



YEAR OF THE TRAIL

◀ 2023 ★ NC ▶



**GREAT
TRAILS
STATE
COALITION**

BUILDING THE GREAT TRAILS STATE





HIKE • WALK • RUN • RIDE • PADDLE

The Year of the Trail celebrates trails across North Carolina.



[Why is 2023 "Year of the Trail" in North Carolina? - YouTube](#)
[North Carolina Year of the Trail on Vimeo](#)



GOALS

- **Inspire people** of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to try trails
- **Demonstrate the importance of trails** to elected officials
- **Boost outdoor recreation tourism** across the state
- **Promote safe and responsible** use of trails, aligning with Outdoor NC Leave No Trace principles.
- **Advance diversity & inclusion** on trails.



THE CAMPAIGN

- Engagement and events in all 100 counties
- Website/Social media
- Local **toolkits** 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
- Presenting at **conferences**
- **Measurement** and reporting





MTA
 McDowell Trails Association

Year of the Trail Blend

A MEDIUM BODY WITH NU...
 NOTES FINISHING P...

INGENIOUS COFFEE
 ROASTERS

YEAR OF THE TRAIL

WAKE COUNTY



DISCOVER BURKE TRAILS DAY

Exhibitors Kids Activities Food Trucks

Hosted by Deborah Holt Noel from PBS- North Carolina Weekend

COMMA (AUDITORIUM) MARCH 11
 College St, Morganton, NC 28655 12PM-

Featured Guest Speakers



2023: YEAR OF THE TRAIL IN NORTH CAROLINA





James McInvale



Autumn Cobeland



Year of the Trail Tools & Assets



- Website: [Greattrailsnc.com](https://greattrailsnc.com)
- E-Newsletter
- Merchandise
- Social Media: [@greattrailsnc](https://www.instagram.com/greattrailsnc)
 - Instagram
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - TikTok (coming soon!)
- Community Toolkit

Digital Reach:
1,000,000+

Video Views:
200,000+

Social:
10,000+

Newsletter:
5,000+

*Statistics as of January 24th. Will be updated periodically.

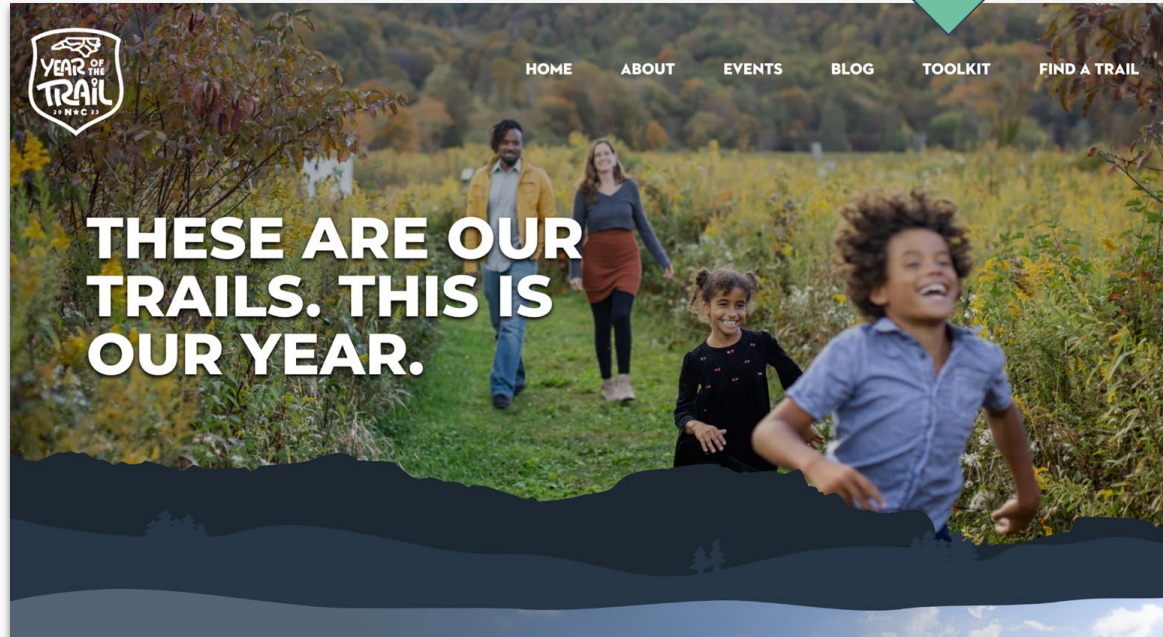
Year of the Trail Website



<https://greattrailsnc.com/>

Where can I find the Community Toolkit?

