



# YEAR OF THE TRAIL

◀ 2023 ★ NC ▶



**GREAT TRAILS STATE**  
COALITION



**BUILDING THE GREAT TRAILS STATE**

# THE GREAT TRAILS STATE COALITION



Image by Piedmont Fat Tire Society



Image by Piedmont Legacy Trails



Image by NC State Parks



Image by NCDOT

## WHO WE ARE

- A broad, diverse coalition of nonprofits, local governments, industry partners
- Committed to bringing the benefits of trails to all of North Carolina
- All trail types: Hike / Bike / Walk / Run / Paddle / Ride
- All 100 Counties
- State agency partners





# WHY TRAILS

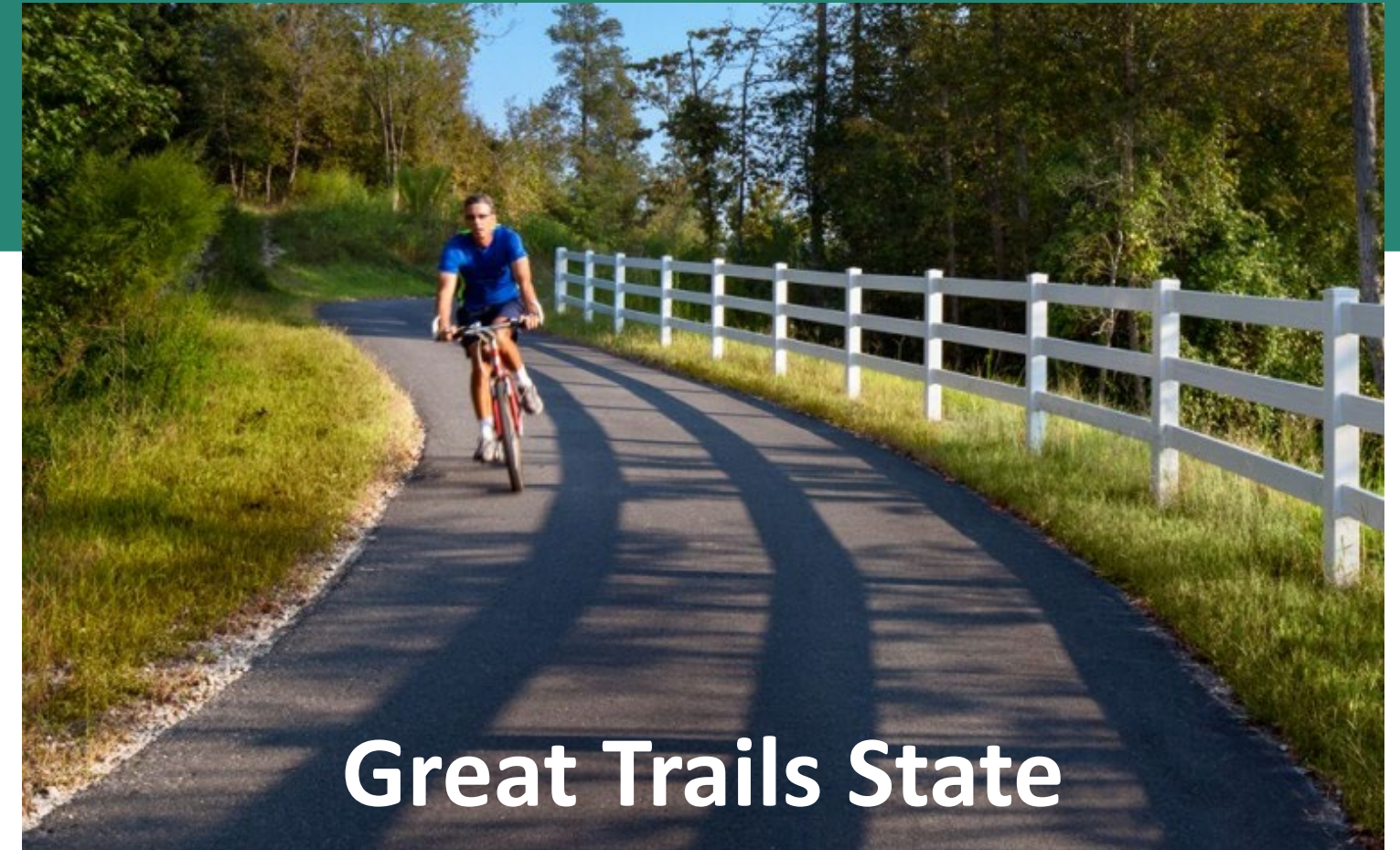
- Free to users
- Improved health and well being
- Safety from vehicular traffic
- Protect valuable natural resources
- Positive economic impact, especially for rural communities
- Backbone of NC's \$28 billion growing outdoor recreation economy



