

2013

Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests
Non-motorized Trail Strategy



*Produced by the National Forests in North Carolina in conjunction with Trail Strategy
Collaborators from the following organizations:*

American Endurance Riding Conference, Andrews Valley Initiative, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Back Country Horsemen of North Carolina, Back Country Horsemen Great Smoky Mountains, Back Country Horsemen of Big Creek, Back Country Horsemen of Pisgah, Benton MacKaye Trail Association, Big Ivy Amblers, Blue Ridge Horseman's Association, Boone Area Cyclists, Inc, Buncombe County Parks Greenways and Rec Services, Cane Creek Cycling Components, Carolina Mountain Club, Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, Cherokee Choices, Cherokee National Forest, Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association, Foothills Conservancy, Foothills Trail Conference, Friends of DuPont Forest, Friends of Panthertown, Gorges State Park, Graham County Recreation, Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team, Great Smoky Mountain National Park, High Country Hikers, Hot Springs Mountain Club, Jackson Macon Conservation Alliance, Macon County Horse Association, McDowell Tourism Development Authority, McDowell Trails Association, Mountain High Hikers, Nantahala Area Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association,, Nantahala Hiking Club, NC Bartram Trail Society, NC Division of Parks and Recreation, NC High Peaks Trail Association, NC Horse Council, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, NC Youth Camp Association Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Association, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail National Park, Partners of Joyce Kilmer, Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Pisgah Area Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association,, Pisgah Group of Sierra Club, Pisgah Trailblazers, Riverwalk Murphy, Southern Appalachian Bicycling Association, Sierra Club- WENOCA group, Smoky Mountain Bicycles, Southeast Endurance Riders Association, Tarheel Trailblazers North Group, The Hub & Back Country Outdoors, The Wilderness Society- Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards, Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, Trail Dynamics LLC, Western North Carolina Alliance, WildSouth, Western North Carolina Outdoors, Yancey County Economic Development Commission

Table of Contents

Trails on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests	1
Purpose of the Strategy	1
Current State of the Trails	2
Collaborative Process.....	4
Trails Strategy Goals.....	5
USDA Forest Service Trail Management Direction.....	6
Trail Fundamentals	6
Trail Management Objectives (TMO)	7
National Quality Standards for Trails	7
Trail Sustainability.....	8
Environmental Sustainability.....	8
Social Sustainability.....	9
Financial Sustainability.....	9
Volunteers	10
Trail Proposal Evaluation	11
Nantahala National Forest Districts	12
Cheoah District	13
Cheoah District-West- Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	14
Cheoah District-East- Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	15
Cheoah District – Collaborator Comments.....	16
Joyce Kilmer - Slickrock Wilderness Trail Complex	17
Snowbird Trail Complex.....	20
Santeetlah Lake Trail Complex	21
Yellow Creek / Cheoah Bald Trail Complex	22
Tsali Trail Complex	23
Cheoah District -District-Wide Comments.....	25
Nantahala District	27
Nantahala District – West - Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	29

Nantahala District - Collaborator Comments	31
Appletree / Nantahala Gorge Trail Complex	32
Wine Springs / Wayah Bald Trail Complex	33
Standing Indian Trail Complex.....	34
Highlands Trail Complex.....	35
Panthertown Trail Complex.....	36
Nantahala District -District-Wide Comments.....	39
Tusquitee District.....	40
Tusquitee District – West - Trail Complex Vicinity Map	41
Tusquitee District – East - Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	42
Tusquitee District - Collaborator Comments.....	43
Benton Mackaye Trail Complex.....	44
Hanging Dog Trail Complex	45
Fires Creek Trail Complex.....	46
Jack Rabbit Trail Complex	50
Chunky Gal / Southern Nantahala Trail Complex	52
Tusquitee District - District-Wide Comments	53
Pisgah National Forest Districts.....	54
Appalachian District	55
Appalachian District – West - Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	57
Appalachian District – Central - Trail Complex Vicinity Map	58
Appalachian District – North - Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	59
Appalachian District – Southeast - Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	60
Appalachian District - Collaborator Comments	61
Harmon Den Trail Complex	62
Hot Springs Trail Complex.....	63
Shelton Laurel Trail Complex	65
Lost Cove / Flattop Mountain Trail Complex.....	66
Roan Mountain / OVNHT Trail Complex.....	67
Big Ivy / Big Butt Trail Complex	68
South Toe River Trail Complex.....	70

