in elevation. There is also access on the Dan River for paddling, 8.4 miles of mountain biking trails and rock-climbing opportunities with permit. A complex of vacation cabins is available for longer visits. Free interpretive programs complement the education offerings of a park museum that explores the natural and cultural history of the Sauratown Mountains.



*Cooks Wall Hanging Rock State Park (Credit: Brianna Haferman)*

A park expansion master plan is complete for the 750 acres of land that the State of North Carolina acquired north of Hanging Rock State Park. This plan establishes a vision for the newly acquired land. The state held public workshops that helped them create concepts for the Vade Mecum and Moore's Springs properties at Hanging Rock State Park. Nine hundred (900) acres were added to the park in the fall of 2019 and will serve the park’s visitors with a new access, plenty of parking, camping and a day use area. (Source: <https://www.ncparks.gov/hanging-rock-state-park/home>)

#### **Haw River State Park**

Located in the northern Piedmont Triad region, picturesque terrain makes Haw River State Park the perfect place to connect with nature. Housed within this natural setting is The Summit Environmental Education and Conference

Center, N.C. State Park's first residential environmental education center. Along with environmental education programming, The Summit Center offers conference center facilities for groups ranging in size from 10 to 180.

The more traditional side of Haw River State Park is found at the Iron Ore Belt Access. A picnic area is located adjacent to the parking lot while a second picnic pad is found halfway along the Great Blue Heron Loop trail. Additional picnic areas and trails will be brought online in the near future. (Source: <https://www.ncparks.gov/haw-river-state-park/home> )

### **Mayo River State Park**

Envisioned as a riverine park along the Mayo River corridor from Virginia to the Town of Mayodan in North Carolina, Mayo River State park is under development, having been designated in 2003. The Park offers basic state park amenities on the 400-acre site of the former Mayo Park, a historic and prized spot for community gatherings. The land holdings are 2,500 acres and include the Mayo Mountain access, Deshazo Mill access and Anglin Mill access. A Master plan has been completed in 2020 and includes development ideas for the existing access locations, but also other public access ideas for the land holdings that have not been activated for public use. The original centerpiece of the park is a restored pavilion-style picnic shelter designed by renowned architect Antonin Raymond and is flanked by picnic grounds, small fishing ponds and a growing network of hiking trails. Rangers offer free interpretive programs at the park and outreach programs at area locations can be arranged. Paddling opportunities on the mild whitewater Mayo River are available from local outfitters. The Mayo River has still water as well as Class III rapids, therefore accommodating water sports from floating to paddling and more and is a unique opportunity for developing access for the Park. (Source: <https://www.ncparks.gov/mayo-river-state-park/home>)



*Rapids on the Mayo River (Credit: Chris English, Tigermoth Creative)*

### **Pilot Mountain State Park**

Rising abruptly to elevations of over 2,000 feet, Pilot Mountain has been a navigational landmark for centuries, and is a recreational landmark as well, offering miles of trails, camping, climbing and spectacular scenery.

Like the rocky escarpments in nearby Hanging Rock State Park, Pilot Mountain is a remnant of the ancient Sauratown Mountains. A quartzite monadnock, this rugged mountain rock has survived for millions of years while the elements have eroded surrounding peaks to a rolling plain.

The top of Pilot Mountain is capped by two prominent pinnacles: (1) Big Pinnacle, with walls of bare rock and a rounded top covered by vegetation, rises 1,400 feet above the valley floor, the knob jutting skyward more than 200 feet from its base, Big Pinnacle is connected to (2) Little Pinnacle by a narrow saddle. Visitors have easy access to the top of Little Pinnacle where the view encompasses hundreds of square miles of the Piedmont and the nearby mountains of North Carolina and Virginia.

The mountain summit remains the principal park area and is connected to the Yadkin River section by a 6.5-mile trail corridor. An extensive trail network is augmented by a bridle trail and a canoe trail on the Yadkin River. The

Park has 49 family camping sites and also a riverside group camp with canoe-in access sites. Rock climbing and rappelling are allowed on portions of the park’s steep cliffs, and those cliffs perched around the mountain’s summit offer seemingly endless views of the Piedmont’s Sauratown and Blue Ridge Mountains. (Source: <https://www.ncparks.gov/pilot-mountain-state-park/home>)

**STATE DESIGNATED TRAILS**

The Piedmont Triad region includes portions of five State Trails. State Trails are components of the State Parks System and offer opportunities for regional connectivity and public access to some of North Carolina’s most significant natural, cultural and scenic landscapes. These trails must be authorized by the General Assembly. The authorization offers a general concept of the trail. Then, State Parks provides overall trail corridor planning and coordination. After a trail segment is actually constructed, then the section sponsor, typically a local government, will apply for state trail designation. The designation process outlines management and emergency response responsibilities for the segment. Once approved by the

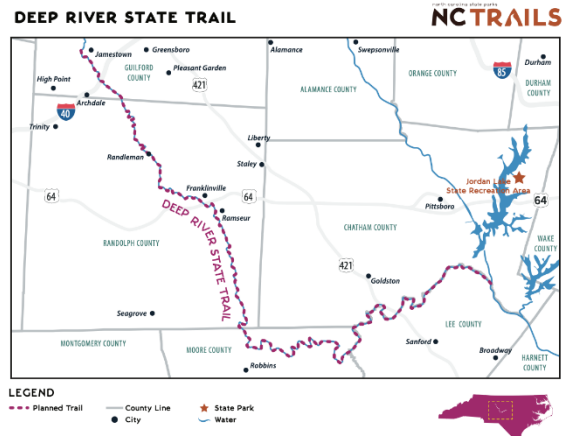


*Mountains to Sea Trail in Stokes County (Credit: Brianna Haferman)*

Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, the trail segment is then officially part of the State Trail. Constructed trail is not part of the State Trail until the designation process is completed. In 2021, the NC General Assembly provided \$29.15 Million in funding for the Complete the Trails Fund, which will assist State trails in capacity building, land acquisition, design, permitting and construction. Partners in trail development Piedmont Triad region include county governments, local municipalities, National Park Service, Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail, Yadkin Riverkeeper, Randolph County Trails Advisory Council, Sauratown Trails Association and the Elkin Valley Trails Association. Vigorous efforts are ongoing to complete each of the State Trails in the region.

**Dan River State Trail** – The Dan River was designated as a State trail in 2021. Projects and promotions for this newly designated State trail will be identified in future updates. Further information on the Dan River is available below in the Piedmont Triad Watershed section.

**Deep River State Trail** - Deep River State Trail was authorized in 2007. When complete, it will encompass both a hiking/biking trail along the banks of the Deep River and a blueway trail on the Deep River. The Deep River Task Force, created in 2015 by the Randolph County Tourism Development Authority, provided the essential momentum for trail development. In 2019, trails in Randleman, Ramseur and Franklinville were designated as official segments of the Deep River State Trail. Planning and implementation continues with several pending grants to construct land based and water trail infrastructure.



**Mountains to Sea State Trail**

The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail, or the MST, is North Carolina’s flagship state trail. The notion of a trail extending across the width of North Carolina was first proposed in 1977 by Howard Lee, who was the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and

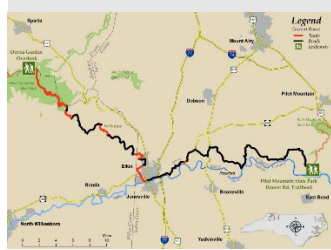
Community Development. In 2000, the MST became a state trail and a unit of the state parks system. In 2017, the General Assembly authorized a major addition to the MST--the Coastal Crescent route that loops through southeastern North Carolina.

When completely constructed, the MST will be about 1,175 miles long and reach from Clingmans Dome on the Tennessee border to Jockeys Ridge State Park on the Outer Banks. Currently, there are 659.5 miles of trail that are completed and designated.

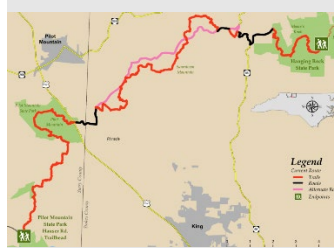


When it is complete, the MST will cross through Surry, Stokes, Forsyth, Guilford, Rockingham and Alamance Counties in the Piedmont Triad. Currently, there are designated segments in Surry, Stokes, Guilford and Alamance Counties. The Friends of the MST organization provides information on the trail, sponsors most of the task forces that build and maintain sections of trail and promotes through-hiking the trail by providing interim routes that connect completed portions of the MST.

**Segments of the MST in the Piedmont Triad**



*Segment 6 – Elkin Valley*



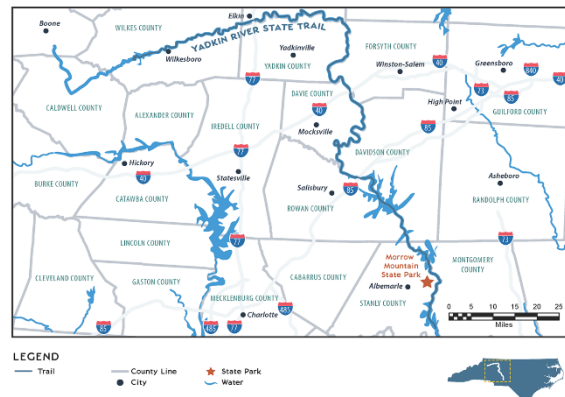
*Segment 7 – The Sauratown*



*Segment 8 – Rivers, Railroads & Lakes*

**The Overmountain Victory State Trail** was authorized in 2019. The Division of Parks and Recreation is partnering with the National Park Service, Burke County and local sponsors to develop an off-road trail within the historic Overmountain Victory Trail corridor. This corridor highlights the Overmountain Men’s 330-mile hike through the backcountry of Appalachian Mountains to confront British forces at Kings Mountain. There are several routes tracing the paths that the patriot militia took as they mustered to Kings Mountain. One of those routes begins in **Elkin, in Surry County**. Of the 330-mile long National Historic Trail, the 225 miles of trail that travel through North Carolina have been authorized as the state trail.

**Yadkin River State Trail** - Authorized in 1985, the Yadkin River State Trail is considered completed. It is a blueway or paddle trail. There are access sites along the 164-mile length of the State Trail portion of the river between Kerr Scott Dam in Wilkes County to the Uwharrie River in Montgomery County. In the Piedmont Triad, the Yadkin flows through Surry, Stokes, Forsyth, Davie, Davidson and Montgomery Counties. The Yadkin Riverkeeper is an excellent source of information about paddling the Yadkin River State Trail. Even though it is completed, ongoing maintenance of the waterway and accesses is essential. Additional accesses would be an asset to this trail.



**GREAT TRAILS STATE PLAN**

The Great Trails State Plan will draw upon existing plans and new recommendations to identify a network of shared-use paths and trails that connects every county in North Carolina, with a focus on connections between population centers and North Carolina State Parks.



