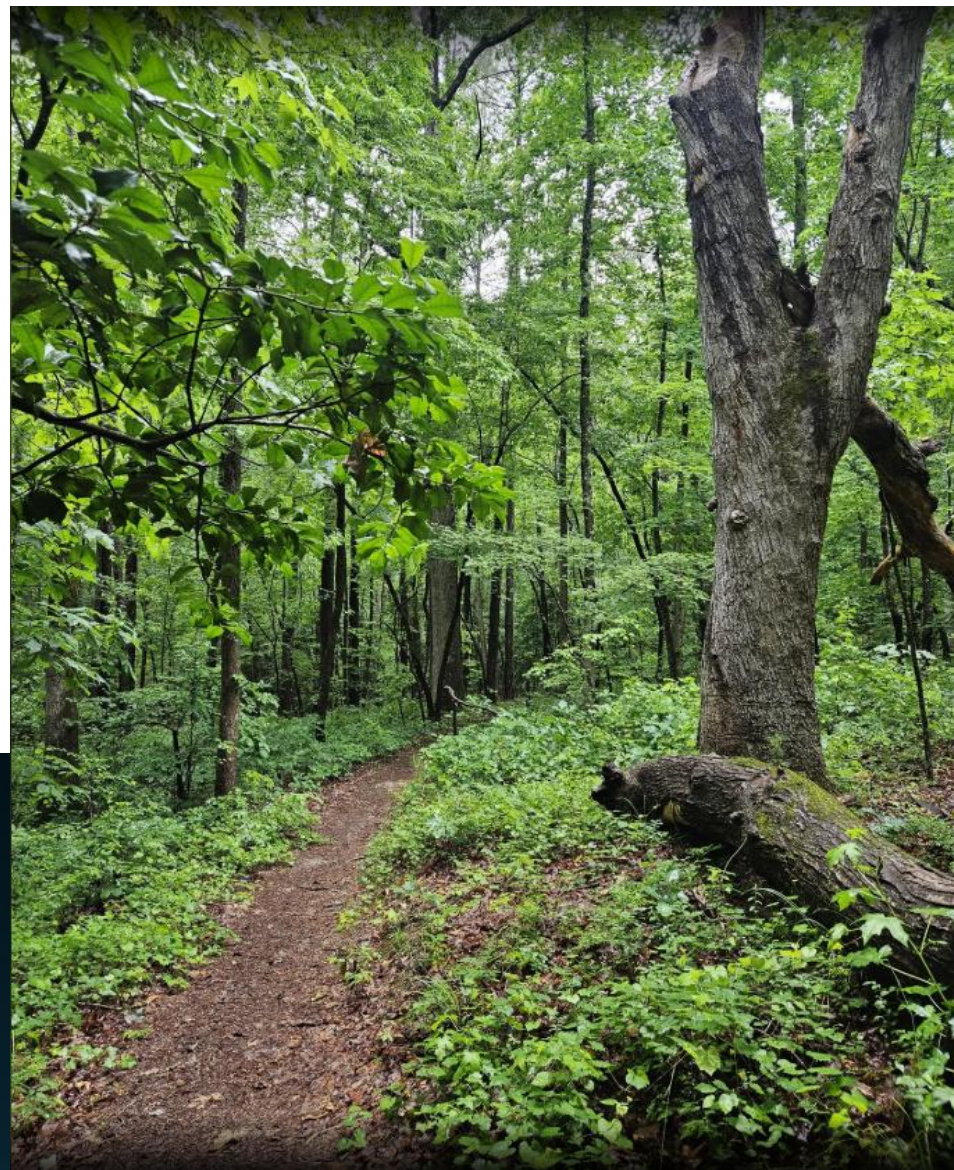




Trails and Open Space Update

Chatham County Board
of Commissioners
December 2025



Today's Presentation



Trails in County
Parks



State Trails



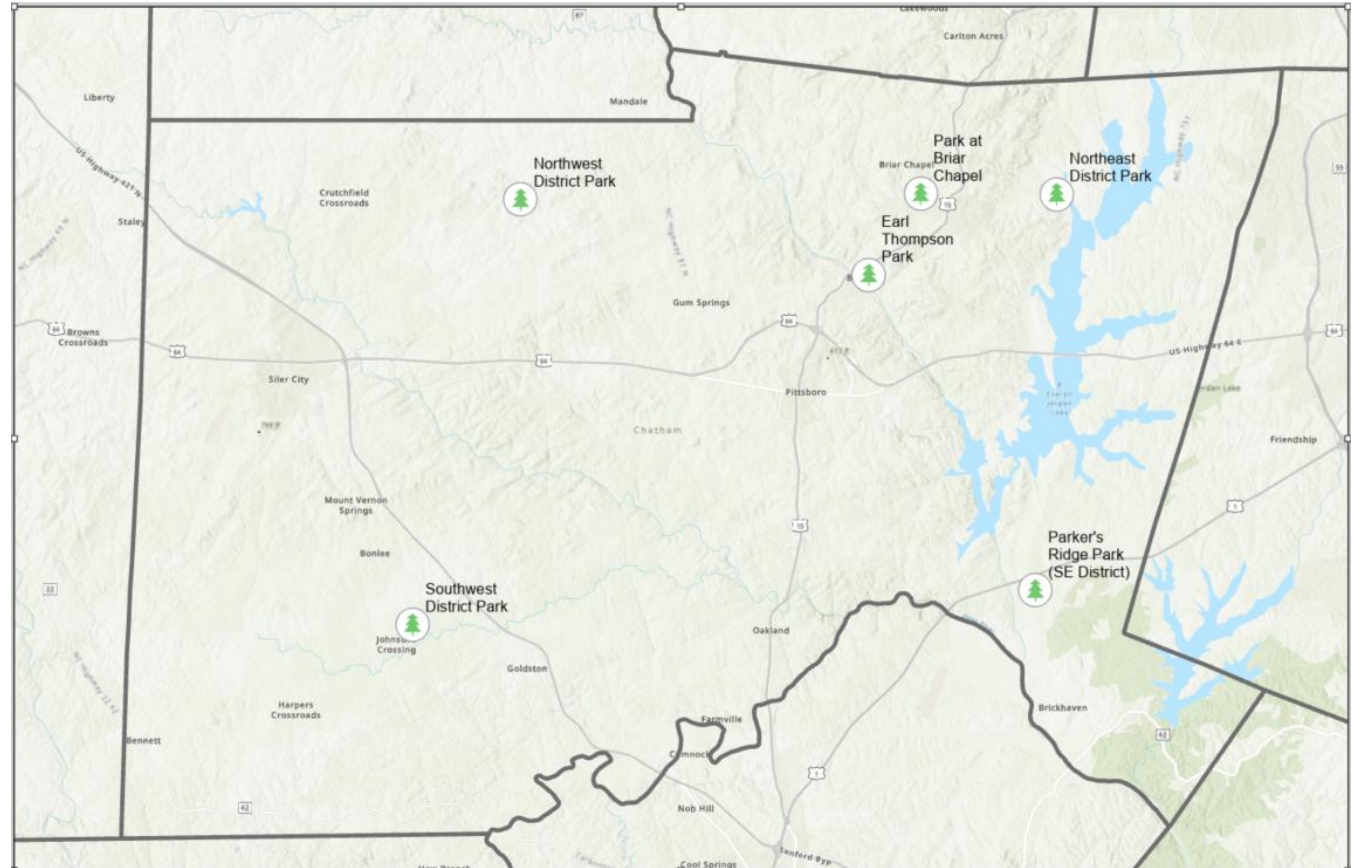
Greenways and
other county trails



Open Space (land
conservation)