# NORTH CAROLINA IS THE GREAT TRAILS STATE



- ✓ Vision
- ✓ Community Demand
- ✓ State Leadership
- ✓ Commitment
- ✓ Funding



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- State Leadership
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**INDUSTRY**



**NON-PROFITS**



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**



**PARTNERS**

# 29 NON PROFIT MEMBERS



THE  
CONSERVATION FUND



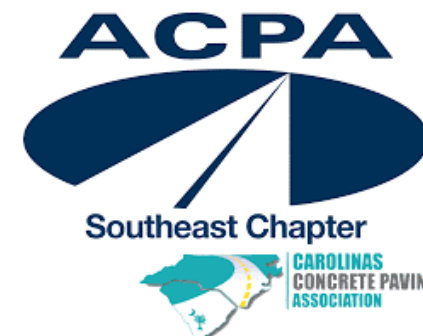
AARP



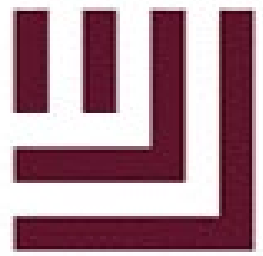
FOOTHILLS  
CONSERVANCY  
OF NORTH CAROLINA



RIVERLINK



# 15 INDUSTRY PARTNERS



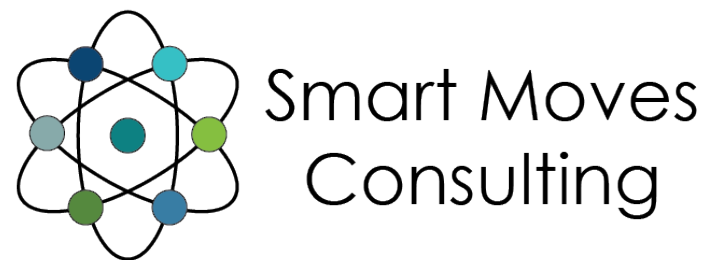
MCADAMS



**BACKWOODS  
BRIDGES**



**alta**



**TOOLE  
DESIGN**



# AGENCY PARTNERS



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
PARTNERSHIP of  
NORTH CAROLINA