Grandfather District	72
Grandfather District – West- Trail Complex Vicinity Map.....	74
Grandfather District – Central- Trail Complex Vicinity Map	75
Grandfather District – East - Trail Complex Vicinity Map	76
Grandfather District – Collaborator Comments.....	77
Old Fort / Catawba Falls Trail Complex.....	78
Mackey Mountain / Curtis Creek Trail Complex	79
Woods Mountain / Armstrong Trail Complex	81
Linville Gorge / Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Complex (OVNHT).....	82
Wilson Creek / Steeles Creek Trail Complex	84
Boone Fork / Globe Trail Complex	87
Pisgah District.....	89
Pisgah District Trail Complex Vicinity Map	91
Pisgah District – Collaborator Comments	92
Bent Creek Trail Complex	93
Wash Creek Trail Complex	94
South Mills River Trail Complex	95
276 Corridor Trail Complex	97
Headwaters Corridor Trail Complex	100
Graveyard Fields Trail Complex	103
Middle Prong & Shining Rock Wilderness Areas Trail Complex.....	104
Pisgah District -District-Wide Comments	106
Appendices.....	108
Appendix 1- Additional collaborator comments from meetings	109
Appendix 2- Funding Sources	125
Appendix 3- Volunteer Sources.....	126

Trails on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests

National Forest System Trails are the arteries into the heart of the forest. They are one of the primary activities that allow people to experience the forests beyond the picnic areas, campgrounds, and forest highways. Trails invite people to view waterfalls and scenic overlooks and entice them to explore deeper into the forests. They allow a personal interaction with the forest landscape in a minimally constructed and planned environment.

Recreational trails are a major component of the recreation programs on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. Trails are increasingly destinations in and of themselves. They provide places to enjoy one's chosen method of travel whether it is by foot, bicycle, or horse. Trails can be economic drivers for local communities and are generally seen as green, providing open space and green corridors for wildlife and communities around forests. No matter the mode of travel, there are personal health benefits to trail activities, getting people outside and away from the computer and television. Trail users are diverse, passionate, caring and giving.

Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this document is to provide recommendations for the sustainable management of non-motorized trails across the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests of North Carolina. The strategy identifies issues to address in order to provide sustainable, diverse, quality trail experiences well into the future. The strategy will also be an important reference for upcoming Forest Plan revisions. The process created new partnerships and has provided additional volunteer support for trail management on National Forest System lands.

The National Forests in North Carolina initiated the Non-Motorized Trail Strategy collaborative process to analyze existing trails and complexes, evaluate current and predicted needs, and create a coordinated approach to managing forest trails. With shrinking trail budgets and the high volume of visitor use, managing National Forest System Trails has become increasingly challenging. The future success of sustainable trail management relies on the thoughtful prioritization of trail projects, efficient use of the volunteer workforce, and maximizing opportunities for trail grant funding. The importance of these factors is magnified by the fact that Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests have far more trail miles than can be maintained with current funding and volunteer programs. Yet every year the Forest Service receives numerous requests for additional trails. There is a need to strategically address these requests given current and future resources, and to balance these desires with providing a higher quality trail experience rather than an increase in trail miles.

The Non-motorized Trail Strategy can also be used to inform the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) revision, which is being launched in early 2013. Through several collaborative public meetings the Trail Strategy engaged trail user groups in discussions of a broad range of trail-related issues, from user perceptions of positive trail experiences, to elements of sustainability, and recommendations for improving trail system function and condition. Collaborator recommendations included in this document can be referenced in forest

planning where users have indicated desired conditions such as locating mountain bike trail systems near communities, or a desire to have trail heads which fully accommodate the intended use, or to ensure adequate opportunities for hike-only trails in scenic landscapes. Information on desired condition is not only helpful to District trail managers, but could be beneficial in the Forest Plan revision as well.

Current State of the Trails

The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are home to approximately 1560 miles of non-motorized trails managed for hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding. Many system trails represent a legacy of forest management practices and trail interests spanning many years. While some of these trails were built in sustainable locations and well designed, many were “ridden” or “walked” in, placed on old logging roads, and never built following good design standards. Many were developed to respond to individual requests and not planned within a larger context of providing a comprehensive trail program.

