

Tar Heel Trails

1997

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation

James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor



Jonathan B. Howes
Secretary

Raleigh Honored by AHS as a "Trail Town USA"

Raleigh has been selected as a "Trail Town USA" by the American Hiking Society (AHS) in its awards program celebrating National Trails Day. The award recognizes the nation's communities which have made significant efforts to make trails an integral part of the lives of their citizens and which have exemplary trail systems.

"We asked for nominations from places that went beyond using trails purely for recreational purposes," explained AHS President David Lillard. "Recreation is one important aspect of a healthy trail system, but we were also looking for areas where trails promote nonmotorized transportation, bring added economic benefits to the area, and connect to other trail systems, adding to the ongoing effort to create a nationwide system of trails and greenways."

Entrants to the competition were asked to submit an essay describing their town's trail system and three letters of recommendation. (Raleigh's letters came from Mr. Jud Ammons of Ammons, Inc.; Mr. Greg Lytle of the Sierra Club-Capital Group; and Mrs. Dorothy Stowe, volunteer hike leader with Parks and Recreation.) Judges for the award included Leslie Hefner of the Bureau of Land Management, Steve Loucks of the American Society of Travel Agents, Tom Ross of the National Park Service, Gene Sloan of *USA Today*, and Karen Walker of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

"We were overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of the nominations we received," says Lillard. "It was exciting to see all the innovative plans going on out there on behalf of trails. Narrowing the list down to ten was a lot tougher than we thought it would be."

The first place winner was Jefferson County, Colorado, with Anchorage, Alaska as a close second. Raleigh won tenth place in the competition. The judges praised the city's Capital Area Greenway Plan, in place since 1974, which links schools, neighborhoods, and parks

through natural green corridors along waterways. Today, Raleigh has nearly 40 miles of greenways in place, with twice that many planned.

"We've created a Trail Town USA Hall of Fame," explains Lillard. "Every year we'll open the gates for more nominations and then add the top places to the list." Although the towns that are inducted into the Hall of Fame do not have to renominate themselves each year, Lillard says AHS will continue to check on these towns' progress to make sure they are maintaining their Trail Town status.

Trails Specialist Beth Timson, who has been serving as North Carolina's Coordinator for National Trails Day, presented Raleigh Mayor Tom Fetzer with a plaque

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NC CELEBRATES NATIONAL TRAILS DAY!

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in honor of the town's award at the City Council meeting on June 4. The award also includes a Trail Town sign for the greenway trail heads and a Trails Town logo for use in promotional materials.

Publications Available from the State Trails Program

Some new publications are available for trails users from the State Trails Program:

Directory of Trail Associations and Trail Managing Agencies in North Carolina (Summer, 1996) Contact persons and numbers for state and local agencies, trails clubs, and trails affinity organizations

An Introduction to North Carolina's Mountains-to-Sea Trail (Spring, 1996) Contains maps and trailhead descriptions for the designated sections of the MST

The Albemarle Region Canoe and Small Boat Trails System (Winter, 1995) A guide to boating in the northeastern part of the state

Call (919-846-9991), fax (919-870-6843), or write and request a copy be mailed to you.



Raleigh Parks and Recreation staff member Cindy Trumbower holds the city's "trail dedication ribbon." Each patch on the ribbon represents a past trail dedication and its ribbon-cutting ceremony.

1997 Grant Applications Available by Mid July for Adopt-A-Trail and NRTFP

If you want an Adopt-A-Trail Grant application form and have not received one by August 1, 1996, please contact your Regional Trails Specialist or call the State Trails Coordinator's office and one will be mailed to you. Application deadline is September 15, 1996 so begin your preparation now.

The Adopt-A-Trail Grant Program is an annual \$35,000 grant program administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation's State Trails Program for the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. These funds are available to volunteer trail organizations, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies who plan, build, maintain and manage trails for the public.

If you want a copy of North Carolina's 1996 National Recreational Trails Funding Program grant application

form and have not received one by August 1, 1996, please contact your Regional Trails Specialist or call the State Trails Coordinator's office and one will be mailed to you. Application deadline is September 27, 1996 so begin your preparation now.

North Carolina's 1996 National Recreational Trails Funding Program is a federal grant program administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation's State Trails Program for the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. Money for this program comes from federal gas taxes paid on gasoline for off-highway use.

This year, North Carolina's share of this national program is \$307,051, available for trail grants to non-profit organizations and governmental agencies who plan, build, maintain and manage trails for the public.

Trails Committee Thinks Long Range about Program

ASHEVILLE - At its second quarterly meeting on June 7, the North Carolina Trails Committee was called to order and welcoming remarks were made by Jennifer Toole, Chair, at the Asheville Regional Office of the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.

Phil McKnelly, Director of the Division of Parks and Recreation recognized Allen deHart, past Chairman of the North Carolina Trails Committee as the state's recipient of the Trails Volunteer of the Year Award, sponsored by the American Hiking Society and National Park Service in association with the National Trails Day. Allen de Hart was presented a plaque in recognition of this award for his countless hours devoted to the promotion of trails and for his book *North Carolina Hiking Trails*, now in its third edition.

Allen Poole, NCTC member from Manteo, reported on Senate Bill 1251 titled "Adopt-A-Trail Funds," sponsored by Senator Martin. This bill would provide \$100,000 annually to the Adopt-A-Trail Program. The NCTC members resoundingly supported this bill and voted unanimously to forward a statement of support for Senate Bill 1251 to the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.

Phil McKnelly noted that Senate Bill 1128, entitled "Clean Water Management Fund," sponsored by Senator Perdue, if ratified, could have a positive effect on trails and greenways. This bill could provide \$30 million annually to clean up the State's polluted waters and to protect and conserve unpolluted waters. This bill also notes a five (5) percent set-a-side for greenway facilities. Again, the NCTC members were strongly supportive of this bill and voted unanimously to forward a statement of support for Senate Bill 1128 to the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.