- Web-Based at www.greattrailsnc.com
- Downloadable PDF
- Downloadable Resources



TOOL KITS



1. Introductory Information

- YOTT Brochure
- Logos, Assets & Brand Usage Guide
- Press release template

2. All About Trails

- What makes a good trail
- Trail Asset Analysis Worksheet

3. Trail User Guides

- Trail Day Planning Checklist
- Leave No Trace (Outdoor NC)

4. How to Host a YOTT Event

- Templates - Event Planning, Volunteer Recognition, Banners, Event Flier, Event Evaluation

5. Community Engagement Strategies

- Finished Social Media Assets - Monthly Content Calendars, Canva Templates, Trail Awareness Flier, Trail story ideas

6. Trail Support beyond 2023

- *How to stay engaged with trails in NC and your community and how to become part of the Great Trails State Coalition.*

Jan: New Year, New Trails

Inspiration: New Years, resolutions

Potential Focus: finding trails, trail orgs, trail events, trail initiatives, setting goals for the community trails, getting on trail

Feb: Make a Date with a Trail

Inspiration: Valentine's Day

Potential Focus: bring new folks to trail, trail events, volunteer on trails, getting on trail

Mar: Spring into Action

Inspiration: First day of spring

Potential Focus: getting active, health, joining a trail initiative, connecting with legislator, getting on trail

Apr: Celebrate NC Trails

Inspiration: Earth Day/Month

Potential Focus: Volunteer events, celebrating volunteers, learning about environmental impacts of trails, getting on trail

May: Explore NC Trails

Inspiration: NC Trails Act ratified 50th anniversary (22nd)

Potential Focus: learn trails history & current orgs supporting trail development & maintenance, exploring new trails, visioning trail opportunities, getting on trail

Jun: Out(doors) and About this Summer

Inspiration: Summer

Potential Focus: safety, trail day events, planning summer outings, getting on trails

Jul: Celebrate NC Parks

Inspiration: Nat'l Parks & Rec Month may adopt their theme

Potential Focus: promoting trails maintained by local, state, national parks, recreation options on trails, learning about parks in the area, getting on trails

Aug: Wellness & Trails

Inspiration: Nat'l Wellness Month

Potential Focus: trails benefits to health, trails benefits to environment, getting on trails, safety on trails

Sep: Achieve a Trail Goal

Inspiration: back to school

Potential Focus: personal or community goal campaigns, trail advocacy, getting on trails

Oct: Trail Innovators: Past & Present

Inspiration: Grandma Gatewood's birthday (25)

Potential Focus: history of NC trails, learning supporters of trail initiatives in the area, connecting with legislator, becoming a trail innovator, getting on trails

Nov: Show Gratitude for NC Trails

Inspiration: Thanksgiving

Potential Focus: trail events, clean ups, trail advocacy, getting on trails

Dec: Year in Review & Future Aspirations

Inspiration: end of year, end of YOTT

Potential Focus: celebrate success of trail events, trail advocacy, goal setting for the future