These trails tend to be randomly placed, lack overall design and necessary support facilities, and do not hold up to the capacity requirements of either the trail users or the modes of travel. Some current trail designs do not meet user needs, are creating major erosion issues, and are causing environmental damage. In the face of trying to maintain the existing system of trails, the Forest Service struggles with trying to mitigate effects of non-system trails and damage from unmanaged recreation. Additionally, the Forest Service is besieged with requests for new and expanded trail systems in the face of declining budgets.

Another factor contributing to trail condition and maintenance backlog is the sheer volume of use. The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are among the most visited in the nation, with an estimated 4.6 million visits annually. Of those visitors approximately 73% participate in hiking, bicycling, or horseback riding; and an estimated 48% come to the National Forests with non-motorized trail recreation as their primary reason for visiting. By a wide margin, non-motorized trail-use is the most popular recreation activity on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. This data comes from the USDA Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) conducted in 2003 and 2008.

Trail funding on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests comes from three sources: appropriated funds, fee collections, and grants (primarily Recreational Trails Program grants). The combined non-motorized trail funding on these two forests was approximately \$366,000 for FY2011, this amount was slightly lower for FY2012. This equates to annual funding of approximately \$235 per trail mile (including grants and fee collections). Comparatively, contracted trail maintenance can cost \$10,000-\$15,000 per mile for brush & hazard tree removal, structure repair/replacement, and restoration of tread & drainage. Construction of new trails or relocations can be much more expensive.

Though fee collections may rise over time as use increases, projected budget appropriations for trails are expected to decrease each year for the foreseeable future. A major source of funding for trail maintenance and construction projects on the National Forests is the Federal Highways Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The National Forest's trails have been heavily subsidized by RTP grants awarded through the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation's Recreational Trails Program. This program, while having been fairly steady for the last 15 years, is not a guaranteed program. Reauthorization through Congress is required to keep it alive. Additionally, at the state level, competition for funding is increasing and the National Forests are less assured of success in competing for non-motorized trail projects.

Table 1 - Trail funding sources for FY2011

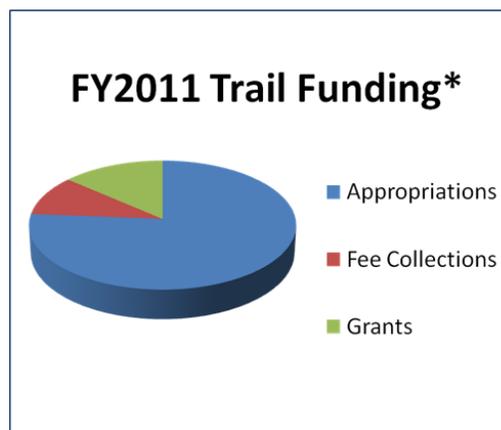


Table 2 - Trail mileage of each non-motorized use-type by Forest & District

NFNC Non-Motorized Trail Miles by Use-Type*					
NFNC Unit	Total	Hike Only	Horse/Hike	Bike/Hike	Horse/Bike/Hike
Nantahala NF	649	504	72	21	52
Cheoah RD	252	198	15	0	39
Tusquitee RD	121	83	18	20	0
Nantahala RD	276	223	39	1	13
Pisgah NF	911	609	50	157	95
Pisgah RD	380	200	8	99	73
Appalachian RD	264	203	39	15	7
Grandfather RD	267	206	3	43	15
Total for NAN-PSG NF	1560	1113	122	178	147

* Mileage is approximate as of Jan. 2012; trail assessments and database updates are ongoing.

Collaborative Process

One of the major challenges the Forest Service has is fostering open, productive communication with trail users. The need to improve communications and trail management conversations with trail partners is recognized, as is the need to involve the different trail advocates into a larger collaboration group to help the agency with long term trail maintenance and planning. The vehicle for conducting the Trail Strategy has been a collaborative between trail users/volunteers and the Forest Service. From its inception, the process involved members of the public possessing an interest in National Forest trails working in conjunction with Forest Service personnel at all levels of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests; including District Technicians, Program Managers and Rangers, as well as Supervisor's Office Program Managers, Staff Officers and Forest Supervisors.