NC DEPARTMENT  
OF NATURAL AND  
CULTURAL RESOURCES

OUTDOOR **nc**<sup>SM</sup>

**nc**  
NORTH CAROLINA



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

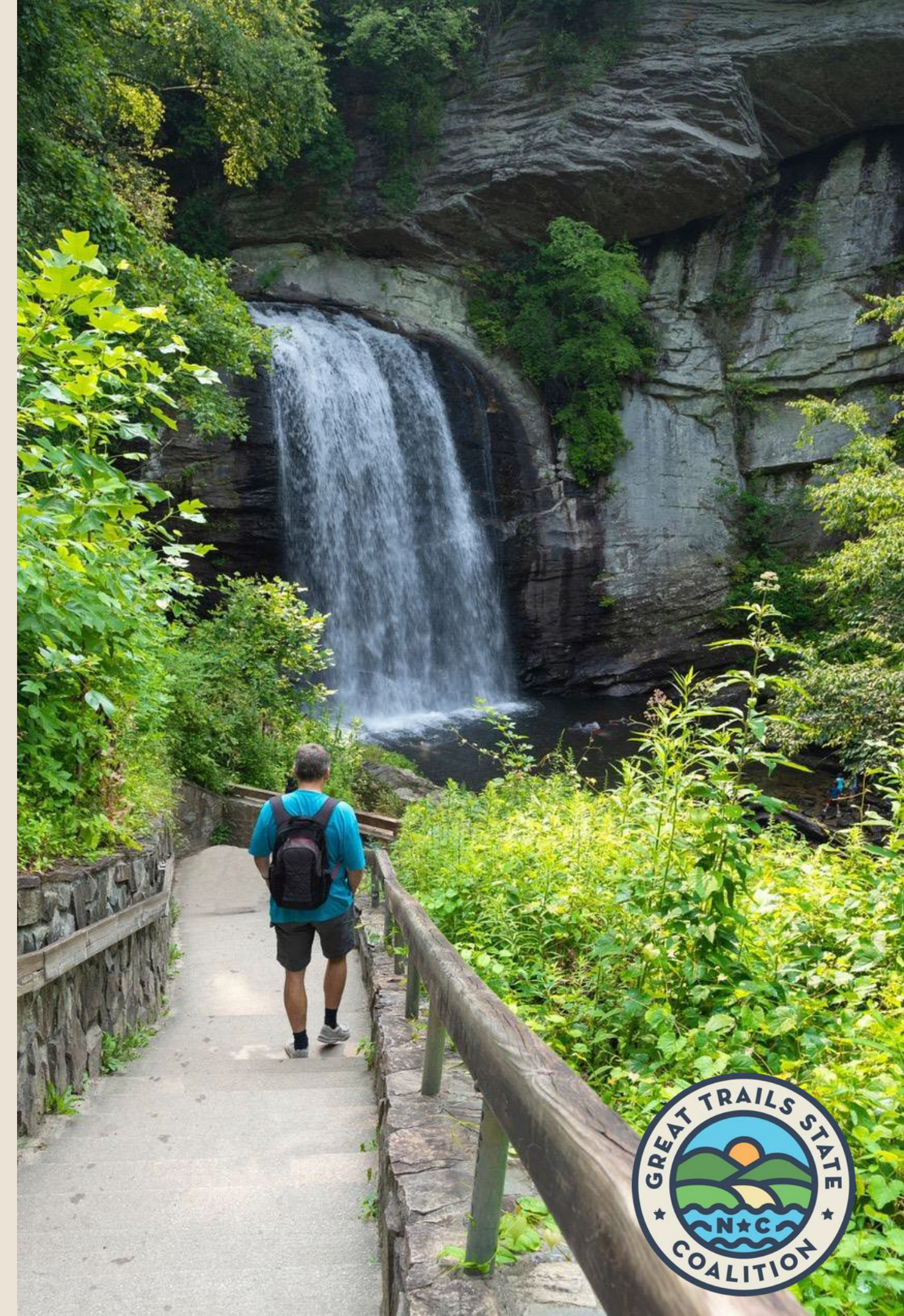


**Goal: Build the Cities, Towns and Counties for Trails Working Group**

# Cities, Towns and Counties for Trails

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- **Who's Invited to Join:**
  - Elected Officials
  - Elected Official Organizations
  - Government Staff
  - Water Districts
  - Travel & Tourism Authorities
  - MPOs
  - RPOs
  - COGS
- **Goals:**
  - Educate local governments about benefits of trails
  - Listen to their needs for getting trail on the ground
  - Coordinate legislative messages
- Meet regularly, with quarterly open briefings



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GREAT TRAILS STATE COALITION