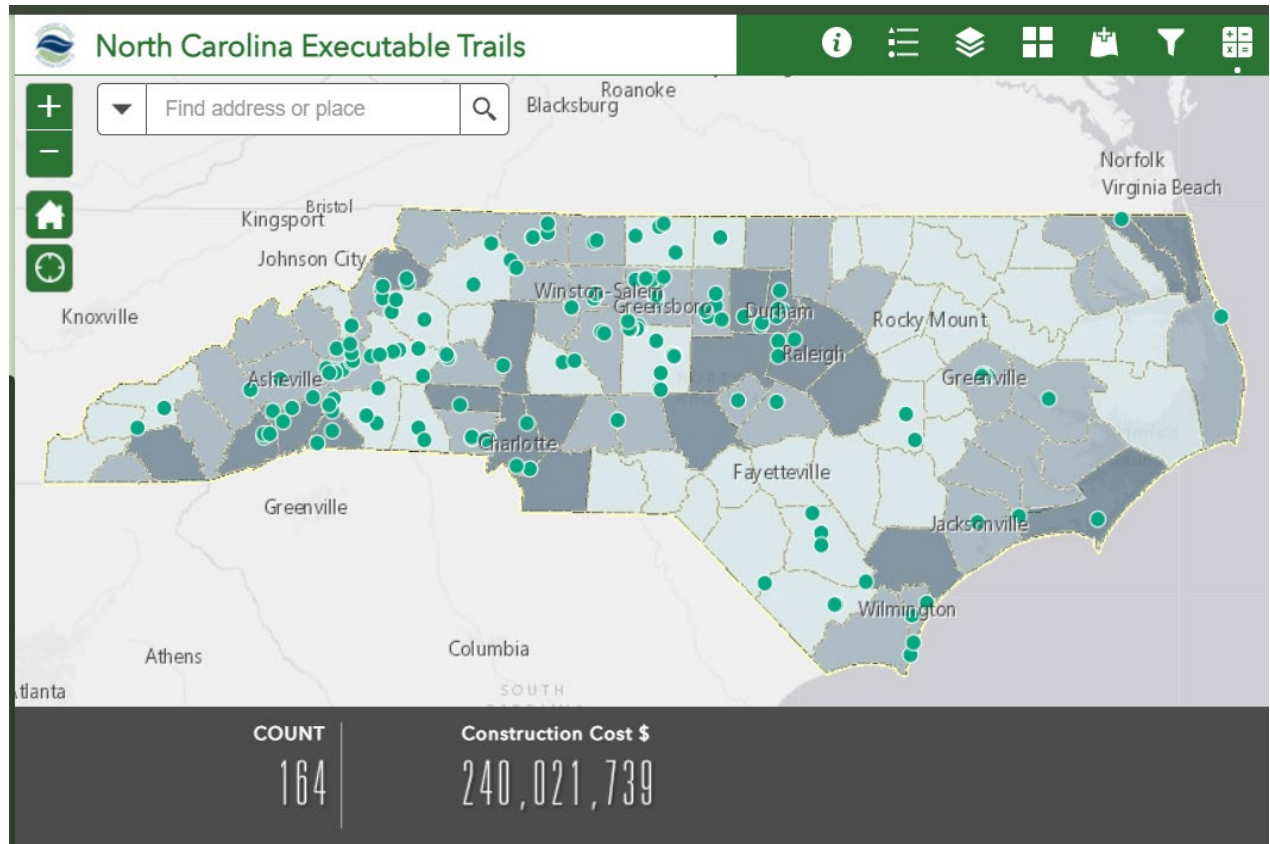
The primary outcome of this planning process is to develop a statewide trail map coupled with an action-oriented network plan and 5-year implementation strategy. The planning process for the plan

The Great Trails State Plan is being led by the N.C. Department of Transportation’s Integrated Mobility Division, in coordination with the NCDOT Transportation Planning Division and North Carolina State Parks. A draft plan was released in late 2020, with a final plan yet to be released.

**Executable Trails**

The Great Trails State Coalition collected information from communities about natural and paved trail projects that are ready for construction and design. These are shown on the right.

There are 164 projects in 52 counties, representing an estimated \$240 million of construction costs. NC DOT’s Great Trails State Plan identifies future projects in all 100 counties.

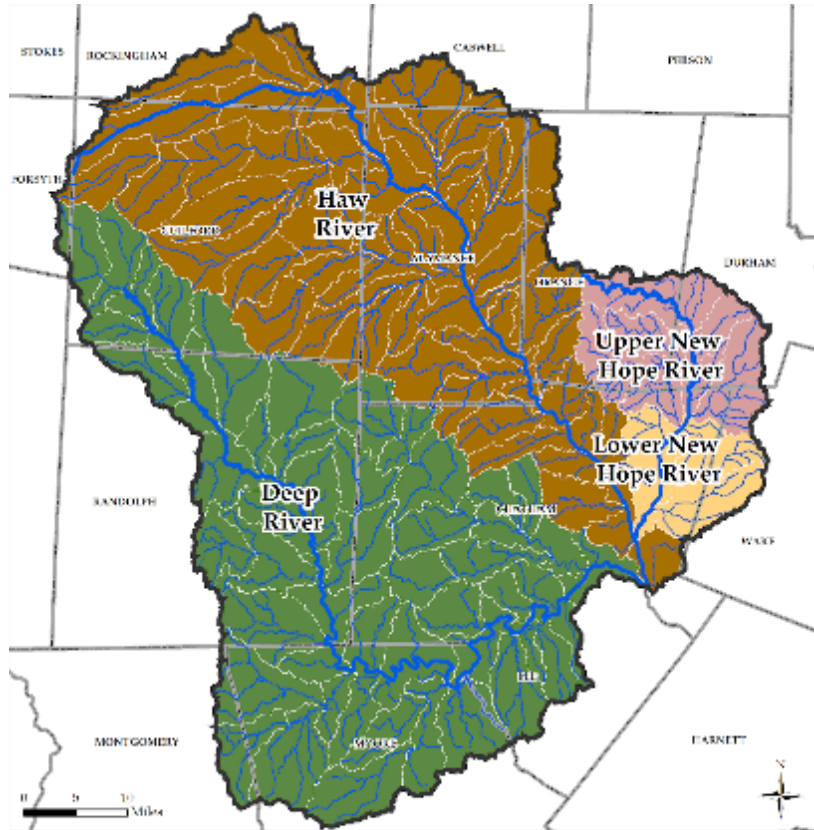


**PIEDMONT TRIAD WATERSHEDS**

The Piedmont Triad has three resident river basins within its twelve-county region: Cape Fear, Roanoke, and Yadkin-Pee Dee Rivers. The Cape Fear and Yadkin-Pee Dee Rivers are the longest and largest river basins in North Carolina. Both the Cape Fear and Roanoke Rivers originate in the Piedmont Triad. A more detailed description of the sub-regional hydrography is that there are eight river sub-basins that offer different outdoor recreation opportunities. The Deep and Haw River Sub basins of the Cape Fear River; the Upper Dan and Lower Dan River Sub-basins of the Roanoke River; and the Yadkin River Headwaters, South Yadkin River, Yadkin River, Lake Tillery, Rocky River and Pee Dee River Sub basins of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River. The total area of these river basins (and that covered within this project) is 13,931 square miles, larger than the State of Maryland. The watersheds health and vitality are critical to the success of the outdoor recreation economy.

**Upper Cape Fear River Basin**

The Upper Cape Fear River Basin is composed of two major drainages: The Haw River and the Deep River contains 11 sub-basins. It drains approximately 3,135 square miles of the North Carolina piedmont and includes portions of 10 counties and 42 municipalities. It is the uppermost portion of the Cape Fear River Basin, the largest river basin in North Carolina, and one of four river basins that lies completely within the state. According to the 2010 NC NCDWR 303(d) list, the Upper Cape Fear River and many of its tributaries are listed as impaired for fecal coliform, turbidity, ecological community, pH, copper, nitrite-nitrate nitrogen, zinc, low dissolved oxygen and Chlorophyll *a*. The 2005 NCDWR Cape Fear River Basin-Wide Water Quality Plan associates most of these impairments with urban or impervious surface areas, construction sites, road building, land clearing, and agriculture and forestry operations.



**Upper Cape Fear River Basin Prioritization**

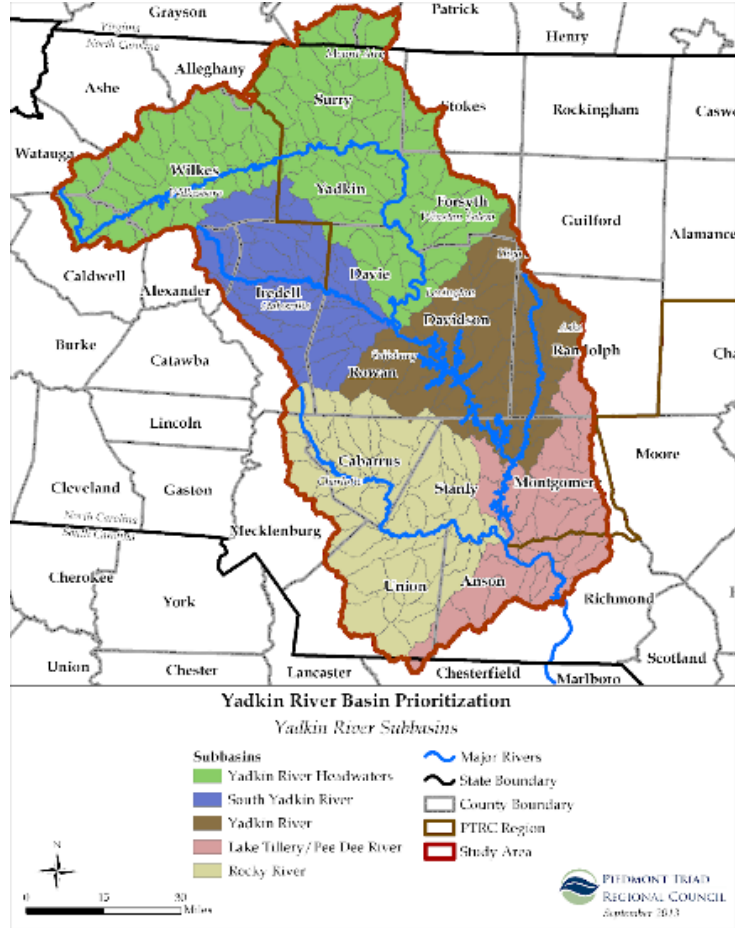
*Overview Map*

- |                        |                       |                        |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Subwatersheds</b>   | <b>Stream Layers</b>  | <b>Boundary Layers</b> |
| ■ Deep River           | — Major Rivers        | □ UCF River Basin      |
| ■ Haw River            | — Other Named Streams | □ County               |
| ■ Lower New Hope River |                       |                        |
| ■ Upper New Hope River |                       |                        |



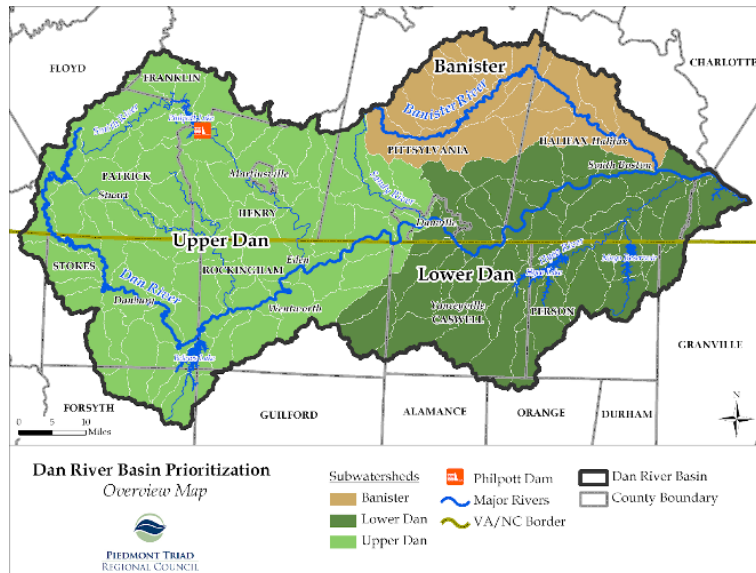
**Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin**

The Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin is the second-largest river basin in North Carolina after the Cape Fear River, covering twenty counties and totaling 7,213 square miles and 5,946 linear river miles. The river basin covers a diverse landscape from Blue Ridge Mountain headwaters to the expansive Charlotte metropolitan area, crossing much of the Piedmont region and including parts of the unusual geology and ecology in the sandy Uwharrie Mountains. The topography, geology, and land use throughout the Yadkin River basin are diverse, presenting a patchwork of land uses, aquatic habitats (including trout-sensitive waters), and urban growth, and challenging the development of a uniform management strategy. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of all rivers and streams, and thirty-six percent (36%) of all lakes and reservoirs within the Yadkin River basin are listed as “impaired” by the NCDWR. The Yadkin River is also known for its outstanding resource waters, primarily found in the Uwharrie National Forest in Montgomery County and the headwater tributaries of Wilkes and Surry Counties. The Fisher River is a tributary to the Yadkin River.