Although the release of this document was the primary product of the Trail Strategy, it does not mark an end to the collaborative process. Interaction with user groups will continue through District project coordination with volunteer groups and with continued dialogue through the nctrailstrategy@gmail.com email account. Collaborator comments will be monitored and this Trail Strategy document will be periodically updated based on evolving needs, opportunities, and accomplishments. With the concept of both the collaborative process and this document being dynamic in nature, there is no end date or timeline for implementation. Updates will be posted to the National Forests in North Carolina Non-motorized Trail Strategy website at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/nctrailstrategy

Initial stages of the Trail Strategy were in 2010 and 2011 with GPS condition surveys being conducted on 345 miles of non-motorized system trails across the Nantahala & Pisgah National Forests. Of these, 300 miles were surveyed by Forest Service employees and 45 miles by volunteers. WildSouth was awarded a National Forest Foundation (NFF) grant to recruit and coordinate these volunteers from hiking, bicycling, and equestrian user groups. Volunteers were then trained by Forest Service personnel in trail condition survey methods using GPS. Under a subsequent NFF grant for project coordination, additional trail miles were surveyed by WildSouth volunteers in 2012. These efforts were the beginning of the collaborative process.

In early 2012 the National Forests in North Carolina expanded the collaboration with three rounds of public meetings aimed at engaging a broad spectrum of non-motorized trail users of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. Introductory workshops were held in five locations around Western North Carolina, during which Trail Strategy goals were outlined. There were over 200 participants representing over 70 organizations. A foundation for the collaborative process was set, including defining a positive trail experience from perspectives of various use types, exploring definitions of sustainable trail management, and creating rapport between user groups.

The second round of meetings included one meeting for each National Forest to identify trail complexes on each district and potential criteria to be used in evaluating trail proposals at subsequent meetings. In the summer of 2012 a third round of meetings was held for each District to identify specific collaborator recommendations, which were then compiled for analysis.

Following District-specific meetings, Forest Service trail managers analyzed collaborator recommendations for each District of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. This process balanced collaborator recommendations with Trail Strategy objectives, Forest Plan standards, and District goals. Recommendations were then categorized by trail maintenance items implementable with the volunteer workforce; and those needing more extensive planning, funding and long-term commitment for volunteer maintenance. All collaborator recommendations and Forest Service responses are detailed in the following sections of this document or appendices. Regardless of how these recommendations are categorized, implementation of any proposal is dependent on funding, environmental clearance, and volunteer commitment for maintenance.

A final round of collaborator meetings was held for each affected National Forest to present this draft Trails Strategy and provide an opportunity for review and discussion. In all, approximately 45 organizations and several individuals (not associated with an organization) were represented through the full process. All meetings were open to the public; advertised through web, news releases, and/or emails; and scheduled on weekday evenings to maximize collaborator involvement.

Trails Strategy Goals

The following are goals and outcomes initially established by the Forest Service Trail Strategy steering team and subsequently updated through the collaborative process. Although the list as it appears below has been expanded, refined and/or focused on what became the most important issues to collaborators and Forest Service trail managers, these basic goals were presented and discussed at each collaborator meeting and referenced throughout the process. Some of these goals will only be accomplished over time with implementation of the Trail Strategy, but many have been completed and detailed in this document.

Nantahala & Pisgah National Forest Non-motorized Trail Strategy Goals & Outcomes:

- Identify a sustainable trail system providing a range of high quality recreation experiences for each use-type; emphasize a quality experience over quantity of trail miles.
 - Identify unsustainable trails needing maintenance or relocation due to poor location, erosion, excessive grade, etc.
 - Identify existing trails that can be used as loop opportunities with construction of short connector trails.

- Identify trails which are little-used, unsustainable for their designed use, serve no function within a complex, or are incompatible with other resource objectives and should be decommissioned.
- Identify needs for supporting infrastructure, such as trail head improvements, signage, information kiosks, etc.
- Develop a working definition of sustainable trails, and a process for evaluating sustainability of existing trails and user requests for new trails.
- Explore opportunities to connect Forest Service system trails with those on adjacent public lands, such as county greenways, State Parks, and National Parks.
- Recruit, organize, train and empower volunteer groups to provide increased maintenance and support to the Forest Service trails program in an efficient and integrated manner; especially on Districts currently lacking sufficient support.
- Update the agency trails databases, identify missing data and collect information on trail location and condition.
- Provide improved trail information at trail head kiosks, District offices, in map publications, and through the internet; for user convenience, resource protection, and a reduction of unmanaged recreation on non-system trails.
- Continue the Trail Strategy collaborative process into the future, with opportunities for public feedback, information exchange, updating project proposals, and reporting of trail maintenance and improvement accomplishments.