NC Year of the Trail Honorary Committee



- Representative Hugh Blackwell, *Burke County*
 - Representative Larry Strickland, *Harnett and Johnston Counties*
 - Representative Dean Arp, *Union County*
 - Former Representative Pat Hurley, *Randolph County*
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- Lori Bush, *Mayor Pro Tem, Cary; retired Cisco Systems; East Coast Greenway Alliance Board*
 - Alice Butler, *Mayor, Town of Roseboro*
 - Jennifer Pharr Davis, *internationally recognized adventurer, speaker, author, and hiker*
 - Kate Dixon, *retired Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail*
 - Chuck Flink, *President, Greenways, Inc. one of the nation's leading greenway planners*
 - Bill Flournoy, *Founder of Triangle Greenway Council*
 - Sig Hutchinson, *Chair, Wake County Board of County Commissioners*
 - Kristian Jackson, *Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Recreation Management, Appalachian State University*
 - Howard Lee, *former Mayor Chapel Hill; former Sec. of NC Dept. of Nat. Resources & Comm. Dev.*
 - Chuck Neely, *former NC Representative; retired attorney*
 - Chuck McGrady, *former NC Representative; NC DOT Board of Directors*
 - Pat McCrory, *former NC Governor*
 - Dwayne Patterson, *Director, NC State Parks*
 - Mitchell Silver, *former NYC Parks Commissioner; former Director of Planning Raleigh; Principal, McAdams*
 - Stephanie Swepson-Twitty, *President/CEO Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation*

NC Year of the Trail Planning Committee



- Sandi Bailey, *Town of Cary*
- Amanda Baker, *Visit NC*
- Bret Baronak, *Carolina Thread Trail*
- Betsy Brown, *Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail*
- Joseph Furstenberg, *NC DOT*
- Sue Gray, *NC Horse Council*
- Brianna Haferman, *Piedmont Land Conservancy*
- Beth Heile, *Friends of Fonta Flora State Trail*
- Brent Laurenz, *Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail*
- Palmer McIntyre, *Piedmont Land Conservancy*
- Andrew Meeker, *East Coast Greenway Alliance*
- Michael Meredith, *Conservation Corps NC*
- Steve Pierce, *McDowell Trails Association*
- MaryJoan Pugh, *Randolph County Trails*
- Smith Raynor, *NC State Parks*
- Ann Savage, *NCSU Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management*
- Charlynnne Smith, *Recreation Resource Services*
- Jason Taylor, *Elkin Valley Trails Association*
- Iona Thomas, *McAdams/East Coast Greenway Alliance*
- Michelle Wells, *NC Recreation and Parks Association*
- Erin Welsh, *Destination by Design*
- Kathryn Zeringue, *McAdams*

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SPONSORS



SECU Foundation

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE®





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NORTH CAROLINA

PATH

PARKS AND TRAILS FOR HEALTH

STATEWIDE
PARTNERSHIP
AND SUPPORT



2023 Trails Days Across NC Pick Your Path

FEBRUARY 17-19:Trail Days at Elizabethtown
 MARCH 11: Trail Days at Morganton (Year of the Trail Festival)
 APRIL 15-16:Trail Days at Lake James State Park
 APRIL 21-23: Trail Days at Eden (Downtown Festival)
 APRIL 22:Trail Days at NCMA (Indigenous Artist Festival)
 MAY 12-14:Trail Days at Sanford (Strawberry Festival)
 JUNE 2-4:Trail Days at Elizabeth City (First Friday)
 JUNE 2-4:Trail Days at Old Fort (Trails & Trains Festival)
 JULY 21-23:Trail Days at Edenton
 AUGUST 4-6: Trail Days at West Jefferson (Summer Concert Series)
 SEPTEMBER 17-18:Trail Days at Hammocks Beach State Park
 SEPTEMBER 30:Trail Days at Prairie Ridge Ecostation
 OCTOBER 6-8:Trail Days at Shelby (Livermush Festival)
 OCTOBER 27-29:Trail Days at Robbinsville (Fall Leaf Event)

Visit us on the web for details!
pathnc.com



SAMPLE TRAIL DAYS ITINERARY: / SANFORD, NC: May 12-14

8 - 10 a.m. – Guided paddle trip on the Deep River (Endor Paddle)

8 - 10 a.m. – Guided mountain bike ride at San-Lee or Governor’s Park (Back to Dirt Bikes)

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. – Downtown Trails Festival, with information on local hiking, biking, paddling options; vendors (both outdoors and others); food; live music (local)

11 a.m. – Local author reading at local library

Noon – Guided hike, Raven Rock State Park

2 p.m. – Equestrian event: Raven Rock State Park: Avent Creek Access

3 p.m. – Guided hike, San-Lee Park

At each event, we will promote local parks, regional natural and cultural trails, including the Main to Main Street Trail





HOW CAN YOUR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATE?

GET OUTSIDE! CONNECT WITH US!