**Dan River Basin**

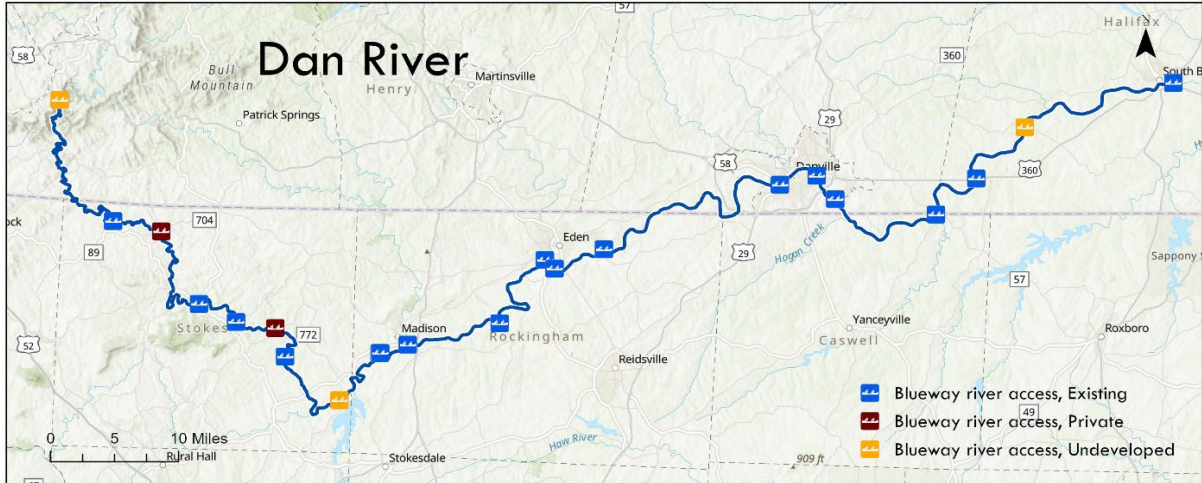
The Dan River Basin is the headwaters sub-basin of the Roanoke River, which originates in the Appalachian foothills and discharges to the Albemarle Sound at Bertie and Martin Counties in North Carolina (NC DWQ 2011). The Dan River Basin occupies the 3,937 square miles and 11,123 linear stream miles of the headwaters for this large river basin. The sub-basin has been separated into three 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watersheds by the US Geologic Survey: the Upper Dan River, the Lower Dan River, and the Banister River (see Figure 3). The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) built and operates Philpott Dam on the Smith River upstream of Martinsville, VA. This impoundment and its management have a profound effect upon downstream water quality and health, especially for river levels and temperatures that the stocked trout rely upon. The river basin has 706.5 stream miles and 5,727 lake acres rated as Impaired by the NC DWQ and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA DEQ); over 7% of the Dan River Basin’s water is impaired for human or ecological uses (NC DWQ 2012; VA DEQ 2012).



## FIVE MAJOR RIVERS IN THE PIEDMONT TRIAD REGION

### Dan River

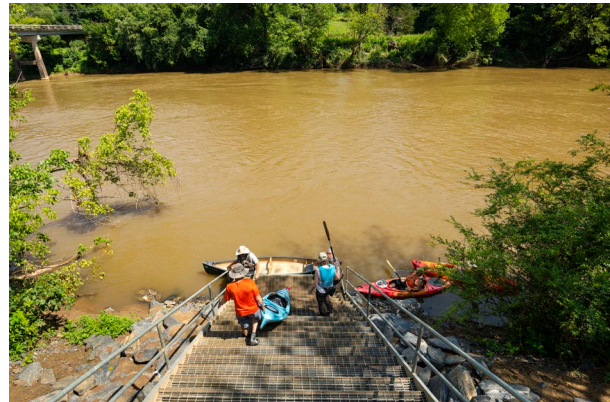
The Dan River flows 214 miles (344 km) through North Carolina and Virginia. It rises in Patrick County, Virginia, and crosses the state border into Stokes County, North Carolina. It then flows into Rockingham County. From there it goes back into Virginia. It reenters North Carolina near the border between Caswell County and Rockingham County. It flows into northern Caswell County and then back into southern Virginia and finally into Kerr Reservoir on the Roanoke River.



The river was named by William Byrd II in 1728 during an expedition to survey the Virginia border. A variant name is "South Branch Roanoke River".

Meandering through the Piedmont Triad of North Carolina, the "Mighty" Dan River flows for roughly 53 miles diagonally across Stokes County from northwest to southeast, then about 40 miles diagonally across Rockingham County from southwest to northeast.

The Dan is a virtually free-flowing river with few modern improvements—only a handful of easily portaged dams. The flood plains are wide, the banks are high, and the tree cover along the river corridors is almost unbroken. Long a favorite of local paddlers, the Dan has become increasingly popular with both novice and experienced canoe enthusiasts for its leisurely pace, beautiful scenery, and historic significance.



*Draper Landing Access in Eden (Credit: Chris English, Tigermoth Creative)*

From Hanging Rock State Park Access to Draper Landing in Eden, two improved access points for hand-carried boats in Stokes County and six in Rockingham County cover 39 river miles, and, if the paddler desires, continuing from Draper Landing to Abreu-Grogan Park in Danville, Virginia, adds an additional 21 miles.

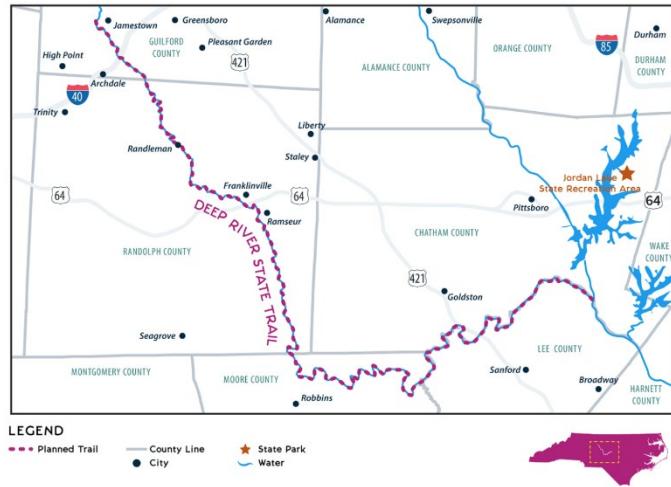
### Dan River Paddle Access Points

The above map shows the access points on the Dan and the Smith River that take paddlers through several counties and two States. Visit the Dan River Basin Association website [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org) for more detail on paddle access locations, paddle difficulty and other river basin information.

### Deep River

Deep River is a tributary of the Cape Fear River, approximately 125 miles (200 km) long, in north central North Carolina in the United States. Deep River is a translation of the Indian name Sappannah, "deep river".

Paddling is popular on the river. Deep River is flanked by the **Deep River State Trail** and several other parks and preservation areas including Carbondon Dam Park, House in the Horseshoe (also known as Alston House) Historic Site, Deep River Park and Deep River Camelback Truss Bridge, Endor Iron Furnace, White Pines Nature Preserve, Lockville Dam, Canal and Powerhouse, and Mermaid Point. The Cape Fear shiner, a critically endangered minnow, inhabits the river.



Deep River rises in western Guilford County, east of Kernersville. It flows southeast past High Point and Randleman, forming the Randleman Lake. It passes northeast of Asheboro, then flows east to Franklinville then to Ramseur, then passing north of Sanford. The Rocky River enters the Deep River at the White Pines Nature Preserve.[3] Deep River joins Haw River at Mermaid Point near Haywood, just below the Haw's emergence from Jordan Lake, to form the Cape Fear River.

Deep River has 12 dams or relict dam structures and is the source river of the Randleman lake project that covers 3000 acres (12 km<sup>2</sup>) of property on the river near U.S. Route 220. The river crosses the Fall Line of North Carolina, an area where rivers are quite rocky and have a moderately high gradient. This gradient was used to power mills along the river to support the early textile industry in North Carolina. The river, popular with canoeists, was a center of a great deal of activity during the American Revolution at places such as Franklinville and the House In The Horseshoe.

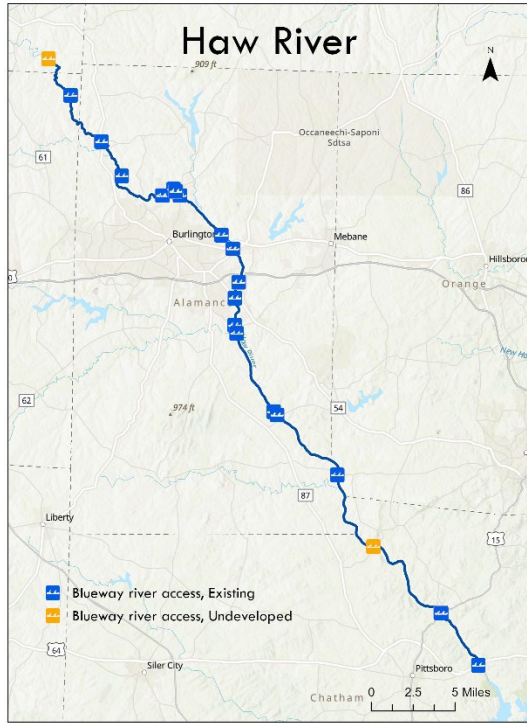
The Lockville Dam, built of stone, is the only portion of the 19th-century Deep River lock and dam system that remains today. Until recently, the Deep River was host to the Carbondon Dam, the largest dam on the river at 17 feet (5.2 m) high and 270 feet (82 m) wide. In the fall of 2005, the dam was removed for the purpose of creating environmental mitigation credit by Restoration Systems, LLC, a leading environmental mitigation company in North Carolina. The project restored 10 miles (16 km) of the former impoundment around the House In The Horseshoe to a free-flowing river.

Deep River became a state trail in 2007 through special legislation in the General Assembly. The authorization did not provide funding to implement the trail but did give priority for communities along the river who may want to access recreation trail grants to construct and maintain trail in the corridor. Soon after, the City of Randleman and the Town of Franklinville opened sections of trail along the Deep River.