USDA Forest Service Trail Management Direction

The USDA Forest Service trail management direction is provided at multiple levels including: Forest Service Manuals (FSM), Forest Service Handbooks (FSH), and Land Management Plans. National direction is summarized in training a document called *Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives*, updated in May 2011. The complete document can be downloaded from the National Forests in North Carolina Trail Strategy web-page: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/nctrailstrategy

The following section provides an overview of national trail management direction:

Trail Fundamentals

Five “Trail Fundamentals” are identified for each National Forest System Trail, specific direction for this requirement can be found in FSM 2353.13.

- Trail Type – Terra, Water, Snow
- Trail Class – TC1 (minimally development) through TC5 (fully developed)
- Managed Use – All uses managed on specific trail; hike, bike, pack & saddle, etc.
- Designed Use – Use for which trail is designed; hike, bike, *or* pack & saddle, etc.
- Design Parameters – Technical guidelines for the survey, design, construction, and maintenance of a trail based on its Designed Use and Trail Class

Trail Fundamentals provide an integrated means to communicate intended design and management guidelines for trail design, construction, maintenance and use. A trail's Designed Use and Trail Class dictates Design Parameters which define trail characteristics for design, construction and maintenance. If a trail does not conform to identified Design Parameters it may not be sustainable for its intended use, and should be reviewed for maintenance or relocation needs, a change in Designed Use or Trail Class, or for potential decommissioning. A complete list of trail Design Parameters is included as part of *Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives* document available for download.

Trail Management Objectives (TMO)

Trail Management Objectives are documentation of the intended purpose and management of a National Forest system trail based on management direction. When the five Trail Fundamentals are defined for an existing or proposed trail they are recorded in the Forest Service trail database and summarized as a Trail Management Objective (TMO). Each trail is to be managed for the TMOs identified for that trail, including Designed Use, Managed Use, Trail Class, Design Parameters, maintenance frequencies, etc. Additional information on TMOs can be found in the *Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives* document and in FSM 2353.12. The National Forests in North Carolina has updated TMOs for most trails, but database updates are ongoing.

National Quality Standards for Trails

National Quality Standards are national criteria that establish the level of quality in terms of health and cleanliness, resource setting, safety and security, responsiveness, and condition of facilities for National Forest System trails. Certain National Quality Standards are identified as "Critical Standards". If Critical Standards cannot be met, action should be taken as soon as practicable to correct or mitigate the problem; and the trail should be temporarily closed until the problem is resolved. In some cases the trail should be reviewed for possible decommissioning.

Critical National Quality Standards for Trails assure that:

- Hazards do not exist on or along the trail
- Effects from trail use do not conflict with environmental laws
- When a trail is signed as accessible, it meets current agency policy and accessibility guidelines

Additional National Quality Standards state that:

- The trail and trailside are free of human waste, litter, or graffiti
- The trail, use of the trail, and trail maintenance do not cause unacceptable damage to other resources
- Information is posted in a clear and professional manner
- The trail and its structures are serviceable and in good repair throughout their designed service life

- Trails that are in disrepair due to lack of maintenance should be repaired, rehabilitated, replaced, or decommissioned, as appropriate.
- New, altered, or expanded trails meet Forest Service design standards and are consistent with Forest Plan direction

These additional National Quality Standards are condensed or paraphrased for the purposes of this document. The complete text is available in *Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives*, or FSH 2353.15.

For a trail to be considered “managed to standard” all critical standards and at least 80% of additional standards must be met. If these conditions cannot be met, the trail should be reviewed for needed corrections or potential decommissioning.

In addition to national trail management direction, other design considerations discussed in Trail Strategy collaborative meetings are to:

- Locate and maintain trails for sustainability.
- Focus on a quality experience over quantity of miles.
- Provide loop opportunities from well-maintained trailheads.
- Provide long distance (multi-day) opportunities.
- Design trail systems to support existing developed recreation facilities.

Trail Sustainability

From the very first Forest Service steering team meeting, through all collaborator meetings, and into analysis of collaborator recommendations, trail sustainability has been the cornerstone of the Nantahala & Pisgah National Forest Non-motorized Trail Strategy. In collaborator meetings there was extensive discussion of what sustainability meant to participants. The concept of trail sustainability was defined from perspectives of trail users, maintainers, and managers.