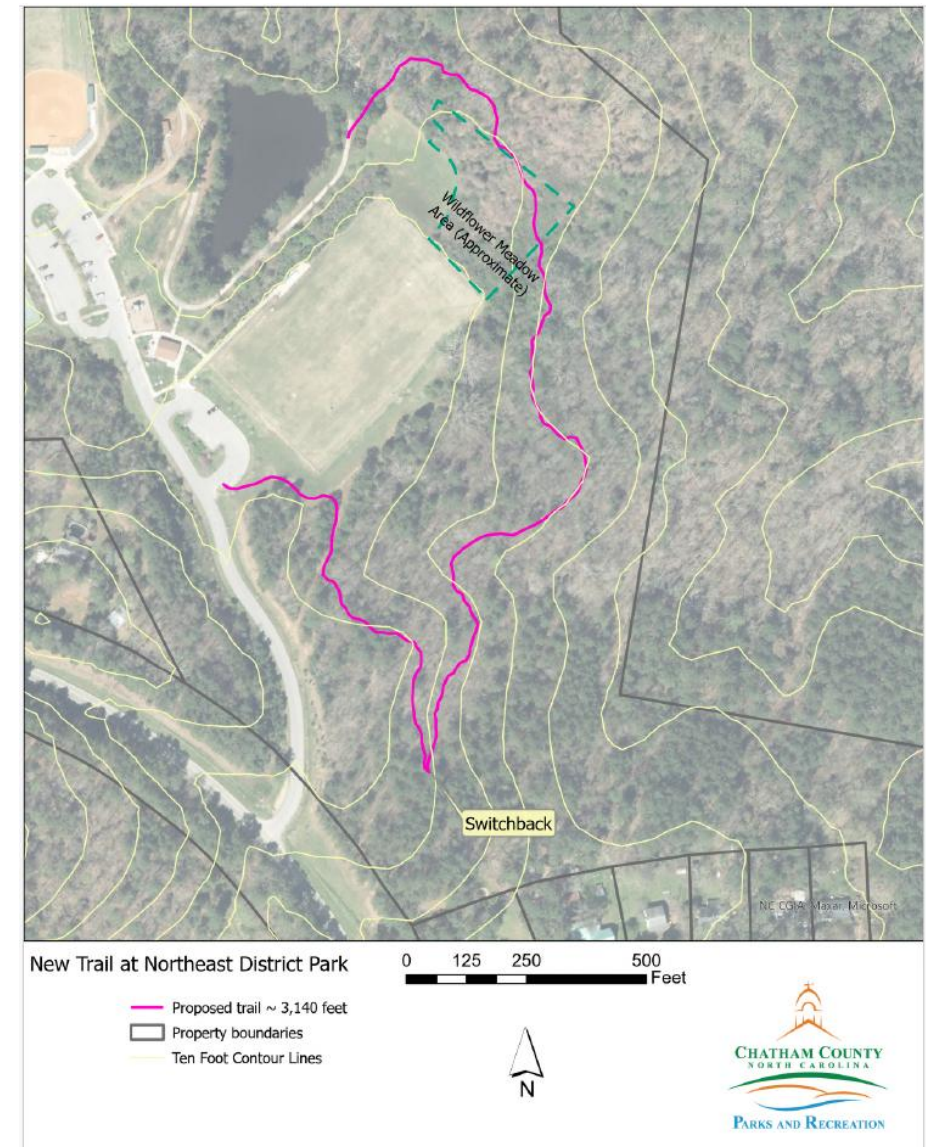
Trails in County Parks

- Expand trail networks in county owned parks.
- Natural surface focus – less impact, easier to maintain
- Projects currently under contract
- Future projects



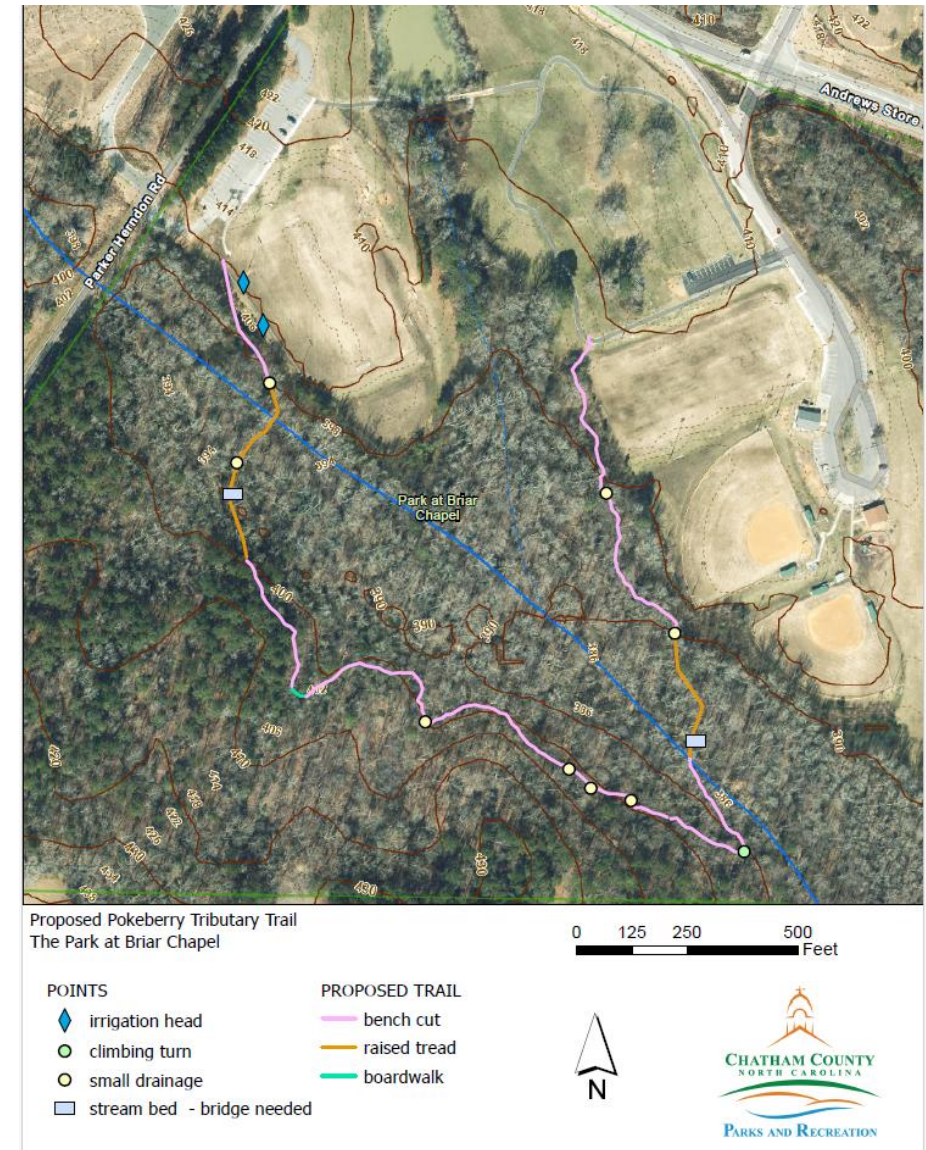
Projects Currently Under Contract

- Northeast District Park
 - George Pauly Trail made possible via donation from Haw River Assembly in his memory
 - Approximately 3,150 ft natural surface trail
 - Walking trail will meander through wildflower meadow and successional hardwood forest