*NOTE: The Town of Ramseur also secured a Clean Water Management Trust Fund grant to complete a detailed alignment of the trail in the Town of Ramseur. In 2015, a Deep River Trail Task Force was formed by the Randolph County Tourism Development Authority with local, regional and state government representatives, as well as recreation and trail advocates to continue coordinating efforts for planning, design, construction and management of the Deep River Trail in the county. A task force report was completed in 2016 that inventoried the status of trail development along the Deep River and provided recommendations on key plans, designs and other actions to move trail development forward.*

### Haw River

The Haw River is a tributary of the Cape Fear River, approximately 110 mi (177 km) long, which is entirely contained in north-central North Carolina. It was first documented as the "Hau River" by John Lawson, an English botanist, in his 1709 book "A New Voyage to Carolina." The name is shortened from Saxapahaw, from the Catawban/sak'yápha:/,



"piedmont, foothill", from /sak/, "hill", plus /yápha:/, "step". The river gives its name to a small town that formed on its banks. The Haw rises in northeast Forsyth County, near the border with Guilford County just north of Kernersville. The river flows northeast, passing north of Oak Ridge and Summerfield into southern Rockingham County, passing through Haw River State Park, north of Greensboro.

The river then begins to flow southeast as it moves through the corner of Guilford County into Alamance County. In Alamance County, the Haw flows through Ossipee and passes north of Burlington, and through the unincorporated community of Carolina. It goes through the town of Haw River. It flows south and is joined by Great Alamance Creek at Swepsonville and continues on to Saxapahaw.

The river forms the southeast border of Alamance County, a border shared by Orange County and Chatham County. The course of the Haw River continues southeast in Chatham County as it flows just north of Pittsboro. Approximately 12 miles (19 km) southeast of the tip of Alamance County, the Haw flows into the Jordan Lake reservoir, which is formed by the confluence of the Haw River and New Hope Creek. 4 miles (6.4 km) south of Jordan Lake dam, the Haw River joins the Deep River to form the Cape Fear River.

The Haw River is home to many examples of local wildlife, including blue heron, beaver, deer, otter, bluegill bream, and these are only a few of the wild animals living at the Haw River.

The river played a major role in the life of Native Americans in the area, including the Sissipahau Indians, and in the development of the communities that were built on the river.

The river was first dammed in Saxapahaw in the 1850s and used for textile mills through the 19th and 20th centuries, and was a major factor in helping Alamance County to rebuild its local economy following the devastation of the American Civil War. Alamance Plaids, a popular textile during the 1800s, were developed near the present-day community of Glencoe.

The Haw River became heavily polluted with chemicals used in the production of textiles during the 20th Century, but the decline of industry in the United States has reduced pollution. However, the Haw is still in danger of pollution from suburban nutrient runoff and sediment. Efforts are underway to improve the ecology of the Haw River, but there is disagreement between various environmental groups, local governments, and economic interests as to how to proceed. Recently, the newly revised Jordan Lake Rules have improved regulatory issues that affect future pollution. Most sections of the Haw are clean by reports from the state Water Quality Section, securing it as a recreational and water supply asset.

For over one hundred years, textile and other industries built the economy of North Carolina. Many located along the Haw and other river basins, providing employment and centers for communities since the Civil War era. Today, a few mills continue to operate near and on the Haw River, including Copland Mills in Burlington, NC. The Haw also provides drinking water and recreational activities to a large portion of North Carolina, as 10% of the state's population lives in the Haw River Watershed. The conservation of the Haw River is now the focus of several groups and government agencies that are working to develop and preserve the Haw River.

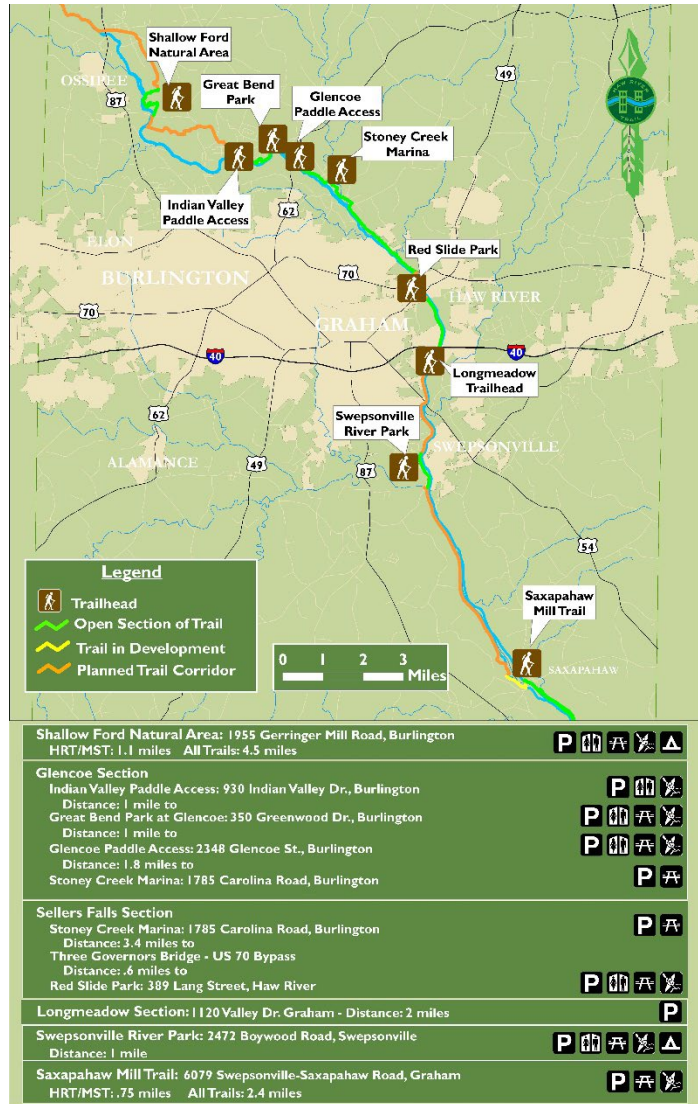
Traditional farming has been the backbone of the economy in the rural counties lining the Haw. Though farming is under pressure, it continues to thrive, providing poultry, beef, grain, and other products for American consumption, bolstering a main export of the state.

Three trails have been developed through conservation efforts on the Haw River.

**The Haw River Trail** is a conservation and recreation initiative formally undertaken by local governments and private groups in 2006. It provides both a land trail and paddle trail (the paddle trail is complete) connecting Haw River State Park and Jordan Lake State Recreation Area (see map on this page). The trail is part of the North Carolina Mountains to Sea Trail. A second major trail that has been established by local governments is the **Haw River Wine Trail**. The Haw River Valley has become a renowned grape growing region. This trail was originally established with five wineries in Guilford and Alamance Counties. Currently, four wineries are open on the trail, and all four have produced award-winning wines.

The State of North Carolina established the **Haw River State Park** on the Haw River in Guilford and Rockingham counties. There are also several city and county parks and golf courses located on the Haw, including Greensboro National Golf Club in Guilford County; Indian Valley Golf Course, Great Bend Park at Glencoe, Town and Country Park, The Challenge Golf Club, Quarry Hills Country Club, Swepsonville River Park, and Southwick Golf Course in Alamance County; and Robeson Creek Recreation Area and New Hope Overlook Campground located at the Jordan Lake State Recreation Area in Chatham County.

The “Big Picture” for the Haw River Trail (HRT) corridor extends approximately 80 miles along the Haw River from Haw River State Park on the Rockingham-Guilford County line through Alamance County to Jordan Lake State Recreational Area in Chatham County. The HRT is a part of the state-wide Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) which allows hikers to travel across the state from Clingman’s Dome to Jockey’s Ridge on the NC coast. The long-range plan is to work with willing landowners to continue creating a corridor for the Haw River Trail, preserving the open space and viewsheds around the Haw River.



### Mayo River

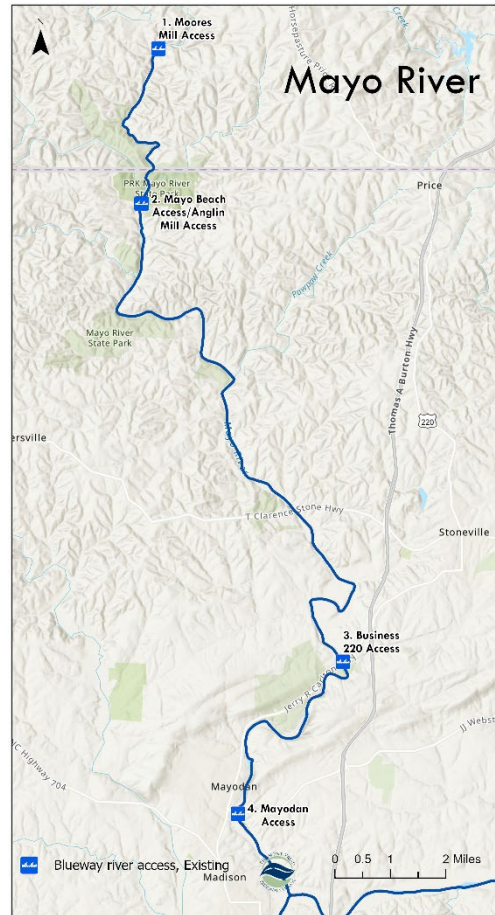
Beginning in Virginia as two small forks, the Mayo's confluence is just below the North Carolina state line. It flows roughly 16 miles south to just below the town of Mayodan in Rockingham County before joining the Dan River. A class III rapid on the upper section offers quite a challenging run as paddlers dodge large rocks dotting the rushing waters. As the river's descent becomes more gradual, the float becomes a more leisurely paced and scenic journey with just a hint here and there of faster moving water. Paddlers need to exit the river north of Mayodan at the bridge on Highway 220 Business.

Two hydroelectric dams and their canals located below the bridge prevent paddlers from completing the entire run because there is no safe portage. These dams were originally built to generate power for two cotton mills-Mayo Mills in Mayodan (later Washington Mills) and Avalon Mills. The Avalon mill structure was destroyed by fire in 1911 and abandoned with village houses moved to Mayodan by hitching them to horses and rolling them on logs. Both cotton mills were established in the 1890s by Colonel Frances Fries of Winston-Salem who with his partners, including Washington Duke of the Duke tobacco empire, envisioned hydroelectric possibilities for their textile business venture due to the natural fall line of the river. They were also responsible for building a railroad along the river's bank. The dams and rail line are still in use today.

Several well-preserved fish weirs (fish traps) built by American Indians can be spotted on the Mayo. Native settlements can be traced back thousands of years. Fragments of tobacco pipes, arrowheads and pottery have been found along the banks of the river and its feeder streams.

Historical artifacts offer evidence that there were once American Indian tribes living on this land near the river. Later, a plantation known as Shady Grove operated on the property owned by early settler Samuel Smith and his descendants. A classical school, Shady Grove Academy, was incorporated on the site in 1825. Two gristmills were built to serve settlers on both the east and west sides of the Mayo River. Several of the Smiths are buried in a family cemetery that still exists today.