The first order of new business was a unanimous vote for "North Carolina's 1996 National Recreation Trails Funding Program Application Package." North Carolina has received \$348,921 from the Federal Highway Administration which will be made available to governmental agencies and non-profit organizations for trail construction, renovation, trail side facilities and land acquisition. This application package should be available to the public by mid July. This action was followed by a unanimous vote for the

"1997 Adopt-A-Trail Grant Application Package." This is the \$35,000 annual grant program provided by the state to governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and volunteer trail organizations for trail construction, maintenance and educational information. This application package should also be available to the public by mid-July.

The final order of business for the day was a brainstorming session on "What's Your Vision for the State Trails Program?" Jennifer Toole opened this session by stating how proud she is of the State Trails Program's current operation, but she wants to see if the State Trails Program can do more. Following are the top three ideas that emerged from each of the six topics discussed:

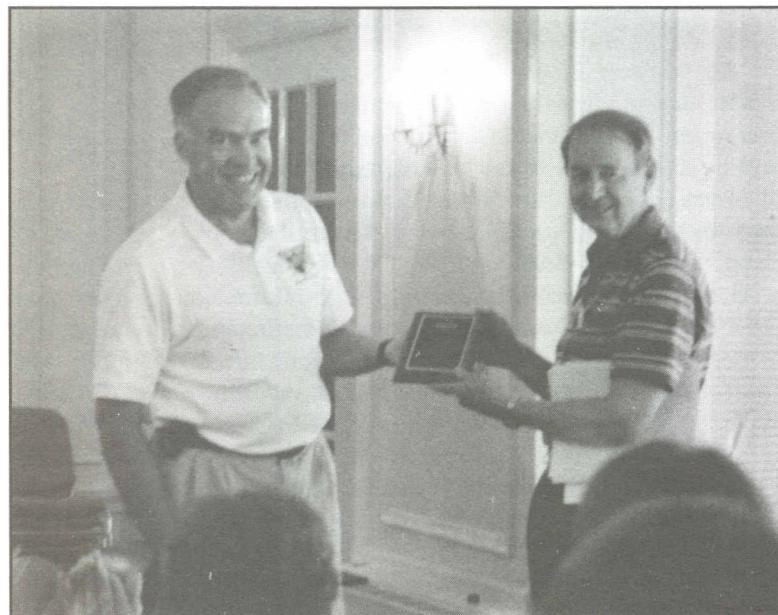
1. What is the State's responsibility for trails?

Funding of trails (including buying land, paying for construction)
Maintenance (making sure it is happening, co-ordinating work)
Legal aspects (including recreational use statute, riparian buffers bill, etc.)

2. What should a State Trails Program be doing?

Promoting trails construction throughout the state / educating user groups
Developing a statewide master plan for trails

(continued on next page)



Division Director Phil McKnelly presents a plaque to Allen de Hart proclaiming him North Carolina's "Trails Volunteer of the Year."

Creating an information database

3. What should a citizens' advisory group (the NCTC) be doing?

Assist State Trails program / networking / local and statewide advocacy

Trails Program leadership

Political contacts

4. Where's the money?

Program of licenses (as in other states) - dedication of state OHV gas tax

Usage fees - recreational equipment surtax

Impact fees - developers' fees

5. Where's the land?

Riparian buffer lands

Easements / leases of private lands

Other government lands: federal, state, and local (public schools, public university lands), churches

6. What are the potential tie-ins with other programs?

US Forest Service and other federal agencies

NCDOT

Non-profits (Nature Conservancy, local and statewide land trusts)

Wildlife Resources Commission

The Committee adjourned at noon to attend a dedication of the Pisgah Ledges Trail, a new section of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. The following day, NCTC members enjoyed ATV riding at Wayehutta as guests of the Smoky Mountain ORV Club.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Information

The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse (NBPC) has produced the first six technical briefs in a new series of Technical Assistance Reports. The four-page briefs give bicycle and pedestrian professionals and advocates quick and easy information and references on some of the most frequently asked questions in the field--from funding flexibility under ISTEA to bicycle and pedestrian facility maintenance. For more information about the free technical briefs and other Clearinghouse services call 800-760-6272.

Technical Assistance Reports currently available:

1. Developing a Successful ISTEA Enhancements Application
2. The Economic and Social Benefits of Bicycling and Walking
3. Trails for Transportation
4. Beyond Enhancements: Making STP and CMAQ Work for Bikes and Peds
5. Integration of Bicycles and Transit
6. Maintenance of Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.

Bikers and Hikers Work Together

A new multi-use trail has just opened on Lake Higgins in Guilford County, thanks to the hard work of the Greensboro Fat Tire Society Mountain Bike Club and long-time trail enthusiasts Bill Craft, Bill Flynt, and Alec Wrenn. Greensboro mayor Carolyn Allen cut the ribbon on the Bald Eagle Trail on April 21, while Greensboro band Talking Drums set the tone for the day. The trail is entirely on the public land of the watershed buffer, and all the trail work was done by volunteers.

The new trail begins at the Lake Higgins marina and winds along the north shore of the lake; it ends four miles away near the Cardinal subdivision on Lewiston Rd. Those four miles are open to hikers and mountain bikers; hikers have the additional option of taking a south shore trail that runs between Lewiston Rd. and Carlson Dairy Rd. and includes the new Beech Bluff Trail.

Though the trail is only eight miles from downtown Greensboro, it feels as though it's much more isolated than its location would suggest. A recent biker spotted a blue-wing teal swimming in a cove off the trail--a visitor migrating through the region. Too, Lake Higgins is becoming known as a good bald eagle viewing site, thus the decision on the new trail's name. Trail builder Bill Craft says "We've seen deer out here, and I saw a beaver. The highlight was the day we saw a wild turkey."