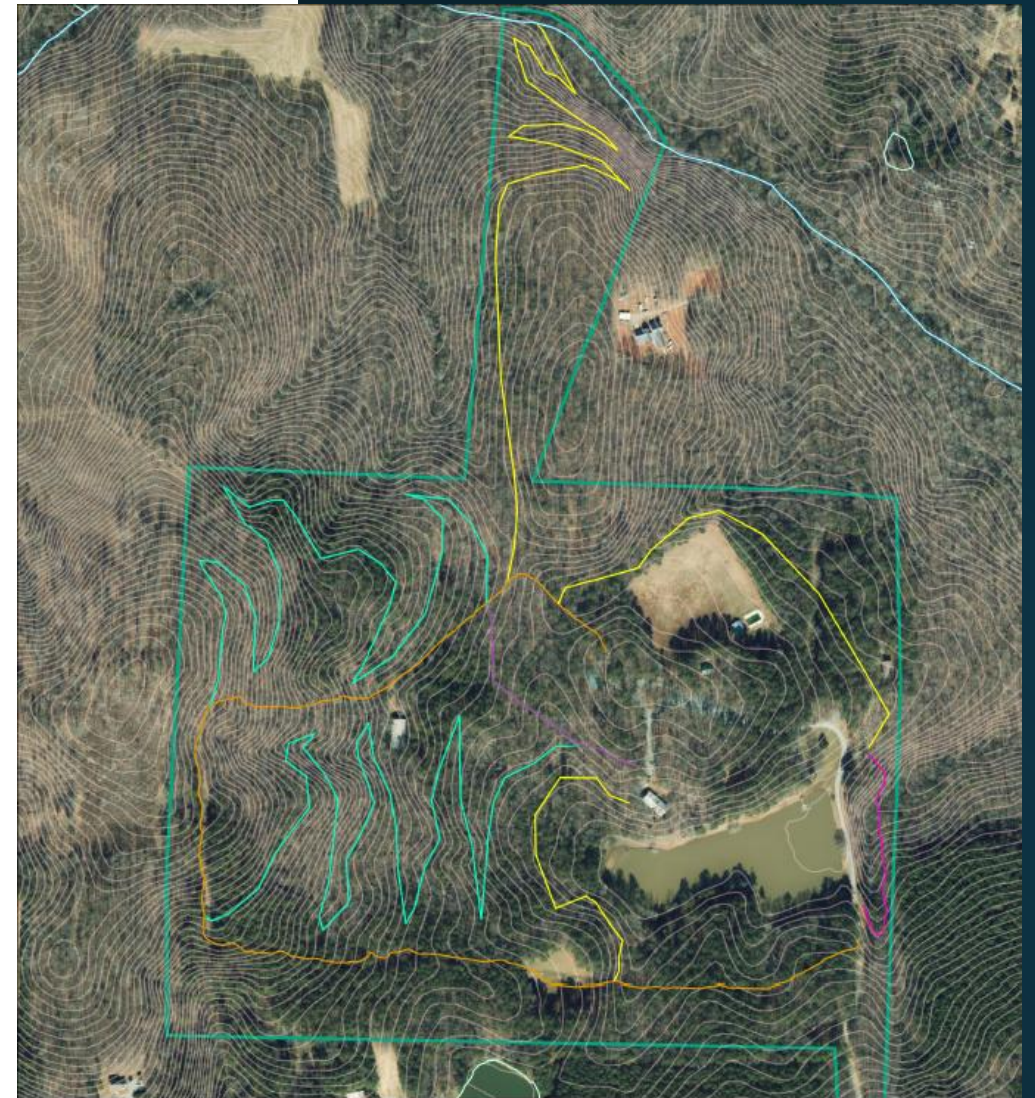
Projects Currently Under Contract

- Park at Briar Chapel
 - Pokeberry Tributary Trail
 - Approximately 3,870 ft natural surface trail.
 - Walking trail wanders through flood plain, over tributary stream and upland forest type.
 - Includes two 45' pedestrian bridges, elevated tread in floodplain, and 40' of boardwalk.



Future Trail Projects in County Parks

- Northwest District Park
 - Approximately 3.7 miles of proposed trail.
 - Dining hall trail
 - Approximately 1,100 feet in length
 - To be constructed by volunteers.
 - Stream determination in July confirmed intermittent status.
 - Stream buffer permit pending.



Northwest District Park
Proposed Trail Network

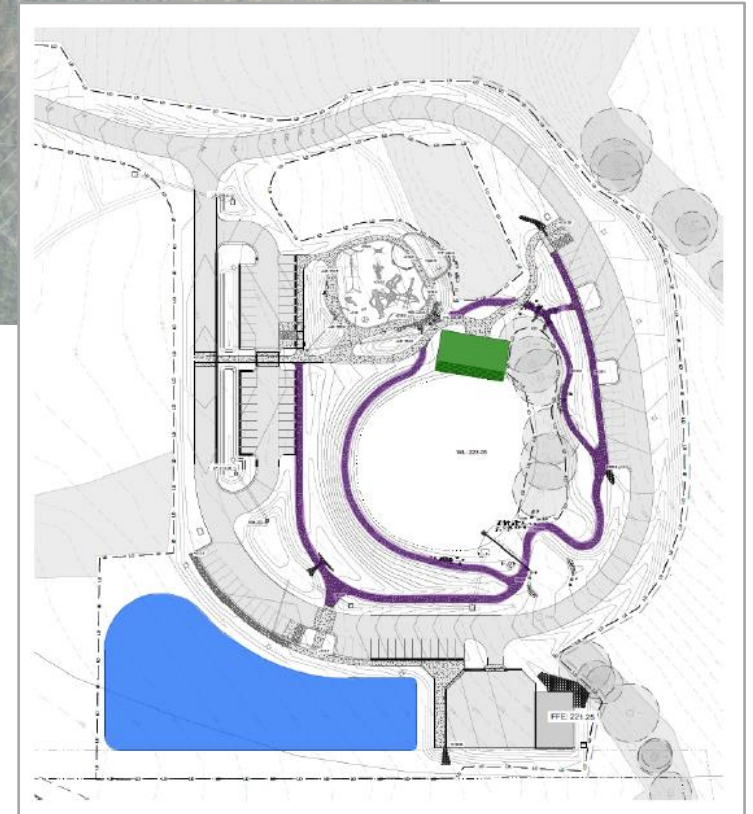
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| — Gravel Rd NW Park | — Two Foot Contour Lines |
| — Short nature trail NW Park | — Proposed multi use trails 2.4 m |
| — Scout trail NW park | — Proposed hiking trails 1.5 m |
| — NW Park Boundary | — Hydro Lines (USGS) |