After much deliberation and review of collaborator definitions, three basic elements of trail sustainability surfaced: Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability, and Financial Sustainability. These elements of sustainability work in concert. They are like a three-legged stool, if one leg is broken the stool will fail. In trail management, if any one of these elements is missing or broken it should be a priority to correct. If the issue cannot be corrected in a reasonable manner, the trail should be considered for decommissioning.

Environmental Sustainability

To be considered environmentally sustainable a trail must conform to USDA Forest Service National Quality Standards for Trails. By these standards a trail or trail use must not unacceptably impact other resources or be in violation of any environmental law. Therefore, to be environmentally sustainable a trail or trail use must not contribute sediments to waterways; have unacceptable impacts to wildlife, plants, or their habitats; or have any condition where the trail tread or structures are

unstable or in jeopardy of failure. If any of these conditions exist the trail should be repaired, relocated, or considered for decommissioning.

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability as related to trails considers how well user needs are being accommodated by a specific trail. A trail could be considered socially unsustainable if:

- The trail is not being used, has overgrown or fallen into disrepair, and has no volunteers willing to perform routine maintenance
- It does not serve a needed purpose within a complex such as a connector or loop, or is not serving as a destination trail to a waterfall or scenic overlook, or does not serve as part of a long-distance trail
- The trail is not supported by other facilities such as trail heads, campgrounds, picnic areas, etc.
- The only trail access is across private land and no ROW or easement exists
- Its sole purpose is to provide National Forest access from private lands which are not useable by the general public; i.e. exclusive use
- There are serious conflicts among user groups, especially where user safety is concerned

If any of these conditions exist and attempts at resolution are unsuccessful, the trail should be considered for relocation, a change in managed use, or potential decommissioning.

Financial Sustainability

Trail funding generally comes from three sources: budget appropriations, fees, and grants. These funds pay for overhead, salary, environmental reviews, training, travel, fleet, equipment, materials & supplies, contracts, and every other aspect of managing a National Forest trail program. The amount of funding available in any given year is always far less than that needed to maintain the 1560 miles of Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest non-motorized trails to National Quality Standards.

Reliance on a volunteer workforce is essential, but it too has costs. Managing a volunteer workforce requires salary for District volunteer coordinators, as well as the cost of fleet, tools, training, safety equipment, etc. The actual per mile cost of trail maintenance by Forest Service or volunteer crew is difficult to ascertain. Contract maintenance or construction costs are easier to estimate and budget. Regardless of how trail maintenance and construction work is accomplished, there is an associated cost.

Whether maintenance or relocation of an existing trail, or proposal for a new a trail, it can only be considered financially sustainable if:

- The work is fully funded through appropriations, fees, or grants; including funding for all required environmental reviews and clearances
- A long-term commitment for routine maintenance is established with a well-organized volunteer group

- National Quality Standards for Trails can be met with a combination of available funding and volunteer efforts

If these conditions for financial sustainability cannot be met, the trail should be considered for possible decommissioning.

Volunteers

The future of recreational trails in Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests relies on a close cooperative and communicative relationship between the Forest Service District trail staff and the leaders and members of the volunteer organizations. Volunteers have generously donated their time and talent to advance the Forest Service Mission. Volunteers spend tens of thousands of hours annually engaged in the development, maintenance, and management of the trails and trail systems that connect people to the land and its resources.

Additionally, trail volunteerism itself is a form of recreation. People form tight social networks, create lasting positive memories, and enrich their lives by donating time and energy to Forest Service trails. Taking all of this into account, volunteers engaged in the trail program should be managed by the Forest Service in a way that leverages their value as a labor force, respects their status as constituents and owners of the public lands legacy, and honors their charity by ensuring their time is well spent, meaningful, and enjoyable.