The builders worked with machetes and mattocks to clear the trail route, sparing trees and interesting plants. One big obstacle was the weather: January's ice storm caused tree falls which obliterated some already-cleared sections and required trail repair work before trail construction was even completed. The city finished up the project with a gravel parking lot at the trail entrance.

Bill Craft notes that with the completion of the Bald Eagle Trail, it is now possible to hike from its trail head west of Greensboro to Church St. on the east, combining this route with existing trails along Lake Brandt and Lake Townsend. Now Craft and his trailblazers are plotting a route from Lake Brandt along Reedy Fork Creek to connect with the proposed Triad Park on the Guilford-Forsyth border. And Craft has even more visionary plans--some day to hike a trail from Triad Park, eastward along Lake Higgins, Lake Brandt, and Lake Townsend, and beside the Haw River into Alamance County.

Almost 50 miles of mountain bike trails exist in the Triad area of the state. In addition to this new trail at Lake Higgins, there are bike trails at Bur-Mill Park, Country Park, Reedy Fork, and Hagan Stone Park in Greensboro, and at Salem Lake, Hobby Park, and Tanglewood Park in Winston-Salem. Information on these trails is available from the Greensboro Fat Tire Society (P. O. Box 9524, Greensboro, NC 27429-0524).

UMBA Takes on the Uwharries!

UMBA (the Uwharrie Mountain Bicycle Association) is a new but very active trails organization in the central section of the state--and a growing organization, too, with 15 paid members and an interest list of over 50 names. The group is actively pursuing a non-profit status to allow it to apply for funding grants for trail work and to allow contributors of materials and equipment to get those tax deductions. UMBA has already signed an agreement with the US Forest Service as an "official volunteer partner" to facilitate its trail work in the Uwharrie National Forest.

The group's charter lists its three primary purposes: (1) to develop and maintain trails; (2) to educate trail users about responsible use; and (3) to promote mountain biking as recreation. Most of their energy, as their name suggests, is being focused on lands and riders in the Uwharrie National Forest--an area that is one of North Carolina's under-utilized treasures. The District Ranger headquarters is in Troy, and most of the National Forest is in Montgomery County--that makes the forest within an hour of Charlotte and Greensboro and only two hours from Raleigh and Durham. In fact, six million North Carolinians live within a two-hour drive of the region.

UMBA's primary project now is to increase mountain biking trails in the Uwharrie NF. Several adventurous members have spent weeks riding everything from wide graveled roads to abandoned mining access roads in the Wood Run section and have sketched out a proposed thirty-mile double stacked loop system of trails. The elevation difference is over 400 ft between high and low points on the trail to make for an interesting ride.

Want to see for yourself what UMBA is doing? Call one of the following contact numbers: Don Childrey (910-439-6204) or Brett Russell (919-380-1609).

Exciting Coalition Forms Along the Haw River

Liz Seymour

(reprinted from the *Haw River Assembly Newsletter*,
April, 1996)

There's an old story about three blind men trying to describe an elephant. The first man grabs the trunk and declares that an elephant is a snake. The second man puts his hands on the elephant's side and insists that an elephant is a wall. The third man gets hold of the elephant's tail and tells the other two that they're both wrong: an elephant is nothing more than a piece of rope.

The Haw River is a little bit like that. In just a hundred miles it is a marshy stream, a creek, a mill river, a wooded river, a rapid river, a slow river, a dirty river, a clean river, and even a lake. It evokes very different memories and very different feelings in the people who live along it; very few people know it in its entirety.

Someday it may be possible to take a stroll down the whole elephant. This January a group of people met at Camp Guil-Rock in Rockingham County to discuss creating a trail between Guil-Rock and The Summit, the Episcopal Conference Center that sits four miles upriver from Guil-Rock [The Summit is best known to Haw River Assembly (HRA) members as Site One for the Haw River Festival.]

To our surprise and delight we have discovered since that meeting that several groups are thinking about establishing trails along their own stretches of the Haw. To keep those efforts in touch with each other we have formed a loose group called Haw River Trails (supported by a seed money grant from HRA); as we all learn by doing, we will share information and expertise.

It is too early to say yet what shape the trail or trails will take, but experience in other states--the New River Trail in Virginia, the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal park in Maryland--suggests that people are eager for a chance to walk along a beautiful river. Who knows, maybe someday the fourth graders at this year's Festival will be taking the long stroll with their own children from Oak Ridge to Moncure.

For more information about Haw River Trails, write, call, or e-mail:

Liz Seymour
406 N. Mendenhall Street
Greensboro, NC 27401
910-274-1814
hobldhoy@aol.com

For information on specific trails projects and ongoing plans:

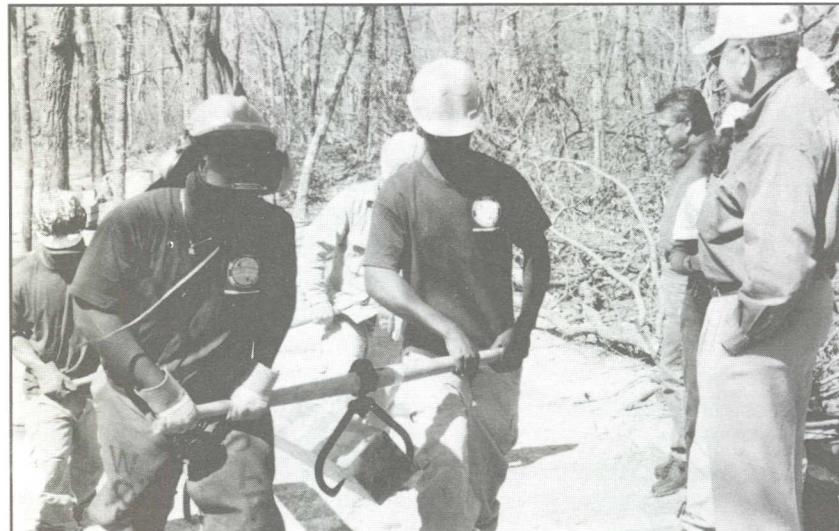
Reedy Fork, Guildford County:
Bill Craft, 910-375-0600

Summit/Guil-Rock, Rockingham County:
Liz Seymour, 910-274-1814

Burlington Bike Trail, Alamance County:
Gene Griner, 910-584-2750

Alamance Community College Trail, Alamance County:
Gail Galbraith, 910-454-4108 (h),
910-578-2002 x2225 (w).