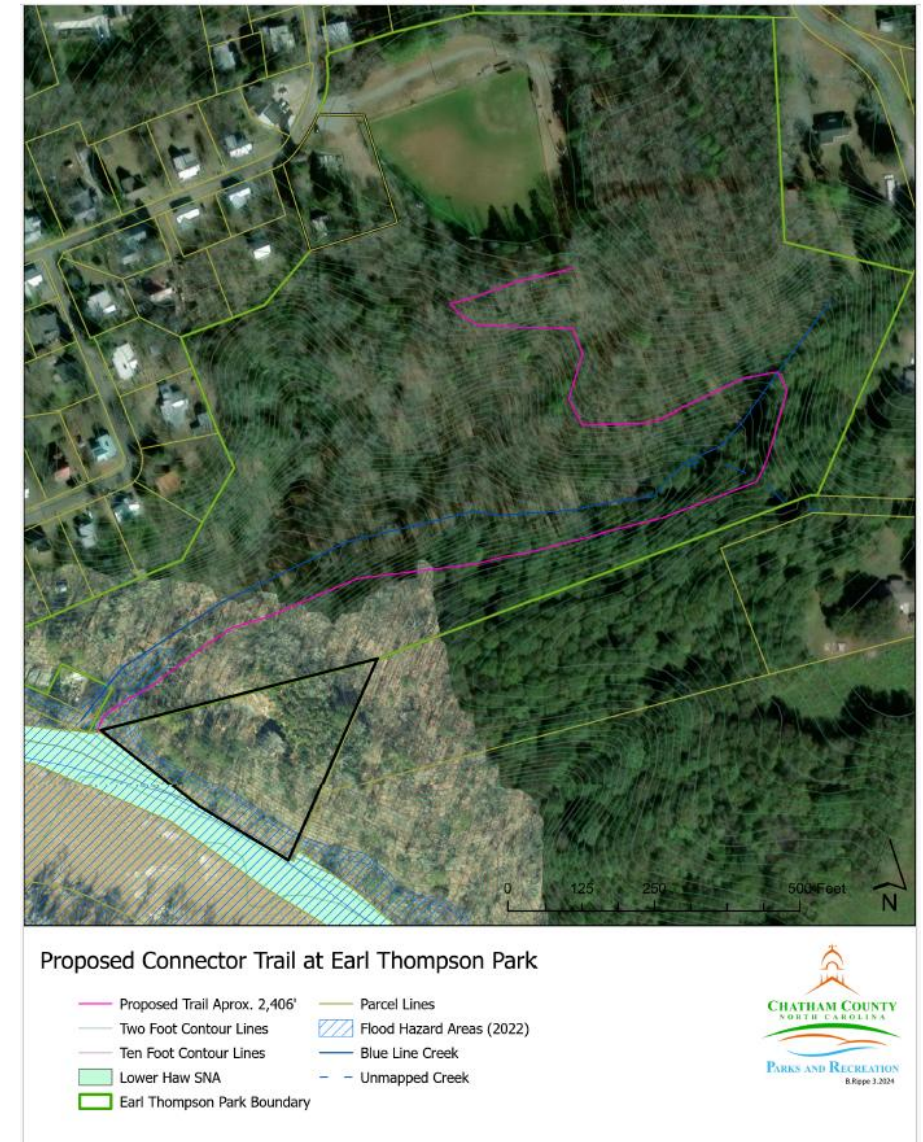
Future Trail Projects in County Parks

- Parker's Ridge Park (Southeast District Park)
 - PARTF Grant to fund Phase 1 construction of
 - Pump track
 - Small graveled walking loop around pond
 - Restroom/Shelter
 - Future planned mixed-use trails
 - Phase 2 of park development – timeline and funding unknown



Future Trail Projects in County Parks

- Earl Thompson Connector
 - Planned Haw River Connector Trail
 - Potential for connection with 2 adjoining properties
 - Approximately 2,400 ft in length
 - Volunteer constructed
 - State Parks approval under review
 - FDP required, survey or engineer stamped plan
 - Include in 2026/27 fiscal year budget



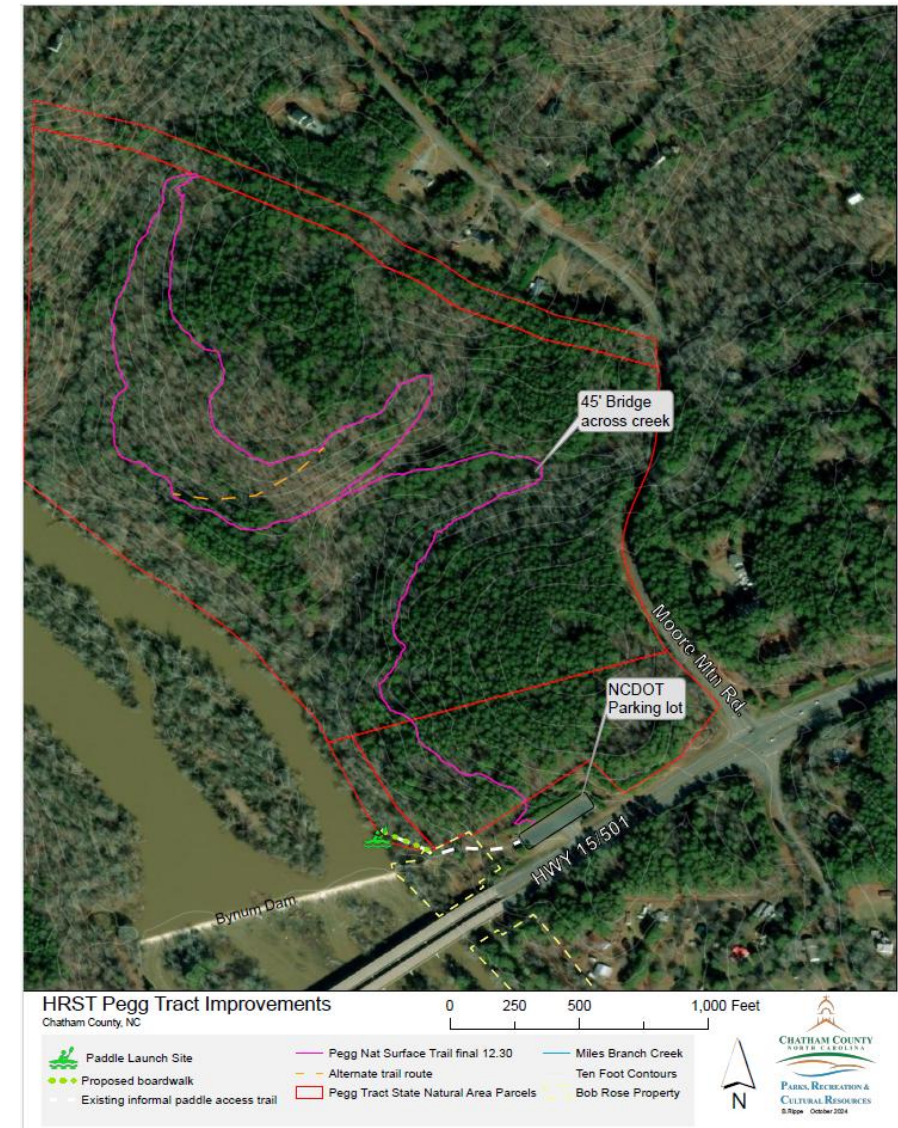


State Trails in Chatham County

- Haw River State Trail (HRST)
- Deep River State Trail (DRST)
- Equine State Trail (EST)