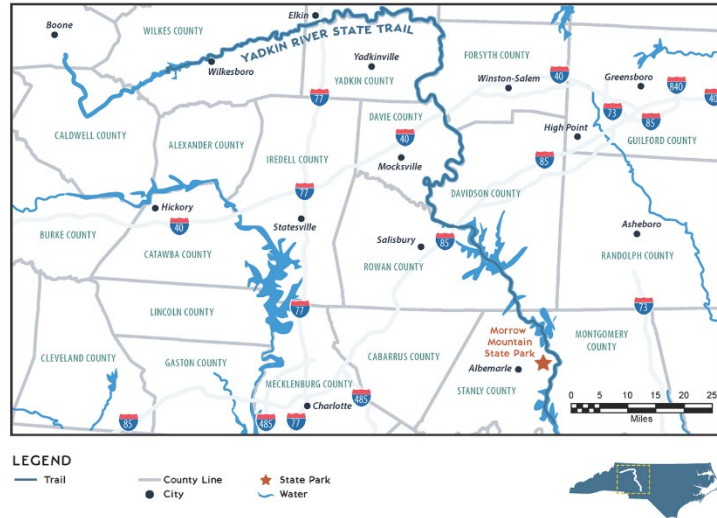
The site was operated as a community park from July 3, 1948 until the early 1970s. The original park owner, former textile giant Washington Mills Company, commissioned internationally renowned architect Antonin Raymond, a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright, to design the park and its recreational buildings. Raymond's architectural design was intended to blend with the densely wooded surroundings. After working in Japan for a number of years on projects such as the famous Imperial Hotel, Raymond returned to the United States and opened a firm with partner Ladislav Rado. The park's massive picnic shelter, historically renovated, reflects Raymond's Japanese-style architectural influence. Unfortunately, a second park building by Raymond that served as a bathhouse for the former park had to be demolished due to deterioration. However, there are new restroom facilities in similar architectural style. Some of the original blue slate stones from the former bathhouse are incorporated into the new building's flooring.





### Yadkin/Pee Dee River

Rising from the foothills of western North Carolina and Virginia, the Yadkin/Pee Dee River courses some 430 miles before entering the Winyah Bay and Atlantic Ocean near Georgetown, South Carolina. In its upper reaches where it is known as the Yadkin River, this system supplies drinking water to Winston-Salem, High Point and other Piedmont communities. Six large hydroelectric dams punctuate 60 miles of the river in central North Carolina. The river's name changes to the Pee Dee at its confluence with the Uwharrie River just above the Duke Energy Tillery Hydroelectric Project. The Yadkin-Pee Dee River system changes character along its path from the high gradient foothills through the rocky shoals of the Piedmont to the lower river's miles-wide floodplain forests, lush and abundant wetlands, and numerous Carolina bays. More than 100,000 acres of federally protected land lie adjacent to the river comprising the Uwharrie National Forest, Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge and Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge.



Migratory fish, including shad, striped bass, eel and sturgeon, ascend the river from the ocean to complete their lifecycles. The robust redhorse, a rare fish that is the largest sucker species native to East Coast rivers, was first discovered here in the 1860s. Many species of both endangered and common freshwater mussels can be found feeding on organic matter flowing across the river's bottom. Rounding out the river's wildlife are black bear, bald eagle and swallowtail kites that travel the river corridor and bring joy to those lucky enough to catch a fleeting glimpse.

The Yadkin River, from its headwaters near Blowing Rock, flows east and then south across North Carolina's densely populated midsection. It travels 203 miles — passing farmland; draining the urban landscapes of Winston-Salem, Statesville, Lexington and Salisbury; and fanning through seven man-made reservoirs before its name changes to the Pee Dee River below Lake Tillery. The Pee Dee courses another 230 miles to the Atlantic, leaving NC near the community of McFarlan and ending its journey at South Carolina's Winyah Bay. The Yadkin Pee Dee River Basin bisects NC, running north to south, neatly separating counties on its journey.

Major tributaries of the Yadkin Pee Dee River include the Mitchell, Fisher, Ararat, Uwharrie and Rocky rivers and Dutchmans, Long and Abbott's creeks. The uppermost reservoir in the basin is W. Kerr Scott Reservoir. Six reservoirs farther downstream are known as the Yadkin chain lakes: High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin (Narrows), Falls, Tillery and Blewett Falls. They were all built in the first half of the 20th century to power aluminum smelters and electric utilities.

High Rock is the first and largest of the Yadkin chain lakes. Badin, the oldest in the chain, was built in 1917 just below the gorge called "the Narrows" to power an aluminum plant in Badin. Badin Lake has been described as a Bassmaster's paradise, where largemouths lurk around the forested shoreline's rocky points. Bald eagles visit Badin and other reservoirs for fish below the dams' turbines.

Forested land covers half of the basin, including the federal lands of the Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the 50,000-acre Uwharrie National Forest, which lies completely within the basin. Since it originates in the Blue Ridge and drains portions of the Piedmont, Sandhills and Coastal Plain, the Yadkin Pee Dee River Basin contains a wide variety of habitat types, as well as many rare plants and animals. The basin's rare species inventory (including endangered, threatened, significantly rare or of special concern) includes 38 aquatic animals. Two species are federally listed as endangered — the shortnose sturgeon, a migratory marine fish that once spawned in the river but has not been spotted in the basin since 1985, and the Carolina heelsplitter, a mussel now known from only nine populations in the world, including the lower basin's Goose Creek. Five new species, all

mollusks, have been added to the state’s endangered species list — the Carolina creekshell, brook floater, Atlantic pigtoe, yellow lampmussel and savannah lilliput.

The Yadkin River, its tributaries and lakes provide multiple opportunities for recreation throughout the river basin. North Carolinians enjoy boating, tubing, swimming, fishing, camping, hiking and relaxing on and around the Yadkin River.

**The Yadkin River State Trail is a 160+-milelong paddling trail** which includes multiple put-in and take-out areas for easy access to the river. The River Trail is mostly flat, with Class I ripples and a few Class II spots. The Yadkin Pee Dee River Trail may be paddled by kayak or canoe beginning east of W. Kerr Scott Reservoir in Wilkes County, meandering east through Elkin and over towards Winston-Salem and then turning south along the boundaries of Davie, Rowan and Davidson counties to the entrance to High Rock Lake. There are two mandatory portages around dams on this section of the river. The Mitchell, Fisher, Ararat and Uwharrie tributaries of the Yadkin provide additional paddle access opportunities.



*Yadkin River Paddlers (Credit: Brianna Haferman)*

Access points along the Yadkin River are maintained predominately by local municipalities. Access areas are in varying conditions, ranging from extremely well kept to needy. New access areas may be opened, or existing ones closed, at any time. The following list shows access points above High Rock Lake to Kerr Scott Dam.

**Yadkin River Access Points**

*TAILWATER ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°08.15’ W 81°13.39’  
 Maintained by: US Army Corps of Engineers, 336-921-3390  
 Distance to next access point: 7.1 miles  
 Conditions: paved parking lot, plenty of parking  
 Facilities: bathroom

*SMOOT PARK ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°09.84’ W 81°08.09’  
 Maintained by: N. Wilkesboro Rec. & Parks, 336-838-3359  
 Distance to next access point: 15.1 miles  
 Conditions: gravel parking lot, moderate parking  
 Facilities: bathroom

*ROARING RIVER ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°12.354’ W 80°59.04’  
 Distance to next access point: 4.4 miles  
 Conditions: gravel parking lot with moderate parking  
 Facilities: none

*RONDA ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°12.95’ W 80°56.25’  
 Maintained by: Town of Ronda, 336-835-2061  
 Distance to next access point: 6.8 miles  
 Conditions: paved parking lot, plenty of parking  
 Facilities: bathroom

*CRATER PARK IN ELKIN ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°14.50’ W 80°50.84’  
 Maintained by: Elkin Recreation and Parks, 336-835-9814  
 Distance to next access point: 10.7 miles  
 Conditions: well-kept gravel entrance and moderate parking  
 Facilities: bathroom, sometimes locked

*BURCH STATION AT MITCHELL RIVER ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°16’34.0" W 80°46’02.4"  
 Maintained by: Elkin Recreation and Parks, 336-835-9814  
 Distance to next access point: 4.7 miles  
 Conditions: well-kept gravel entrance and moderate

parking  
Facilities:

*YADKIN/SHORE ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°16.18' W 80°43.23'  
Maintained by: Yadkin Co. Recreation Dept, 336-679-4228  
Distance to next access point: 5.0 miles  
Conditions: primitive access, moderate parking  
Facilities: no bathroom, camping permitted, water pump

*SHOALS ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°15.45' W 80°31.05'  
Maintained by: Pilot Mountain State Park, 336-325-2355  
Distance to next access point: 6.9 miles  
Conditions: dirt and gravel road entrance, limited parking  
Facilities: none

*DONNAHA ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°12.95' W 80°26.02'  
Maintained by: Yadkin County Recreation Dept, 336-679-4228  
Distance to next access point: 6.6 miles (includes mandatory portage)  
Conditions: dirt and gravel entrance road, moderate parking  
Facilities: bathroom

*OLD 421 PARK ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°07.97' W 80°26.65'  
Maintained by: Forsyth County Parks and Rec, 336-778-6300  
Distance to next access point: 5.4 miles  
Conditions: Large paved parking lot -  
Facilities: bathroom, picnic tables, playground

*TANGLEWOOD ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36°00.83' W 80°25.01'  
Maintained By: Forsyth County Parks and Rec, 336-778-6300  
Distance to next access point: 16.7 miles (includes

mandatory portage)  
Conditions: primitive gravel with moderate parking  
Facilities: none

*HUNTSVILLE ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 36 °5.58' W 80°30.97  
Maintained By: Yadkin County  
Distance to next access point: 10.8 miles  
Conditions: primitive with gravel and dirt lot.  
Facilities: none

*US 64 ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 35°51.40' W 80°23.14'  
Maintained by: Davidson County Rec. Dept., 336-242-2285  
Distance to next access point: 9.3 miles  
Conditions: primitive gravel with moderate parking  
Facilities: none

*NC 801 ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 35°50.30' W 80°29.08'  
Maintained by: NC Wildlife Commission, 1-800-662-7137  
Distance to next access point: 3.5 miles  
Conditions: gravel lot, parking, handicap space  
Facilities: none

*BOONES CAVE ACCESS*

GPS coordinates: N 35°48.01' W 80°28.02'  
Maintained By: Davidson County Rec. Dept., 336-242-2285  
Distance to next access point: 9.5 miles  
Conditions: parking  
Facilities: camping, bathroom and picnic area (approx. 250 yards from river)

*YORK HILL ACCESS/YADKIN RIVER PARK*

GPS coordinates: N 35°43.42' W 80°23.43'  
Maintained By: Alcoa Power Generating, Inc., 704-422-5525  
Conditions: gravel lots with plenty of parking -  
Facilities: camping, picnic area, trail across WilCox bridge.

## CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP

Conservation and stewardship are an integral part of outdoor recreation, which relies upon healthy and accessible lands, clean air, and clean water for success. Conservation protects the natural resources and wildlife habitats that outdoor recreation depends on so they can be enjoyed by current and future generations, while fostering stewardship and responsible recreation helps ensure that natural resources are used respectfully and properly maintained through sustainable practices. At the same time, outdoor recreation encourages conservation and an environmental ethic by helping people understand the importance and value of healthy, intact ecosystems. Source: <https://shiftjh.org/the-principles-for-advancing-outdoor-recreation-and-conservation/>

The Piedmont Triad has a vast network of parks, trails, waterways, forests, working lands, and historic places that contribute to the region’s rich natural heritage and outdoor economy. As the region continues to grow, it is increasingly vital that these natural areas are preserved and protected. Many public and private entities across the region are already engaged in conservation and stewardship initiatives that enhance recreation and stewardship. Land conservancies, river keepers, local parks and recreation departments, Keep [insert Town/County] Beautiful all are coordinating “fun-raising” events to support conservation and stewardship of the outdoors. These activities are fundamental to a robust outdoor economy in the Piedmont Triad. However, there are still opportunities to better coordinate conservation and recreational efforts. The following section discusses common themes for conservation, stewardship, and outdoor recreation organizations and allows opportunities to share resources and messaging to fulfill mutually beneficial goals.