History Repeats Itself at Hanging Rock State Park



Members of the Tyrrell County Conservation Corps and Americorps haul timber up the Hanging Rock Trail.

Margaret Jordan

In July of 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for unemployed young Americans, converged on the Sauratown Mountains in Stokes County and began the construction of Hanging Rock State Park. Sixty years later and fifty two years after Hanging Rock State Park opened to the public, the Corps has returned to the park, this time to repair and renovate park facilities established by the CCC.

Two corps programs--Americorps and the Tyrrell County Conservation Corps--will be working together to combat trail erosion on Hanging Rock's trails. The 1995 general management plan for the park identified \$1.4 million in trail repair needs. The groups will be using trail funds allotted from the 1993 state parks bond referendum.

"I don't know how we would have gotten this work done without you," Hanging Rock State Park Superintendent Tommy Wagoner told the young corps workers as they placed timbers along the Hanging Rock Trail. After a morning of hard labor, the work crew lunched on sandwiches they brought up the mountain. The group is camping in the park's family campground while they are working on the park.

In November of 1995, in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and Pilot View Regional Conservation and Development, Inc., Hanging Rock State Park became a work site for three Americorps participants. Patterned after the 1930's CCC program, Americorps is a national service program established by President Clinton in 1993. With a goal of "getting things

done," Americorps participants are unemployed young volunteers who receive a living allowance while volunteering 1700 hours of service. Upon successful completion of service, they will receive an educational award to continue their education or pay off student loans. One of the services provided by Americorps is renovation of rural parks by repairing trails and park facilities. Since their arrival at the park, Hanging Rock participants have been working on trail erosion, building picnic tables, and clean-up from the severe ice storm of 1994.

Having worked and received training in trail repair, Americorps will now team with 10 members and a crew leader from the Tyrrell County Conservation Corps. The Tyrrell County Corps is affiliated with Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, Inc. based in Florida. Their mission is restoration and/or maintenance of natural resources and associated maintenance of public recreation facilities. A typical corps member is 20 years old, has attended some high school, and has had difficulty obtaining a job. The goal of the corps is to provide all participants the opportunity to develop skills and to prepare for responsible citizenship. Participants receive a minimum wage for their work.

In addition to accomplishing a hard day's work and contributing to our natural resource preservation, many of the crew members set personal goals for themselves. "Mine is to conquer my fear of heights," said one young man from the flat lands of Tyrrell County as he stood amidst the peaks of the Sauratown Mountains.

Members of the original Civilian Conservation Corps will meet with the new Conservation Corps to share their days of work at Hanging Rock State Park.

Canoeing the Neuse Reveals the River's Problems and Promises

Tom Dillon

(reprinted from the *New Bern Sun Journal*)

Once the Neuse River is cleaned up, consideration should be given to more recreational promotion and use of it--for everything from fishing to canoeing and kayaking. That's an opinion shared by boaters who canoed or kayaked some 120 miles of the river from above Clayton, just southeast of Raleigh, to Kinston in Lenoir County, in March. The group included John Maloney of Coastal Kayak Outfitters in New Bern, who outfitted the trip and volunteered his time; Randy Mason of the Coastal Federation; Ben Bunn, former Naval ROTC teacher at New Bern High School; Erick Gill of the Sun Journal staff and me.

Most of the trip took place over five days in early March, but Maloney and I got back on the river the first day of the first complete the run from below Seven Springs to Kinston. A full report on the trip is in a 16-page supplement put out by the newspaper in New Bern, and you're likely to be hearing about it other places. But the message, boiled down, is that the Neuse is a beautiful river with immense possibilities--which has been unfortunately trashed in far too many ways.

Downriver from Smithfield, the river passes through more than 30 miles of wilderness which is as remote as any stretch of river in North Carolina west of the Albemarle-Pamlico Peninsula. Its oxbows are like those on the Mississippi. Above Goldsboro, the river passes historic Waynesborough, one of the 19th century steamboat stops, when steamboats traveled as far as Smithfield. Waynesborough's now a state park with a good many shad fishermen on a nice spring day.

At Cliffs of the Neuse are the Cretaceous Period bluffs which are the most awesome geological feature on the river--especially in the coastal plain--while at Seven Springs (formerly Whitehall) was the boatyard where the Confederate army's ironclad ram "Neuse" was built. It's all well worth seeing from a boat. As Ed Kelly of Goldsboro's Neuse Trails Association, one of our advisers, puts it: "We can have a historic canoe trail. Towns could start making money on it. But we've got to preserve the water quality."

The river shows many, many scars inflicted by thoughtless people. On only one of five days afloat dur-

ing the first part of the trip did we not smell the tell-tale smell associated with hog farming. Sewage treatment in several towns is not what it should be. And the litter in the Neuse--as in other streams in North Carolina-- is appalling. Where trees are downed in the river in the wilderness below Smithfield, probably a result of outflow from Falls of the Neuse dam, rafts of litter can become so huge you would think you could walk on them. That includes probably millions of discarded plastic pop bottles, tires, pieces of Styrofoam, oil cans, plastic six-pack binds and-- the only thing we found it possible to count in our miles of ACC-country river--basketballs. Randy Mason counted 35.