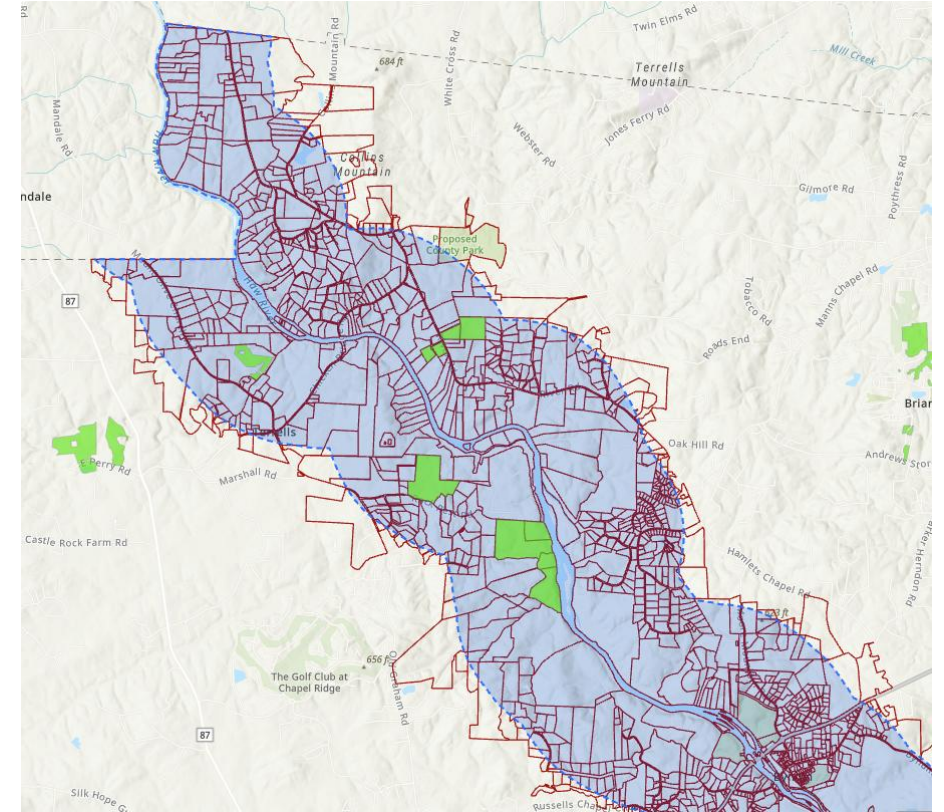
HRST Pegg Tract Improvements

- Lower Haw State Natural Area project includes multiple improvements.
 - Formalize the paddle access with steps and a low elevation boardwalk.
 - Over a mile of new natural surface trail outside of the floodplain.
- Funded via 2 grants
 - Recreational Trails Program
 - \$100,000 with 25% county match
 - Trail and steps
 - Great Trails State Program
 - \$251,294 with 1:1 match
 - RTP counts as match
- Trail is flagged, initial review with state parks, working on permitting. Go out to bid in summer



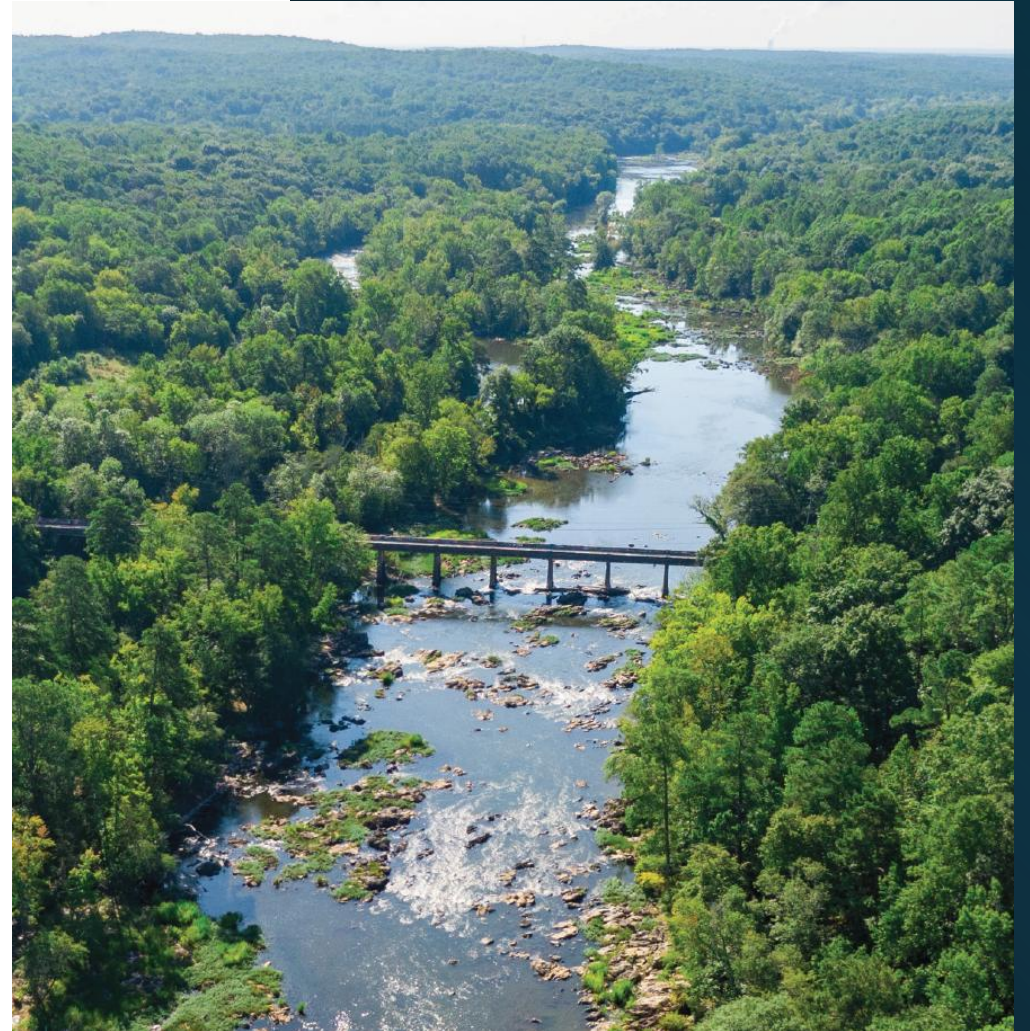
HRST Landowner Outreach

- Outreach efforts
 - Coordination with conservation partners
 - Orange Chatham Association of Realtors
 - Piedmont Forest Landowner's Summit
- Multiple opportunities being pursued – talks ongoing.



HRST Other Projects

- Designated US 64 Access, 1st paddle access designated on HRST
- Applied for designation of Bynum Mill Access in partnership with State Parks
- Connection between Earl Thompson and LHSNA
- Chicken Bridge Paddle Access
- Future LHSNA planning



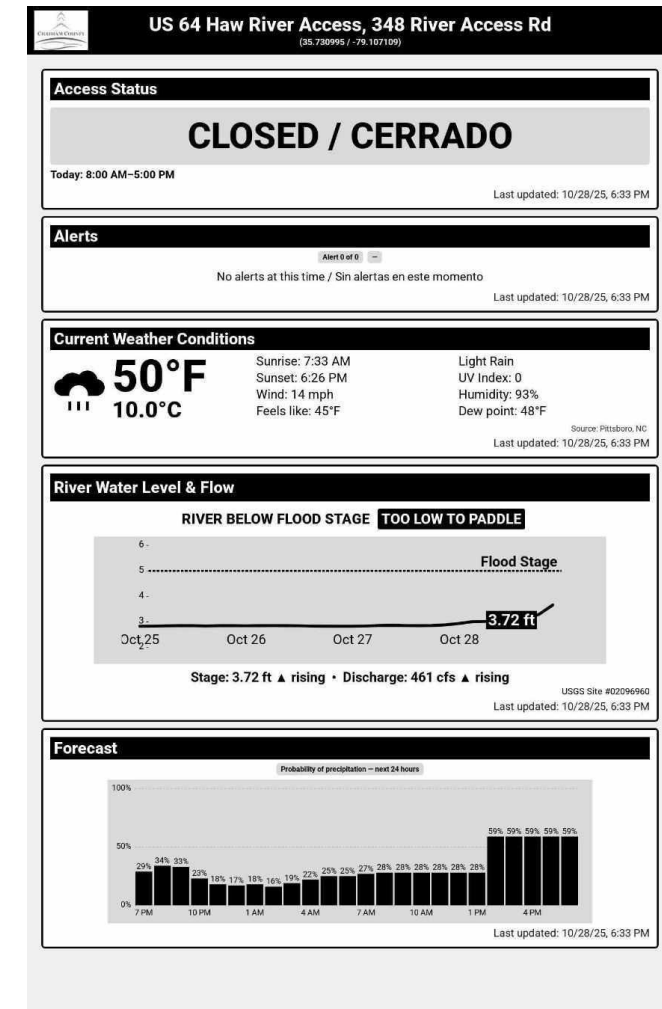
Haw River Safety Coalition:

- Bridge signage for paddler/tuber wayfinding installed on upstream and downstream sides of bridges
 - Chicken Bridge Rd
 - US 15/501
 - US 64



Haw River Safety Coalition:

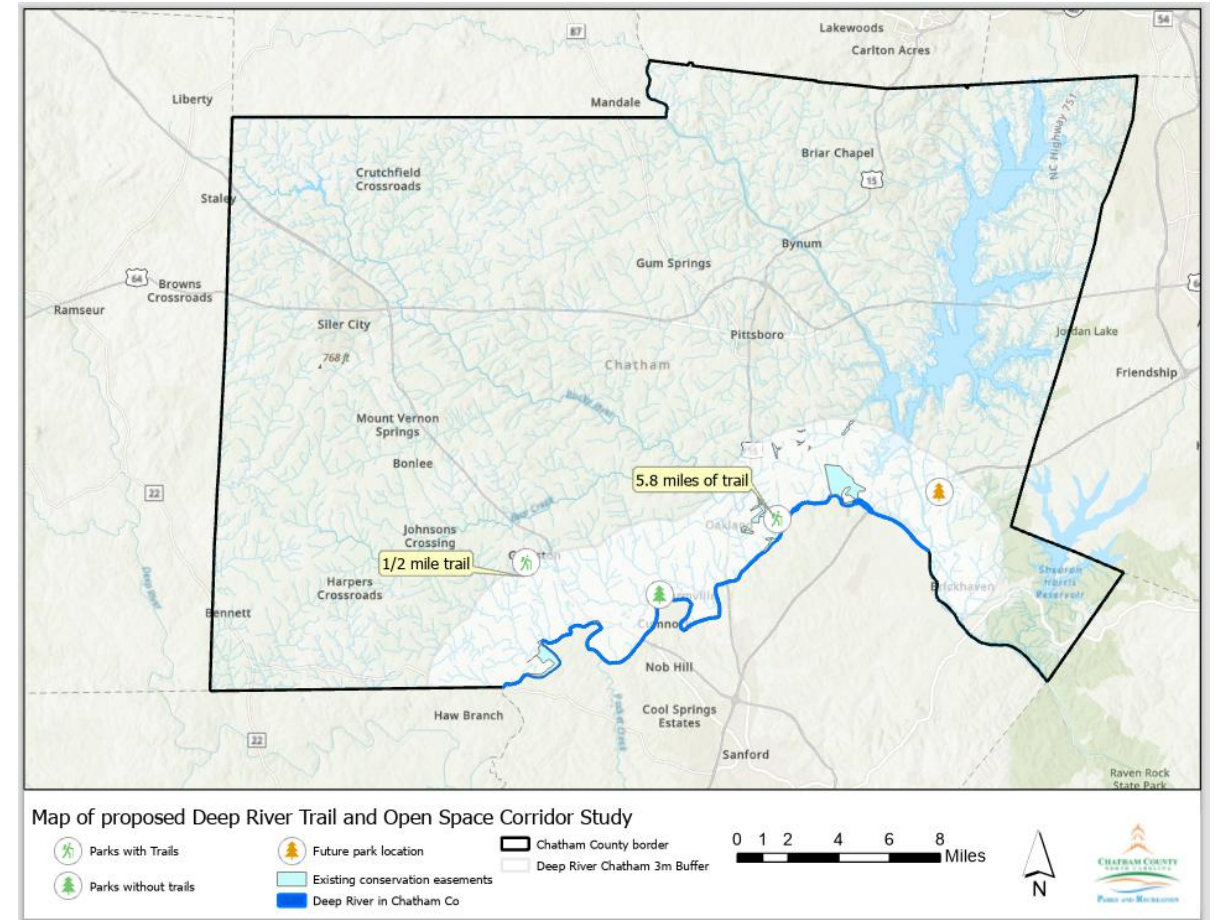
- Digital Safety Signs
- Real time safety information for river users
 - Access status
 - Weather alerts (heat, rain, temps, etc.)
 - Weather conditions & forecast
 - River Flow Rates
 - Air quality
- To be installed at US 15/501 and US 64 River Accesses
- Under final internal review and zoning approval



DRST



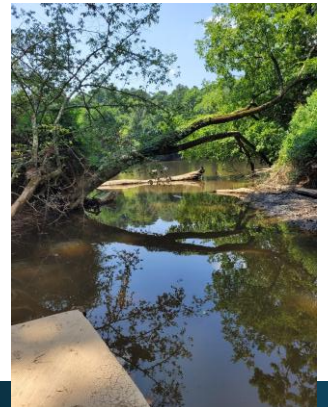
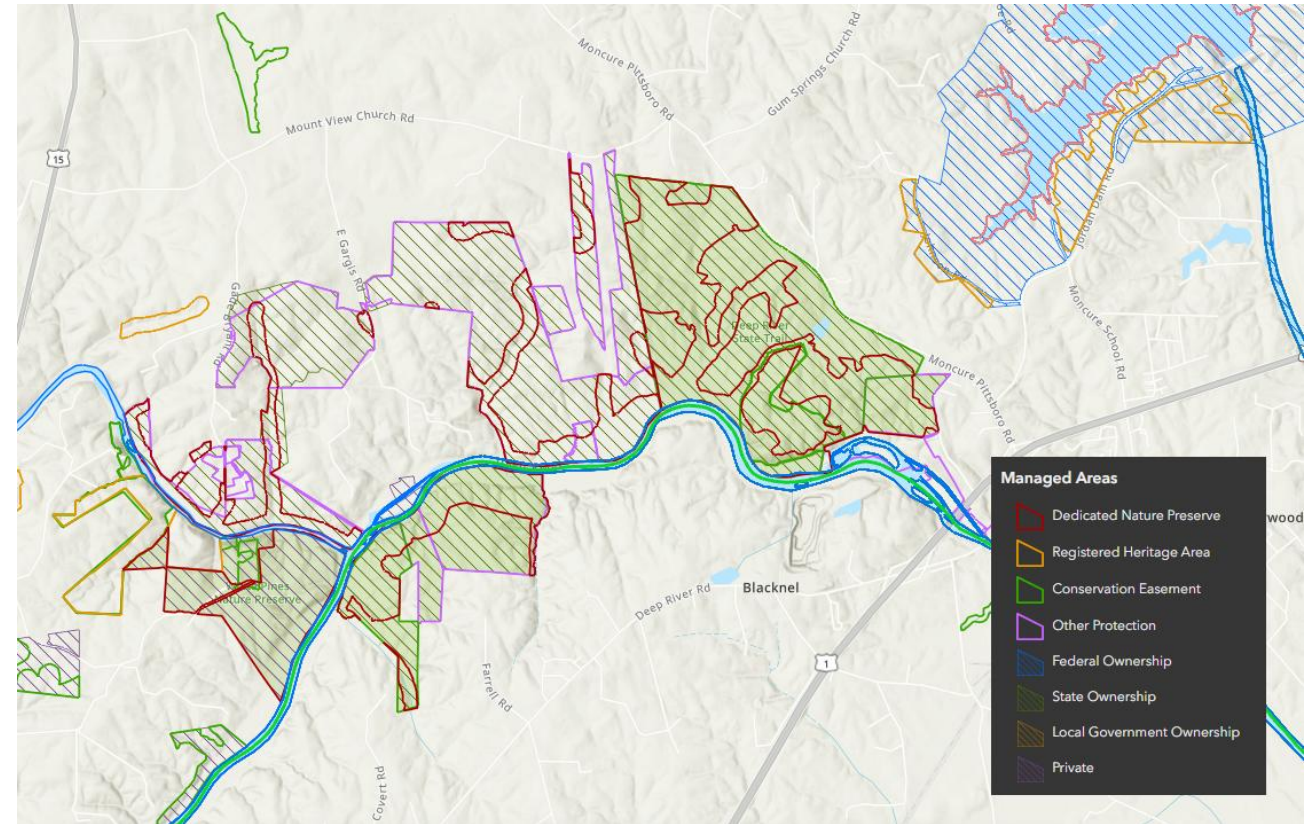
- Meet quarterly with DRST Steering Committee.
- Feasibility study funded via GTSP
 - \$75,000 award with 1:1 county match
 - Grant contract in process, developing RFQ
 - Similar in scope and process to Haw River Trail study in Chatham