The Forest Service recognizes that the capacity to provide quality recreational trails depends heavily on a well-trained volunteer corps. However, managing volunteers takes time, energy, deliberation, and resources to manage effectively. They are not free. Forest Service employees working with volunteers often have difficulty performing in this arena due to time constraints and having the volunteer program assigned to them as collateral duties. If the Forest Service wants to effectively work with volunteers, there must be a commitment of time and personnel resources to do so. With limited resources, however, it is clear that Forest Service employees can more effectively manage volunteer groups rather than individuals. Those interested in volunteering on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are encouraged to join an already established volunteer organization that has an agreement in place with the Forest Service. A list of potential volunteer opportunities developed by collaborators can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

Volunteer management is a complex and demanding job. Sometimes people who are serving as volunteers may advocate for a pet project or propose new trails, but don't follow through with the long-term commitment for maintenance. Often times, people "volunteer" and do not coordinate the work to be done or let the Forest Service know they are out doing trail "maintenance" activities. In other cases, people who believe themselves to be volunteering will alter trail resources "on behalf" of the Forest Service without permission. In the worst case scenarios, these activities can lead to resource damage, a duplication of effort, violations of the Endangered Species Act or the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, or injury. A clear volunteer agreement with a description

of service and job hazard analysis must be in place to prevent these problems. “Volunteers” acting outside of the scope of service contained within their volunteer agreement are not volunteers.

An approach utilized on the Pisgah Ranger District has proven to be an effective means of volunteer management, recruiting a volunteer to serve as the District volunteer project coordinator. District volunteer program managers are encouraged to explore this concept with key volunteer organization leadership. Similar project coordination may already exist within certain volunteer organizations, but recruiting a volunteer to coordinate projects among all District volunteer groups and individuals could increase efficiency. Another possibility for increasing efficiency is the possibility of developing Forest-wide sponsored volunteer agreements for those volunteer organizations serving multiple Districts. This approach could significantly reduce paperwork for the Forest Service and volunteer organization.

The Trail Strategy collaborative process has provided an opportunity for improved communication between the Forest Service and volunteers. It is the Forest Service goal to strengthen these relationships and develop more effective partnerships to improve volunteer efforts for the future.

Trail Proposal Evaluation

Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest trail program managers and District Rangers are frequently asked to construct relocations, new trails, or entirely new trail systems. As previously stated, available trails funding and current volunteer workforce is inadequate to maintain the existing 1560 miles of non-motorized system trails. Adding new trails to the system is a difficult decision for District Rangers and trail program managers because of the initial planning and construction costs, but a more troubling concern is the long-term commitment to maintenance. When a user-group or individual requests a new trail they usually offer to maintain or even construct the route, but have no knowledge of the costs associated with trail planning, design, and environmental review costs. In some cases these proposals are “pet” projects and no consideration has been made of how the trail would function within a complex, if there are adequate support facilities, if it would conform to Forest Plan and national trail management direction, or if proposal would impact other resources.

For these reasons a process is needed to evaluate and filter proposals for relocation or new trail construction. This document contains information on National Quality Standards for Trails and Design Parameters for the Designed Use and Trail Class, and criteria for sustainable trails based on collaborator input. Criteria and trail management requirements can be used to evaluate proposals, but a streamlined process is needed and was an identified goal of the Trail Strategy. However, a process for trail proposal evaluation was not developed because similar efforts are underway by the Forest Service Southern Regional office recreation staff. When the Regional process is complete, it will be adopted on the National Forests in North Carolina.

Nantahala National Forest Districts

Cheoah District

Background - The Cheoah Ranger District has 120,500 acres in Graham and Swain Counties. These lands surround four large mountain reservoirs and contain numerous streams. Fishing, boating, whitewater rafting, hunting, hiking, and viewing fall colors are some popular activities. The district is bounded by the Cherohala Skyway to the west. The Appalachian Trail and other trails make up a trail network that crosses the district, including a section of the Bartram trail, from Beechertown to Cheoah Bald. There are a variety of trail opportunities for horseback riders, mountain bikers, short-distance hikers, and backpackers. The District has several lakeside, streamside, and scenic developed campgrounds, and picnic areas.

The Cheoah District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Joyce Kilmer Wilderness Area Complex

- Maintenance on Stratton Bald (TR54), Jenkins Meadows (TR53A), Naked Ground (TR55), & Hangover Lead (TR56)
- Hazard Tree Removal on Joyce Kilmer Memorial Loop Trail (TR43).