Download the Year of the Trail Toolkit for Statewide events and share with partners

Resources Available:

YEAR OF THE TRAIL proclamation and press release

Newsletters, Social Media and Content Features

Marketing toolkits

Promotional Videos

Trail Day events in your community

Trail Day Itineraries and inclusion in the NC Wonder Guides platform

Trail promotion video in all NC Welcome Centers

Statewide Advertising and Promotion

Engage and connect with regional and statewide partners



THE GREAT TRAILS STATE COALITION



Image by Piedmont Fat Tire Society



Image by Piedmont Legacy Trails

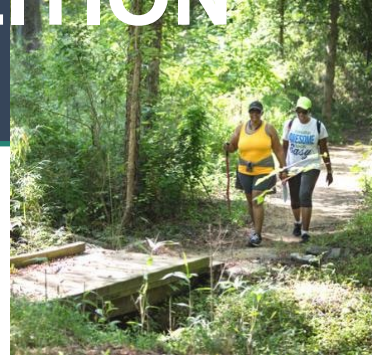


Image by Carolina Thread Trail



Image by
NCDOT

WHO WE ARE

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





THE GOAL OF THE COALITION

- Secure sustained state funding for trails
- Brand North Carolina as “The Great Trails State”

WHY

- Historically, NC has had very little direct state investment in trails and greenways





WHY TRAILS



- **Free to users**
- **Health – physical, mental, social**
- **Transportation, Safety from vehicular traffic**
- **Protect valuable natural resources**
- **Positive economic impact, especially for rural communities**
- **Backbone of NC's \$11.8 billion growing outdoor recreation economy**



Why is NORTH CAROLINA THE GREAT TRAILS STATE?



Diversity of Trails

- Abilities – Beginner to Advanced
- Types – Natural Surface, Greenway, Blueway
- Location – Mountains, Piedmont, Coast, Urban, Remote
- Use – Bike, Paddle, Equestrian, Run, Hike, Walk

Most just minutes from a trail



2021 LONG SESSION SUCCESS

- 2023 Year of the Trail Designation
- Budget funding – first time ever specifically for authorized State Trails

\$29.5 M for the Complete the Trails Fund
\$2 million for feasibility studies





North Carolina State Trails



State Trails

- Dan River
- Deep River
- East Coast Greenway
- Fonta Flora
- French Broad River
- Hickory Nut Gorge

- Mountains-to-Sea
- Northern Peaks
- Overmountain Victory
- Wilderness Gateway
- Yadkin River