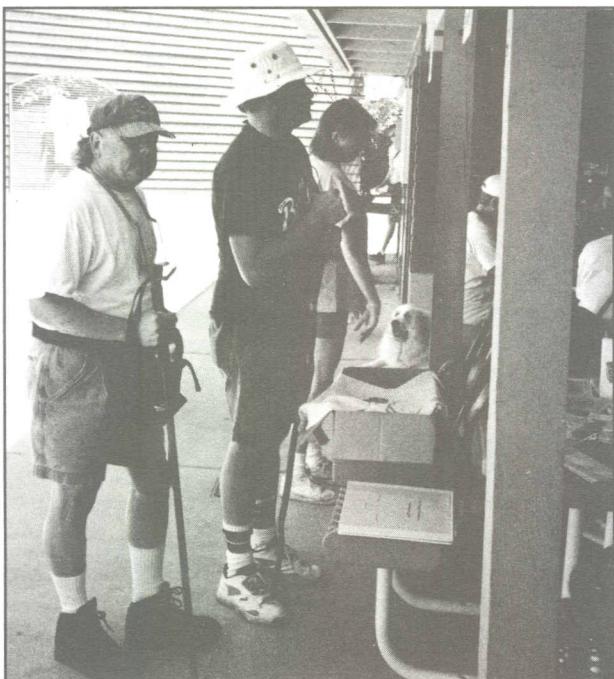
Despite all that, our voyage, in three canoes and a kayak, found the river a memorable experience. We found inviting sandbars, small tributaries to explore and--for a coastal plain river--a surprising amount of topography. It was absolute gravy to see, a few weeks after we got off the river, that a large bluff on the Johnston-Wayne County line had been set aside by the Conservation Trust of North Carolina as a possible river access.

We had planned on going farther--all the way to New Bern--before thunderstorms and a return of cold temperatures interfered with the schedule. We still may. There's considerable interest in a paddle from Kinston to New Bern. We can't testify to the technical issues about the Neuse--things like toxic bacteria and fish kills. That wasn't the purpose of the trip, and anyway, those problems seem to arise in summer when the flow is down, not in winter when the flow is heavy. What we were about was to find out about the Neuse first-hand, to gain some on-the-river knowledge about a subject that needs it.

We may not be experts for having taken the paddle, but we know a heck of a lot more about the river than we did three months ago. I imagine we also appreciate it a lot more, even when we're paddling into a headwind.

*Tom Dillon is the Sunday editor of the *Sun Journal* newspaper in New Bern. More information about this canoe trip, along with copies of the work that resulted, are available from him at the *Sun Journal*, P.O. Box 1149, New Bern, N.C., 28563.*

Crystal Walton holds the ribbon as Raleigh City Councilman Brad Thompson prepares to cut it. The two were helping to celebrate National Trails Day with a dedication of the Lower Walnut Creek Greenway on May 29. The addition of this greenway increases Raleigh's system to over 40 miles of trails.



Two Volkswalkers check in from the 10K hike at Lake Crabtree County Park in Wake County on National Trails Day. The event was sponsored by the Triangle Trailblazers, this region's American Volkssport Association chapter. The club also sponsored a trails work day at the park.

The entire student body of Club Boulevard Elementary School turned out to help Durham celebrate the opening of the Ellerbee Creek Trail on May 31. The trail is a link in an eventual 17-mile stretch of greenway.





With the mayors from Madison and Mayodan on either end of the ribbon, Mayodan Recreation Director Dixie Penn officially dedicates the new Safeway Walking Trail on May 20. The trail was constructed with help from an Adopt-A-Trail grant and local business Kobe Copper Co.

A group effort on National Trails Day, June 1, helped build a new 2-mile trail at the B.W. Wells site in Falls Lake Recreation Area. The REI store in Cary sponsored the event; trail workers included the B.W. Wells Association, the Triangle Land Conservancy, the Cub Scouts, and REI employees and customers.



NC FATS, Raleigh's mountain biking club, ran a clinic on June 1 at Wake County's Lake Crabtree Park on bicycle safety and trail-riding techniques. Many club members also turned out the next day for Flythe Cyclery's work day on the single-track trails at the park.

Off-Highway Trail Riders in North Carolina Determined to Go NOVA!

In 1995, off-highway vehicle clubs in North Carolina formed a statewide organization to further the sport of off-highway recreation in North Carolina, the North Carolina Off-Road Vehicle Association (NOVA). The mission statement of the organization states, "The purpose of this organization will be to gather information relevant to off-highway recreation and disseminate it to its member clubs, other riders, land managers and the public. It will keep its member clubs informed about pending legislation which affects off-highway recreation and express a consensus opinion of those clubs to the legislators involved. It will promote a positive image of the sport." This mission statement was adopted at the August 1995 meeting of NOVA.

The membership of NOVA consists of clubs made up of off-highway vehicle recreationists and businesses

that have a vested interest in off-highway recreation. NOVA encourages off-highway vehicle recreationists to get involved with or start their own local clubs to help build a group large enough, dedicated enough and powerful enough to make an impact on future trails in North Carolina. Member clubs work in cooperation with NOVA, the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, the Blue Ribbon Coalition and the American Motorcycle Association to stay informed of, and influence matters affecting off-highway recreation. They also work to let off-highway vehicle recreationists know that joining a club is also one of the best ways to find out where all the best legal riding areas are.

NOVA President Brian Sears is the OHV representative on the North Carolina Trails Committee.

New Section of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail Dedicated

Dwayne Stutzman

On Friday, June 8, 1996, approximately fourteen more miles of the MST were officially dedicated into the state trail system. Approximately 40 individuals participated in the dedication which was held a few hundred feet down the trail just off the Looking Glass Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Richard "Dick" Johnson, president of the Carolina Mountain Club, welcomed the group and spoke of the dedicated efforts of that organization in its work on the MST. Gary Everhardt, Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway; Randy Phillips, Supervisor of the National Forest in North Carolina; Philip McKnelly, Director of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation; and Jennifer Toole, Chair of the North Carolina Trail Committee, all spoke to the group. A short hike to the famed Skinny Dip Falls Bridge followed. All the wood for the steps to the bridge, as well as for the bridge itself, was packed into the site by members of the Carolina Mountain Club.