DRST



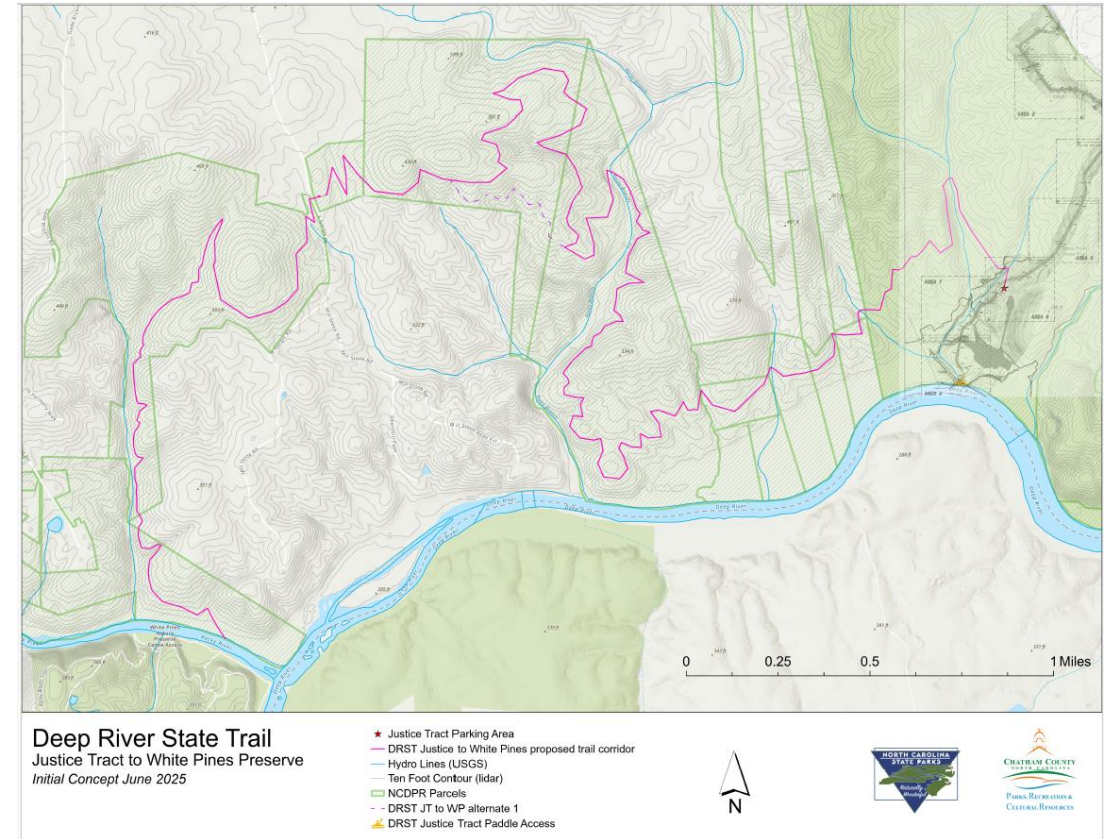
- Moncure Access – Opened in October
 - Part of over 2,400 acre contiguous conservation area along the Deep and Rocky Rivers
 - 2016 bond project includes new gravel road into property, parking with vault toilet and paved paddle ramp on mouth of tributary stream



DRST



- Justice to White Pines Trail Concept
 - Mapped over 8 miles of proposed hiking trail
 - Multiple stream crossings, including large bridge across Rocky River
 - Partner with NC State Parks for planning, environmental review
 - Likely be implemented in phases



DRST



- Planned mountain bike trails
 - TORC has concept plans and funding to design and build phase 1



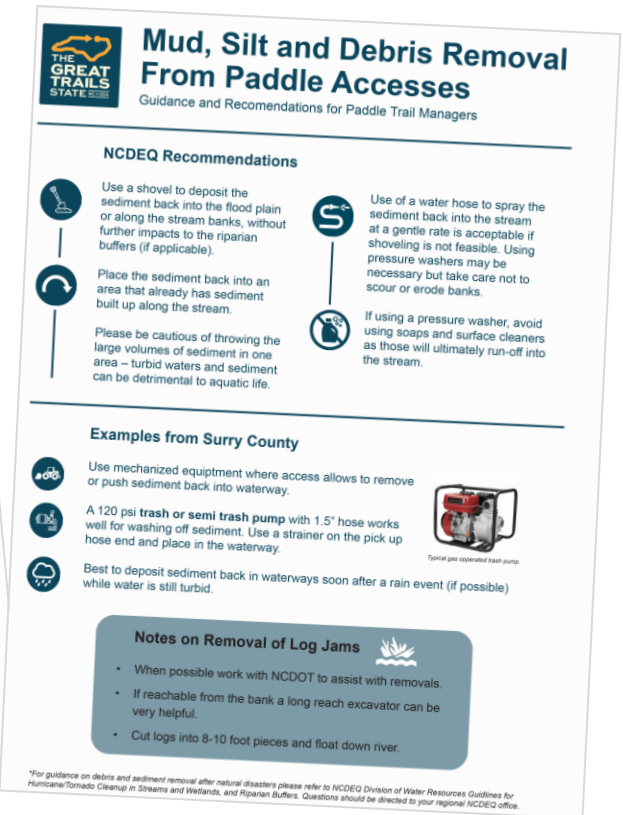
Equine State Trail

- Newly authorized state trail as of 2024
- Planning effort high level currently
- Likely co-align with DRST for large Chatham segment



Great Trails State Coalition

- Started Paddle Trail Working Group
- Address challenges and needs of paddle trail managers across the state
- Developed guidance documents
 - Bridge signage process with NCDOT
 - BMPs for cleaning paddle accesses after floods



Greenways & Other County Trails

Participate in development review meetings (TRC)