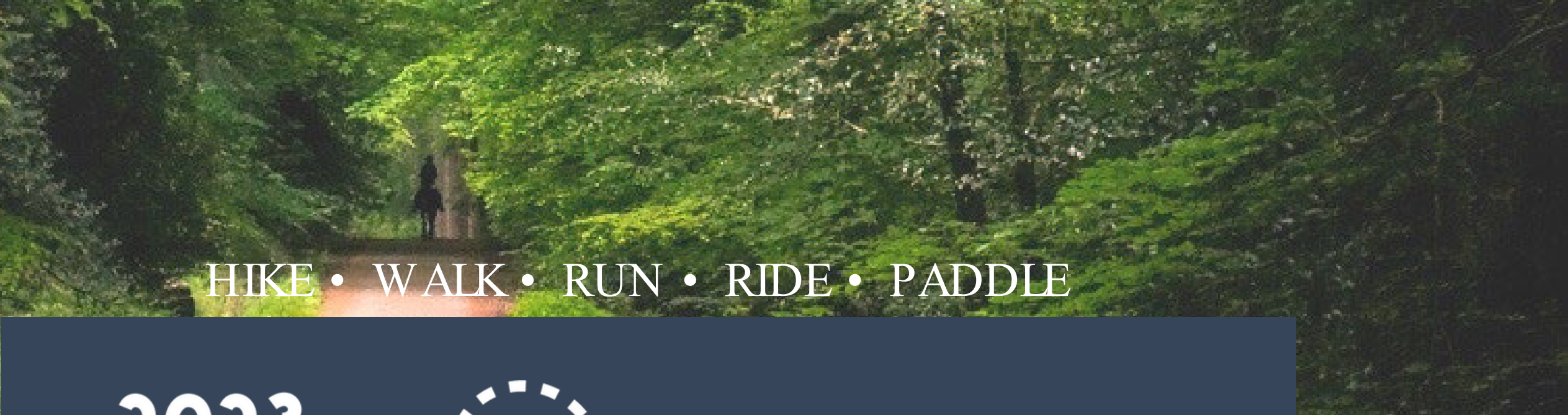
## Successes in 2021 NC General Assembly's Long Session:

- ✓ \$29.15 million Complete the Trails Fund for authorized State Trails (non-State Trails not eligible)
- ✓ Designation of 2023 as the Year of the Trail

## Goals for 2023 NC General Assembly's Long Session:

- ✓ Establish a Great Trails State Fund for all types of trails, not just State Trails
- ✓ Establish recurring funding for State Trail nonprofits