Alan Poole, Jennifer Toole, Tom Wells, Brian Sears, Jennifer Sears, and Hannah Hipp admire "Skinny Dip Falls Bridge" on the Pisgah Ledges section of the MST.

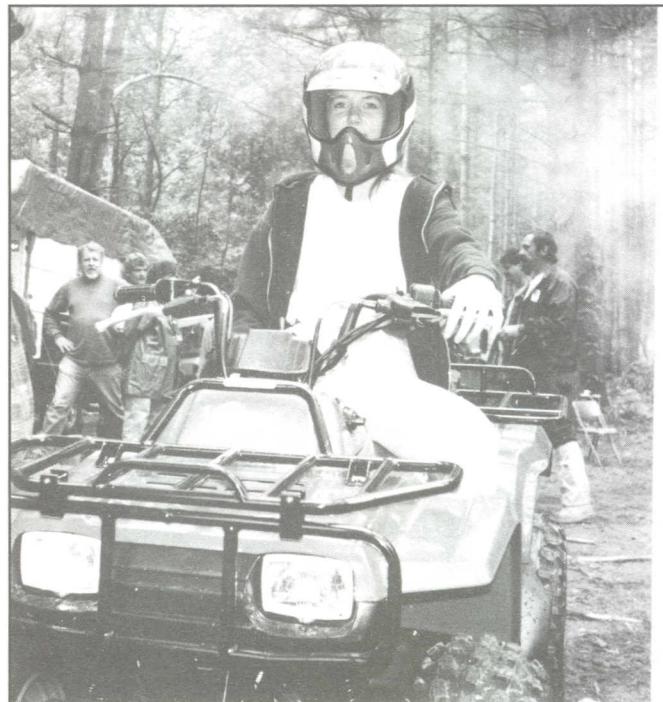
Celebrating National Trails Day at the Wayehutta ORV Area

The Smoky Mountain Off-Road Vehicle Club hosted a National Trails Day activity on Saturday, June 8 at the US Forest Service Wayehutta ORV Area. The National Trails Day Event was held in conjunction with the North Carolina Trails Committee's regular quarterly meeting which was held in Asheville on Friday, June 7.

Co-hosts for the day were the North Carolina Off-Highway Vehicle Association and the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council. These organizations invited the North Carolina Trails Committee, officials from the NC Division of Parks and Recreation and US Forest Service to participate in the day's activities which included an introduction to ATV recreational riding, along with a safety training session on proper riding techniques. Members of the NC Trails Committee rode on the area trails and were treated to a BBQ lunch provided by Waynesville Cycle.

The National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council sent its Peterbilt Mobile Workshop Transport to the event, along with its "On Common Ground" workshop specialist Jim Williams. The mobile classroom is set up to be a training tool to teach the "On Common Ground Environmental Stewardship" program.

An interesting organization which participated in the event was the Henderson County Sheriff's Department OHV Patrol. This group was started by sheriff's department employees who ride OHV's and is set up as a search and rescue unit, with EMT's and an OHV "Mule" to assist in the removal of injured individuals.



NCTC Chair Jennifer Toole receives instruction on the safe operation of a 4WD vehicle.



Brian Sears, NCTC's OHV representative and Henderson County Sheriff's Department OHV Patrol look over the NOHVC Mobile Classroom.

Trails Mapping Goes High-Tech

State Trails Program Gets GIS Software

Beth Timson

If you already know what "GPS" and "GIS" are acronyms for, then you're well into the high tech world of today's trails. You'll probably say, "Yes, of course, the State Trails Program should be moving into that technology." If you *don't* already know that "GPS" is short for Global Positioning System and "GIS" for Geographic Information System, then read on.

A GIS can produce maps, but it is not a map itself. It is a database in which the data--in this case, pieces of "geographic" information--can be constantly updated to reflect changes in the real world. Then, as the world changes, the map produced by the database can change. Ultimately, it's not really that radical to shift from thinking of a trail as a dotted line on a paper map to thinking of it as a series of coordinates in a database table. Both are abstract ways to represent a real, meandering, dirt path.

But a GIS is more than a way to process information more quickly or more elegantly. It has the potential to change the entire nature of trails planning. Because GIS data can be combined and overlaid so easily, all the different agencies and organizations that have the potential for doing trails can combine their information. Available land, as well as existing and proposed trails, under the management of federal, state, and local governments, non-profits, and private organizations, can be seen on one map. Decisions about new trails or new land acquisition can be made efficiently...and no longer in ignorance of what other agencies are planning.

It sounds easy, and it is; but it does take time and energy (and money) to get an entire system up and running and accessible to all the potential user groups. The State Trails Program has purchased MapInfo for the Trails Specialists, including a two-day training workshop on May 1-2 on using the program. MapInfo (from the MapInfo Corporation of Troy, NY) can run as a stand-alone program or on a network, or work as a "front-end" program to a larger GIS such as ArcInfo. It will interface with most, if not all, of the programs commonly used by other land-management agencies across the state.

The next job, obviously, is to acquire the data needed to begin the mapping of trails across the state. Some data are available through the state's Center for Geographic Information and Assistance (CGIA), some will be ac-

quired through information exchange with local governments and other state agencies, and some we will have to generate ourselves. That's where GPS--the Global Positioning System--comes into the game.

GPS technology answers the specific "Where?" and "What?" of creating GIS trail maps. The "where?" answer is provided by radio signals transmitted from units on the ground to GPS satellites and back again; and the "what?" is a description of features recorded in the field that correspond with each location. The positions and descriptions are recorded and turned into digitized information for a database.