*Trail advocates at the Ridge Cycle Hub Lexington*

### Importance of Stewardship

One of the main reasons people travel and recreate is to reconnect with nature and visit places that are undisturbed and beautiful. Unfortunately, all outdoor recreation can have a negative impact on the environment and wildlife, as well as the experiences of others, if it is not properly managed. We all have an obligation to minimize these impacts through ethical behavior and best practices to ensure that the region’s natural resources and recreational opportunities are available for future generations.

Stewardship is often defined as the responsible use and protection of nature through sustainable practices and can involve a wide range of activities, from individual behaviors, such as properly disposing of waste, to land management activities, like invasive-species control, habitat restoration, or public-access management. Each of these activities are integral to sustaining a thriving outdoor economy in the Piedmont Triad. With a rapidly growing population, increased demands on open spaces and public lands, and diminishing public funding for acquisition and maintenance, the need for responsible stewardship is urgent. Through collective responsible action, we can prevent the degradation of natural resources and preserve high quality outdoor recreational experiences for all. To support this mission, we developed the Piedmont Triad Outdoor Recreation Pledge that outdoor recreationists, conservationists, and land managers can use to protect our public lands, waters, and wildlife.

## The Piedmont Triad Outdoor Recreation Pledge

### For Your Safety

1. Use caution any time you get on the water, step on the trail, and venture into the great outdoors.
2. Wear proper safety equipment (life jackets, helmets, etc.) regardless of skill level and setting.
3. Environments may change as a result of natural and unnatural disturbances. Always plan ahead for trips.
4. Ensure that you have all the equipment and supplies needed to participate in your intended activity.  
(This includes medical supplies, proper safety equipment and performance equipment.)
5. Please be prepared for fast-changing weather conditions. Spring & Summer thunderstorms can happen out of nowhere.
6. Water release schedules often change without notice due to unanticipated changes in weather conditions and power system requirements. Check release schedules online before heading out on our waterways.

### Leave No Trace

Your personal commitment to ethical use of rivers, lakes, land trails and all publicly accessible lands is the most important factor in maintaining the outdoors' character. Take pride in leaving no trace of your presence here.

1. Plan ahead and prepare
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impacts
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors.

### Proper Disposal of Waste

Improper human waste disposal creates one of the most disgusting conditions outdoors. Human feces must be deposited in a six-inch-deep hole and covered with soil. No toilet use may occur within 100 feet of a camp or water source or within sight of a trail. Defecating behind a shelter or near a spring creates very unhealthy conditions. All toilet paper, sanitary napkins, and tampons must be packed out. Do not bury them.



*Birkhead Wilderness (Credit: Brianna Haferman)*

### Sustainable Development

As demand for outdoor recreation continues to grow in the Piedmont Triad, new recreational facilities and infrastructure will need to be developed and existing facilities will need expanding. These amenities will serve the region for generations and should therefore be thoughtfully designed and located in a way that causes the least amount of harm to the natural environment and wildlife. Sustainable development is the practice of planning and designing land and construction projects in a manner that works with nature to reduce their impact on the environment. This not only helps protect natural areas and wildlife, but also saves money in the long run by reducing maintenance costs.

This approach is quickly gaining support throughout the trails community. Sustainable trails consider topography, site location and alignment, soil conditions, hydrology, and flora and fauna to minimize environmental degradation and maintenance requirements. Water flow is one of the biggest factors that can impacts trails. Trails can disrupt natural drainage patterns, increase sheet runoff, and collect water in low areas. By following a curvilinear route, utilizing suitable grades, and locating trails along sideslopes, instead of flat ground, trail designers can reduce erosion and provide users an enjoyable experience that will stand the test of time.

### Adequate Facilities & Maintenance

Another way outdoor recreation providers can promote environmental stewardship is by ensuring all recreational facilities have adequate accommodations, including restrooms, trash cans, interpretive signage, water fountains and other amenities to support their use. This encourages users to leave no trace, properly dispose of waste, and respect native wildlife. These types of amenities may not be feasible in certain locations due to infrastructure or

environmental constraints. In areas that are less accessible, recreation providers should strategically locate and distribute parking areas, trail heads, river access points, and other similar facilities in a convenient manner that empowers users to act responsibly.

### **Piedmont Legacy Trails**

This initiative helps coordinate trail building efforts in the Piedmont and to raise the profile of existing trails in the area. Across the Piedmont, trails are being built by counties, cities, towns and volunteer groups. Some of these are smaller efforts to create greenways for short strolls, others are large efforts like the creation of the Piedmont Greenway, which will one day connect Winston-Salem and Greensboro through Triad Park in downtown Kernersville. PLT is working to coordinate all these regional trail building efforts—working at a grassroots level to connect people, connect trails and create opportunities.

### **Piedmont Land Conservancy**

Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC) incorporated as a tax-exempt non-profit, 501(c) 3 organization in 1990. Piedmont Land Conservancy preserves natural and scenic lands, farms and open spaces in Piedmont North Carolina – lands that enrich the quality of life for our communities and for future generations. The Conservancy operates in nine northern Piedmont counties – Alamance, Caswell, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin. PLC is a member of the Land Trust Alliance and the association of North Carolina Land Trusts – the Land Trust Council.

Since 1990, PLC has protected over 28,000 acres of land, completing over 200 land protection projects including over 9,800 acres as State Parks or nature preserves, over 7,600 acres as farmland protection and over 10,600 acres adjacent to water resources to protect water quality.

Piedmont Land Conservancy, along with many partners, believe the demand for a regional trail system is growing and will continue to do so. To serve this need and as a regional leader, PLC and PTRC launched a collaborative initiative—**Piedmont Legacy Trails**.

### **Three Rivers Land Trust**

The Three Rivers Land Trust (TRLT) is an accredited land trust whose mission is to protect and conserve land, natural areas, rural landscapes, family farms, and historic places within North Carolina’s central Piedmont and Sandhills. The TRLT operates in fifteen counties, 4 of which are in the Piedmont Triad region: Davidson, Davie, Montgomery and Randolph County. Formerly the Land Trust for Central North Carolina, the Three Rivers Land Trust has conserved 41,036 acres permanently, of which 14,334 acres are farmland. There are 304 miles of river or stream frontage conserved and 5,731 acres that have been converted to public recreation use.

### **Great Trails State Coalition**

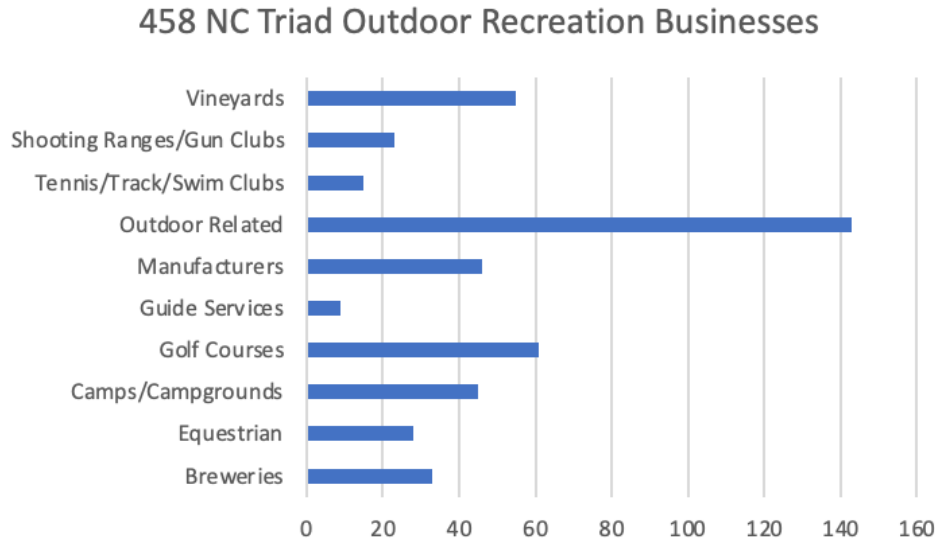
The Great Trails State Coalition is coalition of over 30 local and regional organizations, agencies and other supporters advocating for increase investment in trails of all types. The recently completed Great Trails State Plan highlights trail connections in all 100 counties. To be successful in implementation, the Plan needs State investment to develop key connections now primarily achieved through federal pass through and local funds.

### **Additional Conservation and Stewardship Resources**

There are additional partners at the local, regional, State and Federal level that can be utilized for conservation. Public agencies such as State Parks, Wildlife Commission, Forest Service the National Park Service and other non-profit organizations looking to conserve land for generations into the future such as the Conservation Fund and Conservation Trust for North Carolina or Riverkeepers and watershed basin associations. There are too many conservation and stewardship partners to list here that may be involved in local efforts. Find out who is working on conservation and stewardship for the places you commonly visit and get involved.

## OUTDOOR RECREATION BUSINESSES, ACTIVITY SURVEY AND MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES

The following chart categorizes the 458 outdoor recreation related businesses in the Piedmont Triad in operation in 2021.



A key recommendation around recreation business is to *complete an economic impact study regarding outdoor recreation* in the Piedmont Triad. The study would identify primary and secondary economic impact analysis of outdoor recreation business in the 12 county region.

### OUTDOOR RECREATION SURVEY

A survey was released with mixed results in the winter of 2019 and 2020 around Outdoor Recreation. The following results are summarized here: Participants were asked multiple questions relating to their time, practices, and preferences relating to personal outdoor recreation habits and spending. Surveys were distributed by web-links using Survey Monkey software Fall 2019 and Winter of 2019-2020. Control mechanisms used included limitations to the broadness of questions, short answer/fill in the blank questions, confounding, and matrix rank questions. Various questions developed indices by categorical relevance. There were 95 responses with 2/3 of respondents coming from Guilford, Surry and Forsyth counties.