Map Legend

- State Park
- Planned state trail segments
- Designated state trail segments

Working 2023 Long Session Now

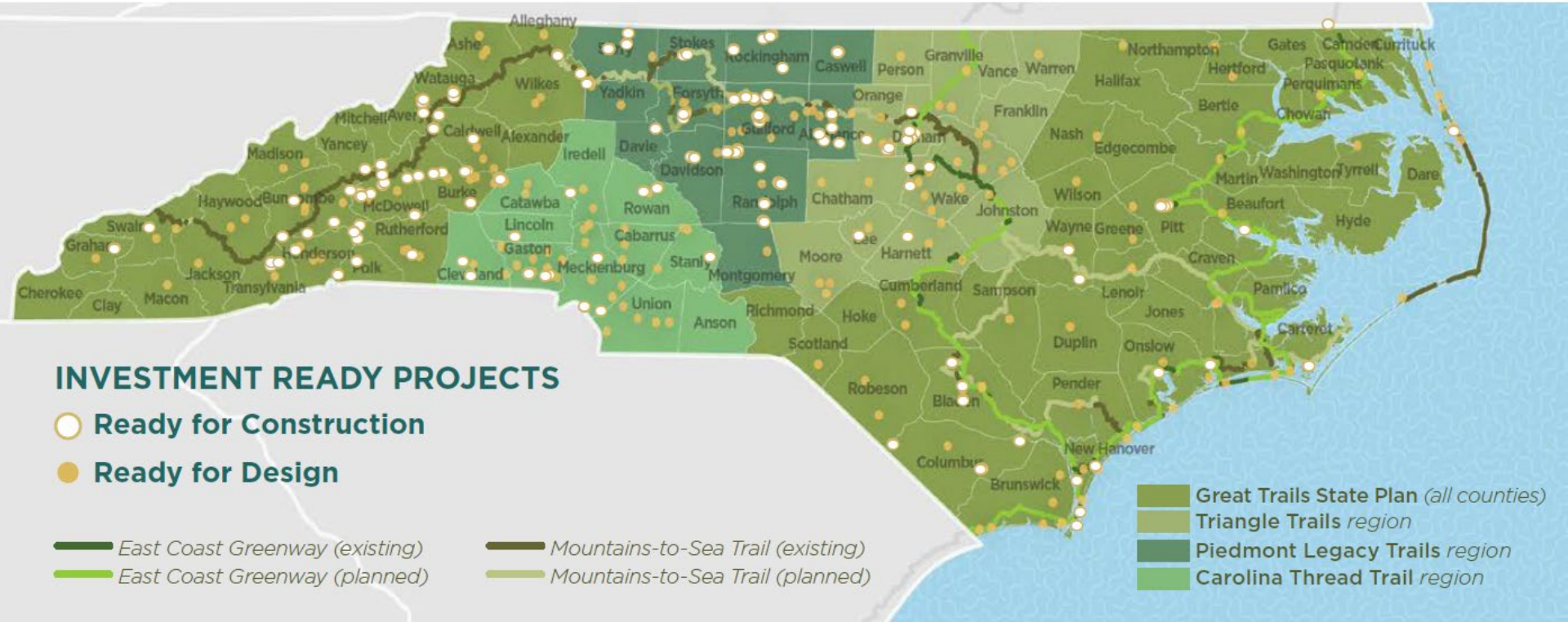
- **Great Trails State Fund** – competitive grant fund for all trails
- **\$2 DOT Feasibility Study Program**
- **Recurring Capacity Building Funds** for State Trail Nonprofit Partners (\$50,000/year/nonprofit)





INVESTMENT READY

Communities have invested in planning and identified trail projects in all 100 counties.





HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

JOIN

Great Trails State Coalition

Cities, Towns & Counties for Trails

WHY JOIN THE GREAT TRAILS STATE COALITION

- ✓ **Amplify the call for Great Trails State funding**
- ✓ **Work together with other Local Governments for trails - Trails Peer Group**
- ✓ **Participate in GTSC Committees (Legislative, Year of the Trail, Recruitment)**
- ✓ **Help guide trail policy recommendations**
- ✓ **Coordinate with Non-Profits and Industry to make your voice louder**
- ✓ **Connect your community to the movement**



CTCT COALITION MEMBERS

Davidson County

Randolph County

Surry County

McDowell County

Chatham County

City of Raleigh

City of Boone

Mt. Holly

City of Greensboro Parks and Recreation

Town of Rutherfordton

Orange County

Town of Chapel Hill

Town of Hendersonville





HOW TO JOIN GTSC

It's Easy!

- ✓ Go to www.greattrailsstatecoalition.org
- ✓ Pick the right level of support for your community
 - \$250-\$2,500 or above
- ✓ Designate your CTCT Working Group participant(s)





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HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

- Try trails or find new trails
- Explore our state through trails
- Invite friends new to trails
- Follow social media
- Check Meetup
- Sign up for newsletter
- Website for Events – to attend or copy!

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

- **Group Hike**
- **Expo**
- **Trails Day**
- **Festival - New Focus**
- **Partner – Do not be a silo**
- **Ribbon Cuttings**
- **Ground Breakings**
- **Pass a Resolution in support of YOTT**

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

- Marketing - Be a Trail Town
- It is not too late to start a new Regional Trail
- **DO NOT BE A SILO**
It is not just a Parks & Rec thing, or just a Tourism thing or just a Community Development thing

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

2023

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- Learn About and Access Funding
RTP, NCDOT, CTF
- Help Bring New Funding (GTSC)
- BOC – Building Outdoor
Communities
- CORE – Creating Outdoor
Recreation Economies



HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

2023

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- Thank Legislators
- Invite Legislators
- Ask Legislators
- Update Legislators





GET INVOLVED

www.greattrailsnc.com

www.greattrailsstatecoalition.org

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