HIKE • WALK • RUN • RIDE • PADDLE

# 2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL



FROM THE EVERYDAY TO THE EPIC



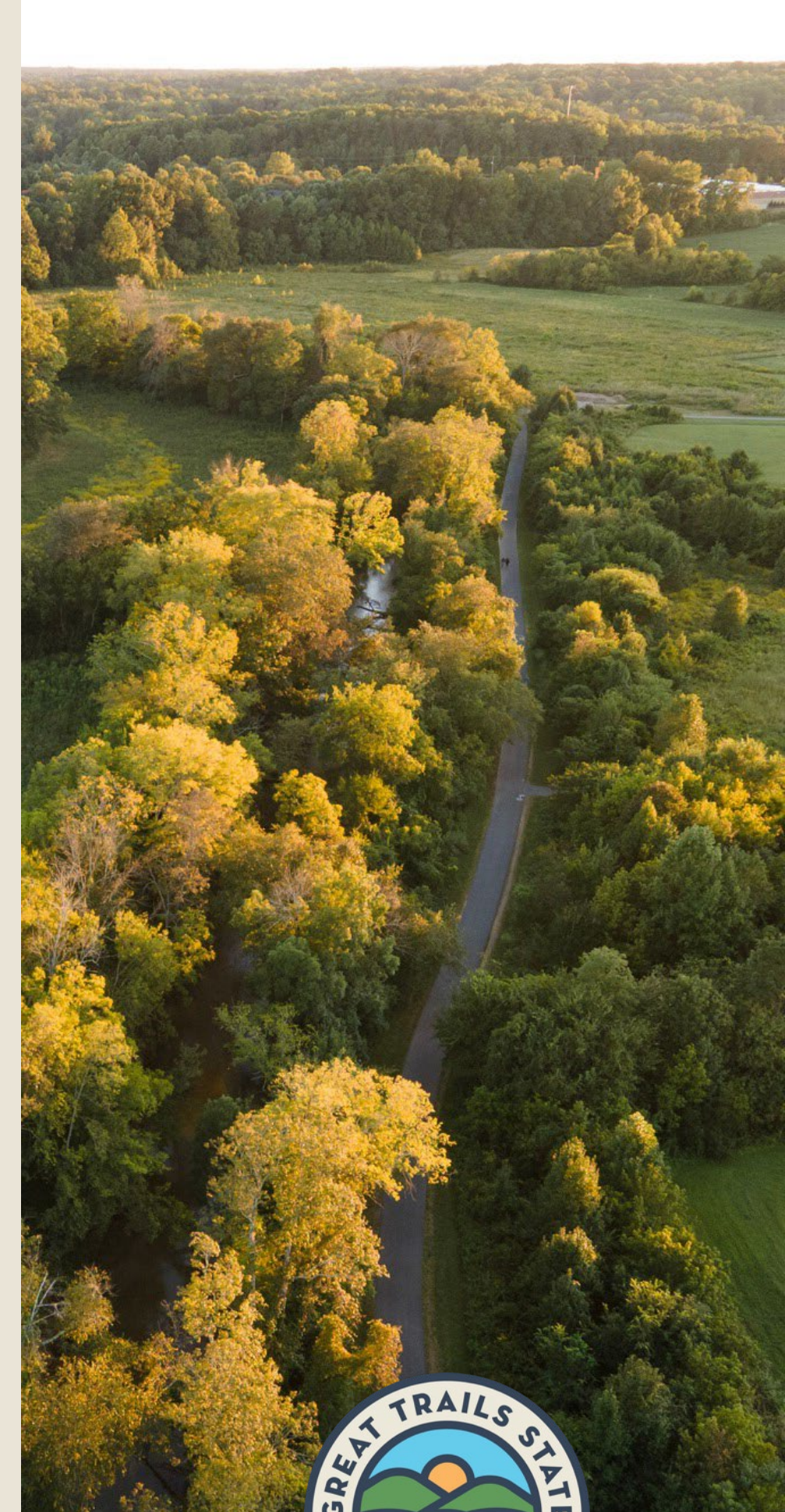


# YEAR OF THE TRAIL IS BIG NEWS FOR NORTH CAROLINA!

## Highlights:

- Inspire people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to try trails
- Create new trail users
- Boost outdoor recreation tourism across the state
- Promote safe and responsible use of trails

**The Year of the Trail celebrates trails all  
across North Carolina!**



# THE CAMPAIGN

- Events in all 100 counties
- Focus on diversity and inclusion
- Website/Social media
- Local tool kits for communities with Year of the Trail assets
- Advertising - outdoor, radio, print media
- Call for Artists program
- Merchandise
- PBS NC Partnership – 30-minute documentary titled “Ten to Try” and 10 short trail profiles
- Speaking at conferences
- Measurement and reporting



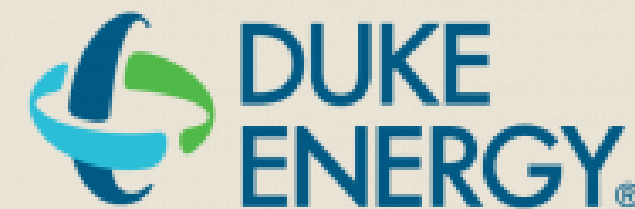
# 2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL

# SPONSORS



## SECU Foundation

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE®



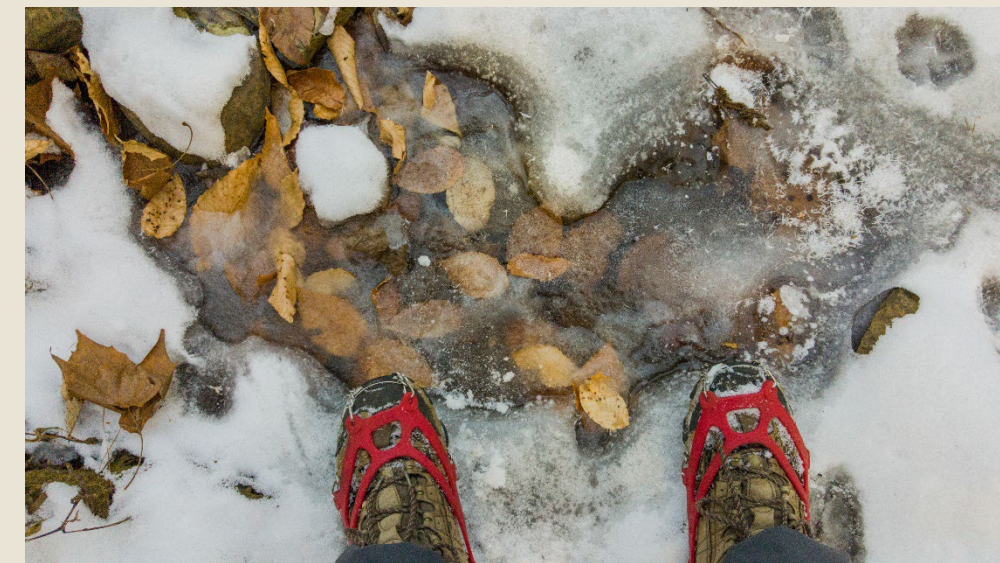
# What Can Chatham County Do?