- Communicate directly with sub developers
- UDO challenges

Chatham County Parks and Recreation Master Plan

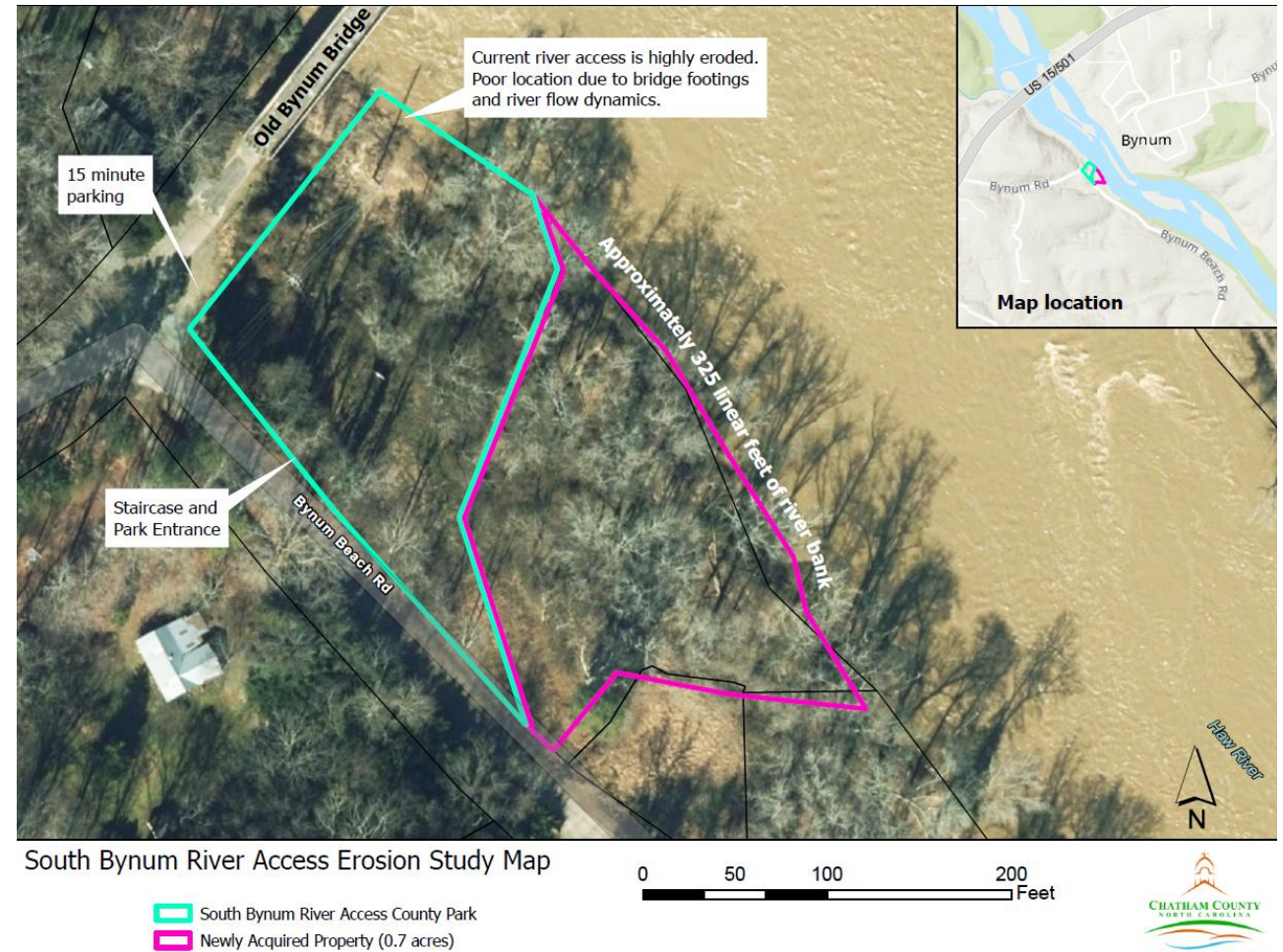
- Greenways, Side paths, and other trail routes
 - Public input needed
 - Feasibility studies needed
- Update to Master Plan will start in 2027

Partnerships

- Multimodal Transportation Study
- Coalition of stakeholders

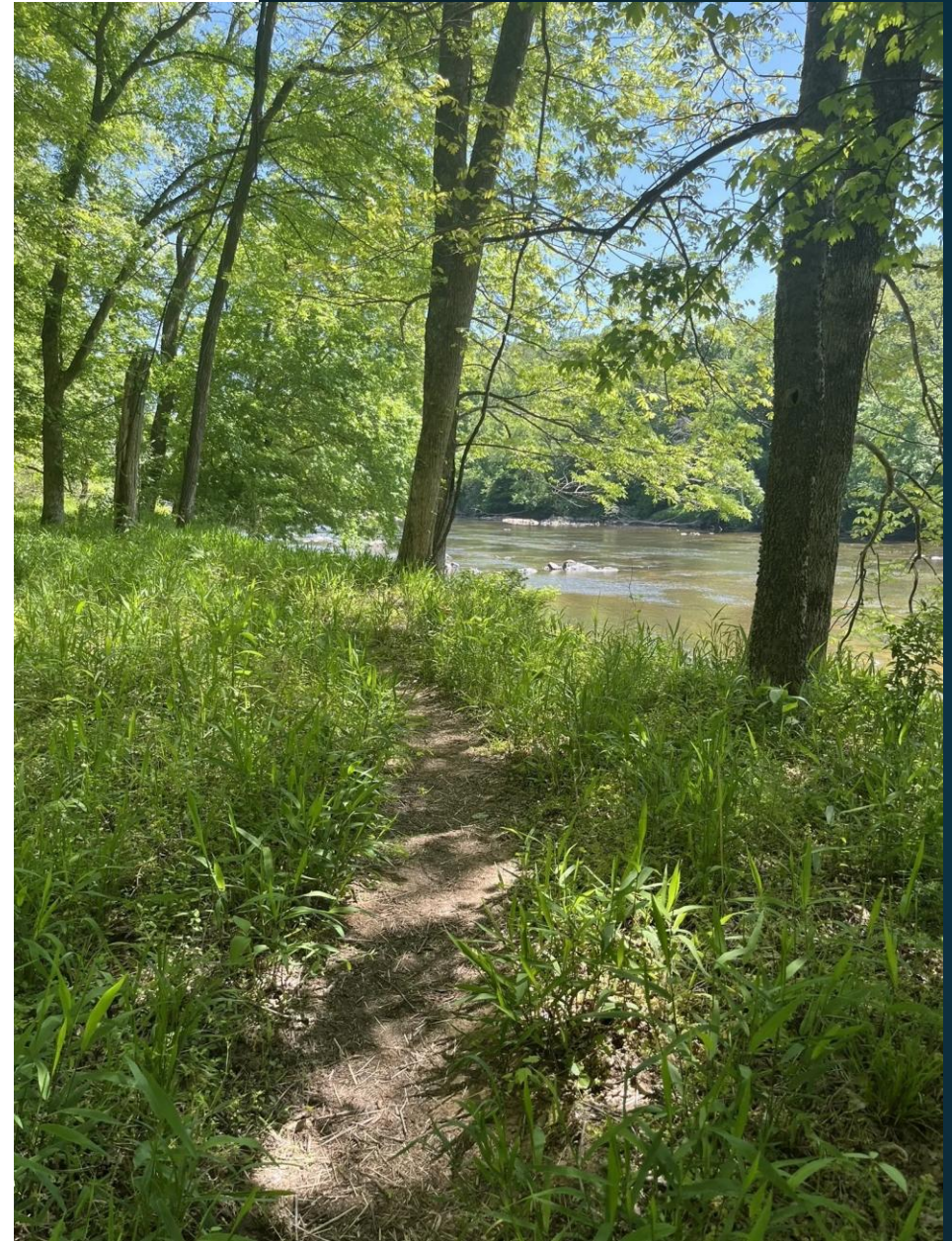
Open Space Planning

- South Bynum River Access
 - Closed on adjacent 0.7 acres in October of '24
 - Erosion Study Under Contract
 - Scope includes options for addressing river bank erosion, relocating river access, access and circulation plan
 - Deliverables includes cost estimates for design, permitting construction and long term maintenance for concept alternatives
 - Public parking for this site is still a need
 - Anticipate significant rise in use as Chatham Park builds out




Open Space Planning

- Land Conservation in Chatham County
 - CWG subcommittee for Land Conservation
 - Addressing the need for stronger partnership/ fiscal support for conservation non-profits for wildlands and non-working lands conservation
 - Exploring possible funding strategies for land conservation
 - Develop a strategic conservation plan and budget



Obstacles, Challenges & Strategies for Success



Time and
capacity

Cross agency
coordination and
partnerships

Funding