#### Activities Question Response

Primary Reasons to Recreate: Enjoy Outdoors (78 Respondents), Exercise (74), To Use a Specific Amenity/Park (39)

Importance of Parks and Rec to Quality of Life (0-100 scale): 89% (94 Respondents)

Barriers to Recreate: Time (38), Distance (31), # of Facilities (15), Lack of Information (15)

Importance of Open Space (0-100 scale): 94% (93 Respondents)

Top Three Activities: Jogging, Gardening, Hiking, Nature Parks

Top 4 Activities Sought: Stargazing (24%), Caving (22%), Canoeing (18%), Dog Parks (18%)

What Would Help You Recreate: Social Media Information, Equipment Rentals, Instructions/Clinics

#### Expenditure Question Responses

Transportation Average (\$): \$651.85

Equipment Average: \$2,432.62

Fees Average: \$117

Food and Lodging Average: \$593

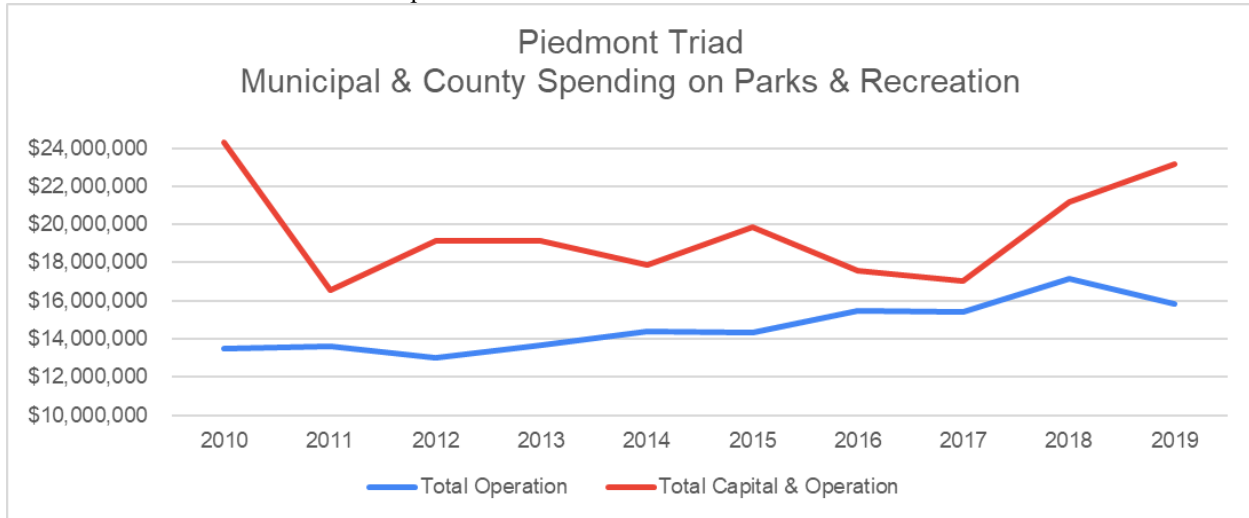
**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

Miscellaneous Average: \$368.66  
 Business Visitation During Recreation: Yes (86%), No (14%)  
 If Yes, Money Spent on Average, Average: \$73.42

Sampling procedures for this survey focused on access to the internet, on-hand email addresses, and snowball promotion using social media. Of the initial sampling, one primary method was used to categorize survey respondents, online. Demographics varied and were not limited to any ethnicity, gender, family, or age. Provided that data were collected from regional residents and visitors, findings may not be generalized to other regions.

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SPENDING ON PARKS AND RECREATION**

Although local governments do not track their spending on outdoor recreation, the follow chart shows how local governments in the region have invested in outdoor recreation in the last decade. Local government spending since the beginning of the pandemic is likely to change the spending trajectory in this decade, as usage doubled or tripled for certain facilities such as trails and parks.



Piedmont Triad	Total Operation	Total Capital	Total Payments	Pymts to Other Govs	Pymts to NC	Construction	Purchases
2010	\$ 13,499,764	\$ 10,779,591				4,827,610	595,1981
2011	\$ 13,618,033	\$ 2,961,764				1,438,110	1,523,654
2012	\$ 13,021,141	\$ 6,124,492	339,664	339,664	0	3,989,248	2,135,244
2013	\$ 13,693,457	\$ 5,417,204	338,654	16,654	322,000	1,576,120	3,841,084
2014	\$ 14,397,520	\$ 3,497,946	338,654	338,654	0	1,849,782	1,648,164
2015	\$ 14,323,649	\$ 5,562,569	331,517	331,517	0	4,494,594	1,067,975
2016	\$ 15,483,217	\$ 2,081,677	25,000	25,000	0	1,603,841	477,836
2017	\$ 15,435,225	\$ 1,590,249	38,500	38,500	0	809,019	781,230
2018	\$ 17,146,956	\$ 4,025,976	73,000	73,000	0	3,278,958	747,018
2019	\$ 15,836,408	\$ 7,316,618	200,000	200,000	0	5,995,419	1,321,199

Source: Office of State Management and Budget



## OUTDOOR RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES

The following list of needs identified for federal and state lands were catalogued by the Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council. The list of needs is not comprehensive, but can be used as a guide for policy, program and resource development to address pressing needs for parks and trails discussed by the Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council.

### PUBLIC LANDS NEEDS ASSESSMENTS - Federal Public Lands

#### UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

PRESSING NEEDS	CURRENT STATUS	STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE
1. Funding for marketing & branding to the public	No public funds available	Create partnerships with CVB's, TDA's & private outdoor recreation industry to develop resources.
2. Education materials for proper use of the forest	Lack of public understanding	Create partnerships with government agencies, private industry & marketing partners.
3. More lodging & guide services nearby or partners of the forest	Only 150 campsites, less than 100 rooms nearby and only 1 private-guide service currently operating	Recruit new vendors to the region to provide these services to the public.
4. Outside support for their hiking and motorized trails	1.2 million visitors create the need for additional maintenance on the trails; lack of public funds maintain effectively	Establish a volunteer group to assist with staff workload, advocate for maintenance funding & establish new private partners.
5. Increase funds for market analysis/economic impact study for the Forest	Data collection is needed to support an ask for more federal funding	Establish a funding strategy that includes federal/private funds.
6. Build more parking for 1.2 million visitors	Funds not available at this point	Develop an advocacy and funding strategy with partners.
7. More federal funds	Federal funds continue to be cut	Develop advocacy and funding strategy with partners
8. Need to build new trails to disperse visitors	Current trails are being "loved to death".	Develop advocacy and funding strategy with partners
9. Need to be able to keep more of the fees that are collected in the Forest.	Only \$379,000 per year remains in the Uwharrie Forest budget.	Develop advocacy and funding strategy with partners
10. Complete Uwharrie National Recreation Trail	Need one tract, gap between Walker's Creek Trailhead (High Pine Church Rd.) and Birkhead Wilderness	Work with the US Forest Service to complete trail

**State Public Lands**

<b>HANGING ROCK STATE PARK</b>	<b>8,000 Acres</b>	<b>600,000 Visitors</b>
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. Additional funding for maintenance and facilities	State funds are very limited	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula.
2. Ability to generate more revenue on site	Park collect some fees, but these are sent to NC State Parks.	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula.
3. Raise more regional/local/private dollars for the Park	Their Friends group has been unsuccessful in raising resources for the Park.	Establish some training and capacity building for the Friends group to enhance their effectiveness.
4. The Park needs additional staff to adequately provide services	Current funding level makes hiring new staff difficult	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula.
5. The Park needs additional campsites to handle the visitor demand	The Park is sold out year- round except for a few days in the winter	Develop a strategy for seeking new private vendor partners that are willing to invest in infrastructure improvements and additional services to visitors.
6. New development in the Park to meet visitor demand	Potential open space areas with road access in close proximity to existing park properties.	Develop a strategy for seeking new private vendor partners that are willing to invest in infrastructure improvements and additional services to visitors.
7. Rehabilitation of the Vade Mecum Hotel site	Park Master Plan calls for improvement but more funding required to complete improvements.	Develop a strategy for seeking new private vendor partners that are willing to invest in infrastructure improvements and additional services to visitors.
8. Need to collect examples/benchmarks from other state parks in the Southeast	Best practices are not currently shared effectively.	Establish advocacy strategy for requesting that this data be collected and shared by the State Parks Department to improve metrics and best practices.

<b>HAW RIVER STATE PARK</b>		<b>1,429 Acres</b>
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. Summit Conference Center needs more usage	Capacity: 180 people, but no marketing funds for the Center	Develop a marketing strategy that includes a partnership with the DMO's in the region to market the Center.
2. The Iron Ore Belt section of the Park needs to be developed	A current trail exists, but needs more signage and improvement for State Park standards.	Develop a strategy for seeking funding that includes more private support partners.
3. The Park needs a Visitor's Educational Center and Amphitheater for music and special events	These amenities to do not currently exist.	Work with the Park leadership to develop more public and private partners to establish these amenities.
4. The Blue Heron Trail (3.5 miles) needs improvement,	The Park needs more funds for maintenance of the trail	Establish an advocacy strategy for seeking more maintenance for State Parks in the region.
5. Need legislation that would better distribute State funds	The current status is unstable:	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula.
6. Need to collect examples/benchmarks from other state parks in the Southeast	Best practices are not currently shared effectively.	Establish advocacy strategy for requesting that this data be collected and shared by the State Parks Department to improve metrics and best practices.

**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

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<b>MAYO RIVER STATE PARK</b>	<b>400 Acres</b>	<b>38,000 Visitors</b>
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. More public access points	Underdeveloped with limited access points	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula and develop a strategy for bringing in private partners/vendors.
2. Camping facilities	Facilities currently do not exist	Develop strategic partnerships that could provide private vendor partnerships.
3. Connection to the Town of Mayodan	Trail does not currently exist	Work with the Town of Mayodan to develop strategy for developing/funding the trail.
4. The Park needs better connections/access to the river	Public access points are undeveloped	Work with local partners to develop strategy for developing and funding the trail.
5. Formal collaboration with the State of Virginia	VA is currently developing their side, but there is no partnership with the North Carolina.	Work with the towns, Rockingham County Tourism and the NC Office of State Parks to foster a bi-state relationship with Virginia Office of State Parks.
6. Need to collect examples/benchmarks from other state parks in the Southeast	Best practices are not currently shared effectively.	Establish advocacy strategy for requesting that this data be collected and shared by the State Parks Department to improve metrics and best practices.

**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

<b>PILOT MOUNTAIN STATE PARK</b>	<b>3,700 Acres</b>	<b>750,000 Visitors</b>
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. More public access points and ADA access	Limited access points particularly on the Yadkin River section of the Park	Work with Yadkin Riverkeeper and other partners to secure funding for additional access points.
2. Current access points need improvement	Lack of funding for improvements	Support efforts of Yadkin Riverkeeper and other partners' organization to secure funding for improvements.
3. Ability to keep a portion of the fees being collected for special events and camping	All funds currently go directly to the state offices.	Advocate for a portion of the funds to remain in the Park for maintenance.
4. There are problems with the current DOT signage regulations.	The Park has local funds for signage, but state regulations prohibits the addition of directional signage for the Park.	Establish an advocacy strategy for dealing with the NC Department of Transportation on this issue.
5. Need to conduct regular visitor surveys to support planning for the Park	State surveys are currently outdated and therefore useless for planning purposes.	Establish an advocacy strategy for requesting state funding for more frequent visitor surveys.
6. Need to collect examples/benchmarks from other state parks in the Southeast	Best practices are not currently shared effectively.	Establish advocacy strategy for requesting that this data be collected and shared by the State Parks Department to improve metrics and best practices.
7. Need legislation that would better distribute the state funds	The current status is unstable:	Develop an advocacy strategy that provides a stable and fair funding formula.
8. 51 campsites need improvements to bring them up to current visitor satisfaction	Sites are in very bad condition and therefore has only 25% occupancy	Advocate for more state funding or create a partnership with a private vendor for investment in the sites.
9. This Park needs connecting trail to other state parks in the region	Connections do not currently exist	Develop long-range plan to connect state parks in the NC Triad region and start pursuing funding to build those trails.
10. Restore Sauratown Trail connection to Stokes County	Some re-routing on State park land needed, but additional private easements also necessary.	Continue to promote the benefit of trails and partner with the Town of Pilot Mountain to establish a trail connection.