One person with a quick training session can carry and operate a GPS receiver along a trail or proposed trail route and generate a highly accurate and cost-effective trail survey. And that information is more accurate than currently existing paper maps. A spot on a USGS quad map, for instance, is generally accurate to within 40 ft of its true ground location; a point located with a GPS receiver, after differential correction, will be accurate to within 10 to 12 ft of its true ground location.

Hand-held GPS units send signals to a set of Department of Defense satellites orbiting overhead (there are 24 satellites in the system, orbiting in six planes). The unit sends signals to three or four of the satellites within range; computing the time it takes for each signal to reach a specific satellite allows the unit to triangulate its position to a unique spot on the earth. Mapping a trail requires taking single-point readings while traveling the trail and then "connecting the dots" to produce a linear feature. The GPS user can program in descriptions with each recorded location--such as trail condition or surrounding vegetation or any other features.

The GPS data can be downloaded into a GIS, and a highly accurate database is the result--a database that can be updated on a regular basis to print very accurate maps. Of course, GPS equipment, like GIS software, is not inexpensive; the Trails Program is still in the early stages of making GPS plans.

This high tech trail gear will never replace the volunteers with the pickaxes, but it can make sure that their work is efficiently planned and accurately recorded. And it holds the promise that a real *system* of trails across the state is getting closer.

Pigeon River Fund Announces Four Greenway Grants

Four organizations in Haywood County have received grants for greenway development from the Pigeon River Fund. Canton Papertown Association will produce a master plan for a greenway and trail system to increase access and recreational use along the Pigeon River in Canton; the Haywood County Planning Department will develop a plan for increased access points and recreational trails along the Pigeon River throughout Haywood County; the Richland Creek Action Committee will develop a multi-use trail linkage from Lake Junaluska to the Waynesville Recreation Park; and the Town of Waynesville will work to stabilize the streambank, create pollution prevention stations and construct fish habitat on Richland Creek adjacent to the Waynesville Recreation Park. Another grant was given to RiverLink, Inc., a local greenway organization for the expansion of the Volunteer Water Information Network (VWIN) program which will further expand this volunteer monitoring effort to at least 12 sites in Haywood County and seven sites in Madison County, and also will expand distribution of educational materials.

These projects were approved and funded by The Pigeon River Fund. The fund was established two years ago through a unique public-private partnership dedicated to improving water quality in the Pigeon River and French Broad River basins. The fund was established by Carolina Power and Light as a key component in its license for the Walters Hydroelectric Power Plant and Dam.

"This occasion is historic," said Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. "It marks the fruition of a unique public-private partnership." Howes called the Pigeon River Fund a "seed of creative compromise" representing a "win-win" arrangement between government, industry and community partners that will yield positive results for the mountain environment.

William Cavanaugh III, President and CEO of CP&L, commented: "What we have found as a company is that a healthy, clean environment and a sound economy can go hand in hand." Of the partnership between industry and government that produced the Pigeon River Fund, Cavanaugh said, "CP&L and DEHNR have seen that sometimes you have to break the mold to accomplish something important."

Easter news ...

Roanoke River Partners Gets Grant

The group working on sustainable economic development for Halifax, Northampton, Bertie, Martin, and Washington counties has voted to adopt *Roanoke River Partners* as its official name. The organization has received an Echoing Green public fellowship grant for \$25,000 and plans to use it to hire an executive director to coordinate and promote its projects. A charge for the new director will be to develop funding sources and begin steps to incorporate the organization as a non-profit.

The tourism planning task force has been meeting on a regular basis to develop tours for the region, including canoeing, history and culture, bicycling, and agricultural and local industries. Another objective of the Roanoke River Partners is developing small businesses in the region. The Conservation Fund has received a \$25,000 grant from the Z. Reynolds to work with the Roanoke River Partners.

Trails in the Meherrin River Area

The Murfreesboro Historical Association is interested in developing a maritime village, including trails to the river, on their property adjacent to the Meherrin River. However, the river at this site is separated from the proposed village by a 75 foot cliff. The plan is to bring the visitors up from the river to the village as quickly as possible, using a set of stairs built up the bluff face.

Dwayne Stutzman, the mountain region trails specialist, came to Murfreesboro to lend his expertise in developing a suitable trail up this 75 foot cliff. The Natural Resources Conservation Service also helped with measuring elevations for location of the trail and a river overlook observation deck.

National Trails Day Outing on Pasquotank River

On Saturday, May 11, 45 canoeists and kayakers met in Elizabeth City for an outing on the Pasquotank River. The outing was organized and led by former NCTC member Bill Sterritt, now associated with the College of the Albemarle.

The outing began at Morgan's Corner in the narrows of the Pasquotank River and ended nine miles down river. All participants were treated to a Kentucky Fried Chicken dinner at the trip's end provided by Rodney Johnson and the Albemarle Resource Conservation and Development Council.

Many in the group expressed interest in having more than one canoe outing during the year. Because of this interest, an outing may be planned for this fall. If anyone is interested in participating in another outing and would like more information, contact Tom Potter at (919) 778-9488.

Rodney Johnson Presented Award for Service to Trails and State Parks

Tom Potter

At the North Carolina Association of Resource, Conservation and Development Council's annual meeting in Wilmington, Rodney Johnson--Coordinator of the Albemarle Region Council--was presented a North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation Award for his assistance in developing the Albemarle Region Canoe and Small Boat Trail System. The presentation was made by Darrell McBane, State Trails Coordinator representing Philip McKnelly, Division Director. Mr. Johnson has contributed hundreds of hours of work in assisting the inventory and developing a map and sign system for the 29 individual streams, creeks, and rivers in the 200-plus miles of the system in the 10 northeastern counties of North Carolina.