- Join the Great Trails State Coalition.
- Participate in the Cities, Towns and Counties Working Group.
- Include trails in upcoming Legislative Breakfast agenda.
- Hold Year of the Trail events.
- Complete and implement the Haw River trail corridor feasibility study.
- Provide funding for trails.
- Acquire land and easements for trails.
- Build more trails!



Photos by Patrick Mueller







# Friends of Lower Haw Invites Commissioners to Take a Hike With Us!

## Learn About:

- How lack of sustainably designed trails and paddle access sites are degrading natural resources along the Haw River.
- How Haw River needs active (not passive) management of recreational use.
- How public access to the Haw River can be improved.
- How creating a regional Haw River Trail benefits Chatham County.
- How funding for trails invests in our community.



Photos by Gary Simpson





# GET IN TOUCH

[www.greattrailsnc.com](http://www.greattrailsnc.com)

[www.greattrailsstatecoalition.org](http://www.greattrailsstatecoalition.org)

## EMAIL ADDRESS

[info@greattrailsnc.com](mailto:info@greattrailsnc.com)





# GET IN TOUCH

Gretchen Smith

Friends of Lower Haw River State Natural Area

[www.lowerhaw.org](http://www.lowerhaw.org)

[lowerhawfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lowerhawfriends@gmail.com)



# Great Trails State Coalition

- **2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL PROCLAMATION** signed by BOC at the December 19, 2022 meeting.
- **Parks and Recreation Department pledged to join the Great Trails State Coalition Steering Committee level for FY24.**



# Year of the Trail Events Hosted by Parks and Recreation Department

- **Community Engagement:**
  - Monthly social media posts engaging the county about Year of the Trail resources and opportunities.
  - Press Release in January announcing Year of the Trail 2023.
- **Events:**
  - Incorporate Year of the Trail into pre-existing events
    - Environmental themed event in June
    - Chatham County Challenge in October



# New Trails and Open Space Planner

- **Ben Rippe is the new Trails and Open Space Planner and he will start on January 17.**
- **Ben comes to us from NC State Parks where he has been the Piedmont Region Trail Specialist. Ben has extensive experience in parks, conservation, and recreation planning. Ben has an undergraduate degree in Natural Resource Management with a focus in sustainable agriculture, master's degree in Ecological Design with a focus in sustainable landscape design and planning, and certifications in Sustainable Trail Design and Layout and Mechanized Trail Building.**



# Trail Activities

- **Haw River Trail Feasibility Study**
  - **Hired Alta Planning + Design to conduct the Haw River Trail feasibility study.**
- **Deep River Trail Steering Committee**
  - **Randolph County has had a group coordinating trail work on the Deep River State Trail (DRST) since 2015. Once Piedmont Land Conservancy agreed to be the DRST partner organization, the group is now organized as the DRST Steering Committee.**
  - **Smith Raynor, NC State Parks/State Trails Planner who has assisted the municipalities constructing trails, asked that the group be expanded to include representatives from all five counties along the 125 miles of the DRST. That way the effort to develop a 3 to 5 Year Plan for the DRST can be coordinated among the five counties to build both trails and paddleways along the Deep River. One trail could be from White Pines Nature Preserve to the unincorporated community Moncure. This trail would be on Chatham County side of the Deep River.**
  - **Attending DRST meetings in Randolph County every other month.**





# GET IN TOUCH

Chatham County Parks and Recreation

919-545-8555

[recreation@chathamcountync.gov](mailto:recreation@chathamcountync.gov)