**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

<b>DAN RIVER STATE TRAIL</b>	<b>214 Miles</b>	
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. The NC General Assembly designated the Dan River as a State Trail in 2021		Not discussed by the Advisory Council due to recent designation.

<b>DEEP RIVER STATE TRAIL</b>	<b>125 Miles</b>	
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. More development of the trail	A conceptual plan is now in place and trail sections have been built in Randleman, Franklinville & Ramseur. Land has been purchased between Franklinville & Cedar Falls.	Work with current partners to develop strategy for further development.
2. Funding to purchase 3 more miles of land	Funding not in place at this time	Strengthen existing strategic partnerships that could provide more funding for the trail.
3. A bridge needs to be built over Sandy Creek	Funding not in place at this time	Strengthen existing strategic partnerships that could provide more funding for the trail.
4. Study trail feasibility around Randleman Lake	Current rules do not allow trail development in the Randleman Lake buffer area.	A new federal rules process would need to be initiated to allow trail construction in the buffer area. Conduct a trail feasibility study for the trail upstream of Randleman dam.
5. Build more river access locations	Boat ramp completed at Franklinville. River accesses at Worthville and Central Falls are funded and underway.	Seek funding to complete river access improvements.

<b>MOUNTAINS TO SEA TRAIL</b>	<b>1,175 Miles</b>	
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. Many segments (e.g. Piedmont Greenway) in the Piedmont Triad need right of way or funding to complete. Additional planning has been completed by State Parks and the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail.		Not discussed by the Advisory Council. Reference existing State Parks and Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail priorities.

**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

<b>YADKIN RIVER STATE TRAIL</b>	<b>164 Miles</b>	<b>45,000 Visitors</b>
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. Additional public access points	Currently there are 16 access points along the River section of the trail w/ numerous boat ramps on the Yadkin Pee Dee Lakes. The NC Wildlife Resources Commission is working on a boat access point in Jonesville Land needed near Rockford	Work with Yadkin Riverkeeper, NCWRC and local government and private partners to identify priority access areas.
2. Camping facilities	There are riverside camping sites at Pilot Mountain State Park, York Hill Access Area and the High Rock Lake Dam Portage. Additional sites are planned as part of the proposed Shallowford State Historic Site.	Develop recruitment strategy for private investment partners and continue to work with state and local agencies to identify potential camp site development opportunities.
3. Better portage areas	Funding not in place at this time	Develop strategy for securing funding partners.
4. Construction of public restrooms at access areas	Portable toilets located at several access areas. Partial funding obtained for restroom facilities at York Hill Access.	Develop funding strategy that includes public/ private funds.
5. Better security for the public users	No comprehensive mileage, hazard warning or marking system for emergency response.	Identify partners and funding resources as well as strategy to accomplish this goal.
6. Repairs from extensive flooding	Need funding and staff time to remediate ongoing flooding damage.	Work with partners (PTRC/Yadkin Riverkeeper, and municipal stormwater programs. to secure stable maintenance funding).
7. Need additional parking in Town of Elkin.	Town of Elkin trying to purchase brownfield site (\$40,000 for property & \$80,000 for facilities)	Continue to work with Town of Elkin to secure property.
8. Establish access points on the Ararat River	Some locations already built.	Continue to support this initiative and develop partners.
9. Complete Yadkin River Park	Master Plan is complete with some grant submissions pending. Connect to Spencer and NC Transportation Museum.	Develop funding strategy & partners to complete this

**Piedmont Triad Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan**

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<b>REGIONAL TRAIL PRIORITIES</b>		
<b>PRESSING NEEDS</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE</b>
1. Update 2011 Piedmont Triad Trail Plan Inventory as a Regional Conceptual Plan	Trail implementation and outdoor recreation facility additions warrant an update	Utilize recreation and transportation focused grant funding to complete an update that compiles existing plan data, but also identifies key regional priorities and strategies.
2. Adopt and begin implementation of the Great Trails State Plan	Draft plan released for comment in late 2021, waiting for final plan draft.	Federal and local funding are primary sources of funding to complete trails, support efforts such as the Great Trails State Coalition to advocate for more funding.
3. Support 2023 as Year of Trail*	2023 has been designated as Year of the Trail by the Governor and NC General Assembly	Work to develop resources and engaging events promoting year of the trail.
4. Trail Storytelling and Promotion: Reach the public with information to use existing trails*	Utilize the Piedmont Legacy Trails website, social media and events to share trail information	Continue building the Piedmont Legacy Trails brand and content. Create the NC Triad Outdoors Website as another opportunity for people to connect with trails.
5. Update regional trail finding map*	Existing map at Piedmont Legacy Trails is difficult to update easily	Develop funding and an application that works with multiple websites to promote trail use, but integrates with local municipal applications and information.

\*See also Marketing Priorities



## COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS

The following list shows the names of existing trail, parks or recreation plans for the counties in the Piedmont Triad. There are many local priorities to consider; accessing each plan will provide an opportunity and listing of assets and plans for each jurisdiction. If you see a plan link that needs updating, please reach out to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council staff so the status can be changed.

### ALAMANCE COUNTY

[Haw River Trail Plan](#)  
[Cane Creek Mountains Plan](#)  
[Alamance County Trails Plan](#)

Burlington

[Greenways & Bikeways Plan](#)  
[Recreation & Parks Comprehensive Master Plan](#)

Elon

[Recreation & Parks Comprehensive Master Plan](#)

Graham

[Recreation & Parks Master Plan](#)

Green Level

Haw River

Mebane

[Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan](#)

[Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan](#)

Ossipee

Swepsonville

Village of Alamance

### CASWELL COUNTY

[Heritage Trail Plan](#)  
[Caswell County Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

Milton

Yanceyville

### DAVIDSON COUNTY

[Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

[Boones Cave Park Master Plan](#)

[Greenway Master Plan](#)

[Blueway Plan](#)

Denton

Lexington

Midway

Thomasville

[Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan](#)

Walburg

### DAVIE COUNTY

[Davie County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan](#)

[Davie County Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan](#)

Bermuda Run

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

Cooleemee

Mocksville

[Farmington Community Center and Nature Park Master Plan](#)

[Park at Lake Louise Master Plan](#)

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

### FORSYTH COUNTY

[Parks and Open Space Plan](#)

[Greenway Plan](#)

Bethania

Clemmons

[Comprehensive Master Plan](#)

Kernersville

[Community Center Recreation Plan](#)

[Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

Lewisville

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Greenway and Pedestrian Connections Plan](#)

Rural Hall

Tobaccoville

Walkertown

Winston-Salem

[Bicycle Plan](#)

[The Gathering Place at Fairview Park Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Happy Hill Park Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Hobby Park Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Jamison Park Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Long Creek Preliminary Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Nelson L. Malloy, Jr. Park Master Plan](#)

[Quarry Park Overall Plan Scale \(PDF\)](#)

[Greensboro Road Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Linville Road Trailhead Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Salem Lake Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Washington Park Master Plan](#)

[Winston Lake Master Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Parks and Open Space Plan](#)

### GUILFORD COUNTY

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

Gibsonville

[Land Development Plan](#)

Greensboro

[Plan2Play Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

[Bicycle, Pedestrian, Trails and Greenway Plan](#)

[Comprehensive Transportation Plan](#)

[Metro Transportation Improvement Program](#)

[Keeley Park Master Plan](#)

[Battleground Parks District Master Plan](#)

[Heath Park Master Plan](#)

[Mayer Park Master Plan](#)

[Peeler Community Park](#)

[Smith Community Park](#)

[Spencer Love Tennis Center Master Plan](#)

[Steelman Park](#)

[Sussman Park](#)

[Barber Park](#)

[Brightwood Park](#)

[Henry Street Park](#)

[Hester Park](#)

[Ole Asheboro Park](#)

High Point

[Comprehensive Master Plan](#)

[Greenway Master Plan](#)

[Regional Bike Plan](#)

Jamestown

[Comprehensive Transportation Plan](#)

[Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

Oak Ridge

[Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan](#)

[Whitaker Property Master Plan](#)

Pleasant Garden

[Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

Sedalia

[Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#)

Stokesdale

Summerfield

[Bandera Farms Master Plan](#)

[Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan](#)

Whitsett

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

[Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#)

[Uwharrie National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan](#)

Biscoe

[Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#)

[Pedestrian Transportation Plan](#)

Candor

Mount Gilead

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

Star

Troy

**RANDOLPH COUNTY**

[Strategic Plan](#)

Archdale

[Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan](#)

[Pedestrian and Trails Master Plan](#)

Asheboro

[Land Development Plan](#)

Franklinville

[Deep River Rail Trail Plan](#)

Liberty

Ramseur

[Deep River Rail Trail Plan](#)

Randleman

Seagrove

Staley

Trinity

**ROCKINGHAM COUNTY**

[Pathways Plan](#)

[Mayo River Recreation Access Action Plan](#)

[Mayo River State Park Master Plan](#)

Eden

[Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan](#)

Madison

Mayodan

Reidsville

[Beaches to Bluegrass – Mountains to Sea Connecting to the](#)

[Dan River Basin Master Plan](#)

Stoneville

[Comprehensive Land Development Plan](#)

Wentworth

[Land Use Plan](#)

**STOKES COUNTY**

[Stokes County 2035 Vision Plan: Moving Together](#)

[Dan River Recreation & Stewardship Plan](#)

Danbury

King

Walnut Cove

**SURRY COUNTY**

[Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Master Plan](#)

[Land Use Plan](#)

Dobson

[Connect Dobson Greenway Master Plan](#)

Elkin

[Comprehensive Town Wide Master Plan](#)

[Recreation, Parks & Greenway Plan](#)

[Elkin/Jonesville Comprehensive Transportation Plan](#)

Mount Airy

[Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan](#)

Pilot Mountain

[Progress Pilot Mountain Comprehensive Plan](#)

**YADKIN COUNTY**

[Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

[Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Master Plan](#)

Boonville

East Bend

Jonesville

[Comprehensive Pedestrian Transportation Plan](#)

[Elkin/Jonesville Comprehensive Transportation Plan](#)

Yadkinville

[Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)

Additional Plans

[Central Park Regional Bicycle Plan](#)

[Yadkin Valley Regional Bicycle Plan](#)

[Mountains to Sea State Trail Master Plan](#)

[Systemwide Plan for North Carolina State Parks](#)

## OUTDOOR RECREATION MARKETING PRIORITIES

The Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies a number of recreation resources in the Piedmont Triad. The following are key marketing opportunities for advancing outdoor recreation connections and branding in the Piedmont Triad

MARKETING PRIORITIES		
ACTIVITY	CURRENT STATUS	STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE
1. Build the nctriadoutdoors.com website.		Coordinate with current recreation providers and businesses to maximize impact and connections with existing provider websites to increase website traffic and business.
2. Develop a formal marketing strategy for nctriadoutdoors.com.		
3. Secure a company or organization to publish a printed Outdoor Recreation Guide with associated maps and brochures including blueways.	Several guides by county or asset are produced along with online applications. There is not one unified guide for the entire region.	Work with CVB, tourism and outdoor recreation stakeholders to figure out what the guide or guides should look like and contain.
4. Build a coalition of marketing partners for the outdoor recreation opportunities.		Use the Outdoor Recreation plan and NC Triad Outdoors, business and recreation providers to engage in improving outdoor recreation opportunities.
5. Develop a strategy to advocate with regional elected officials for the outdoor recreation economy.	Regional and State advisory councils have been established,	Leverage information, local efforts and data to support investment in the outdoor recreation economy.