Mr. Johnson has also assisted in convincing local government officials of the benefits of such a trail system. He met with county commissioners to inform them of the canoe trail system and to solicit their support. Mr. Johnson also served as a point of contact for local land-owners and other community leaders seeking permission to use their property for access points for the canoe trail system and assisted in securing leases for the access points. Through his local contacts, he was able to solicit volunteers to place the trail signs along the streams. These volunteers donated approximately 100 hours to this project and will be assisting in monitoring these signs.

Mr. Johnson, through his contacts with Natural Resources Conservation Services, was able to secure small boats, gas, and other equipment needed to inventory, map and sign these canoe trails. Mr. Johnson, with assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Services' office in Fort Worth, Texas, had the regional brochure prepared for printing, saving an estimated \$3,000 for the project.

Since the canoe trail system was developed, Mr. Johnson has assisted in promoting the canoe trail system by contacting local media and assisting with promotional events, such as our National Trails Day celebration in June of 1995, in which over 60 people canoed one of the trails and ended with a hot dog cookout.

Without his assistance, this project would have taken much longer, and expenditures by the Division would have been much greater. This project has been well received by the local communities and is attracting national attention. People from all over the eastern United States have been requesting our brochure and planning to make trips to this area. This project will have a positive im-

pact on our State Trails Program and to the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Johnson has also provided valuable assistance to Merchant's Millpond and Pettigrew state parks. At Merchant's Millpond, he helped secure grant funding for developing a constructed wetlands septic field, as well as for establishing a weather station and an area recreational kiosk. His assistance at Pettigrew State Park includes a \$5,000 grant from the Albemarle Resource Conservation and Development Council and coordination of a \$5,000 grant from Weyerhaeuser Company for development of a fishing pier and canoe launching facility at the West End area of the park.

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Trails of Thought

Dear Fellow Trails Enthusiasts:

Last fall, Tom Potter and I attended the Southeastern State Trails Coordinators' workshop in Knoxville, Tennessee. With the invitation to attend this workshop, we were asked to prepare a brief description of what our State Trails Program does and wants to do. After some thought, one word came to mind that best described what our State Trails Program does and wants to do more -- "enable."

Webster defines enable as "to supply with the means, knowledge, or opportunity to be or do something, to make feasible or possible, to give legal power, capacity, or sanction to." We want to enable the development of trails, all types of trails, across North Carolina.

I think this one word captures the purpose of the State Trails Program as stated in the 1973 State Trails System Act. I know that I've talked about our purpose before, and have even included the text in this document, but it doesn't hurt us to every so often revisit the old State Trails System Act. It states:

In order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanded population and in order to promote public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoor, natural and remote areas of the State, *trails should be established* in natural, scenic areas of the State, and in and near urban areas.

The purpose of this Article is *to provide the means for attaining these objectives* by instituting a State system of scenic and recreational trails, coordinated with and complemented by existing and future local trail segments or systems, and by prescribing the methods by which, and standards by which, components may be added to the State Trails System. (*italics mine*)

Obviously, this purpose leaves great room for interpretation. It says that the State could, if so desired, acquire, build, maintain and manage State Trails. It also says that the State Trails System should be coordinated with and complemented by existing and future local trail segments or systems. Well, as you know and have read in this newsletter, the Division of Parks and Recreation has not yet gotten into the acquisition, development and management of long distance trails. State Parks have their hands full just trying to manage trails within their boundaries.

Well, then, how can the State best enable or provide

the means for attaining the objectives outlined in the State Trails Act? This is a question that I believe has been somewhat troubling to the North Carolina Trails Committee. It led the North Carolina Trails Committee to devote the majority of their meeting time on June 7 to a brainstorming session titled "What's your vision for the State Trails Program?" In short, their answers can best be paraphrased in three words: money, legislation, and staffing--with a consistent source of significant funding as their top priority knowing that with sufficient funding, legislation and staffing will follow.

Now, there's talk of a North Carolina Trails Funding Program (NCTFP) modeled after the National Recreational Trails Funding Program. The NCTFP could be funded from state gas taxes charged on fuel used for off-highway purposes. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that North Carolina uses over 34.4 million gallons in off-highway miles. Multiply this figure times the amount of state gas tax (currently just over 22 cents per gallon), and a figure of over \$7 million dollars annually appears. No new tax, just the reallocation of an existing tax that goes into the state highway fund. Would this be enabling or what! Stay tuned for further updates on this topic. The North Carolina Trails Committee is interested.

Speaking of the National Recreational Trails Funding Program, this one program has brought together all trail users as never before. For probably the first time, all user groups are pulling together. We are not fussing over who gets to use land, we're united on the need for trails money to fund trails for all users. And this coalition of users is very strong, with all these user groups well represented on your North Carolina Trails Committee.

Take the time to give them a call and tell them thanks for what they are doing. I'm sure they will be calling you for support of the North Carolina Trails Funding Program, in the near future.

As always, we appreciate what each of you does in support of trails, rivers, greenways, equestrian trails, rail-trails, mountain bicycle trails and off-highway vehicle trails across North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Darrell

Darrell L. McBane

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Alleghany	Macon
Ashe	Madison
Avery	McDowell
Burke	Mitchell
Caldwell	Polk
Cherokee	Rowan
Clay	Rutherford
Cleveland	Swain
Davie	Transylvania
Graham	Watauga
Haywood	Wilkes
Henderson	Yancey
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Anson	Nash
Cabarrus	Northampton
Caswell	Orange
Chatham	Person
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Guilford	Stanley
Halifax	Stokes
Harnett	Surry
Hoke	Union
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Montgomery	Wake
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Bertie	Johnston
Bladen	Lenoir
Brunswick	Martin
Camden	New Hanover
Carteret	Onslow
Chowan	Pamlico
Columbus	Pasquotank
Craven	Pender
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