Tsali Complex

- Maintenance on Tsali Right Loop (TR38A), Tsali Left Loop (TR38), Mouse Branch Loop (TR152), Dave Thompson Loop (TR152)

Projects - Work continues as the Cheoah District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

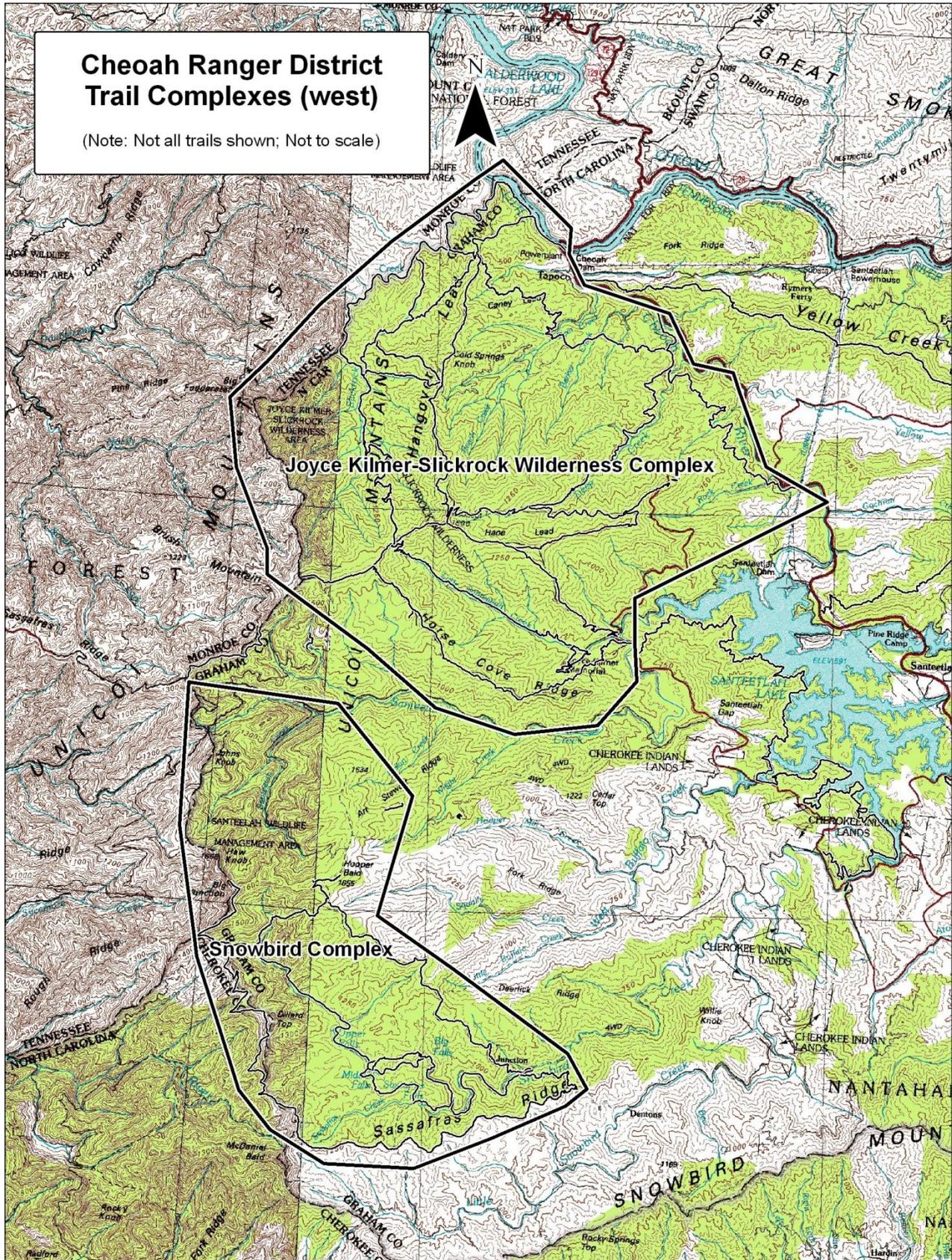
Yellow Creek / Cheoah Bald Complex

- Project planning underway for relocations along the AT near Grassy Gap
- District has applied for an RTP-grant to fund maintenance, relocations, & bridge replacement on Fontana Loop Trail (TR157) Contingent upon this funding is an additional RTP-grant application to improve Bee Cove Trail (TR421) to bike standards.
- Project planning underway – Bartram Trail Society to identify a connector trail between Valley River / Bartram Trail Extension and Cheoah Bald.
- Project planning underway – N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission plans to install a fishing pier on the Cheoah River. District plans to add an accessible trail from Joyce Kilmer Bridge down to the proposed fishing pier.

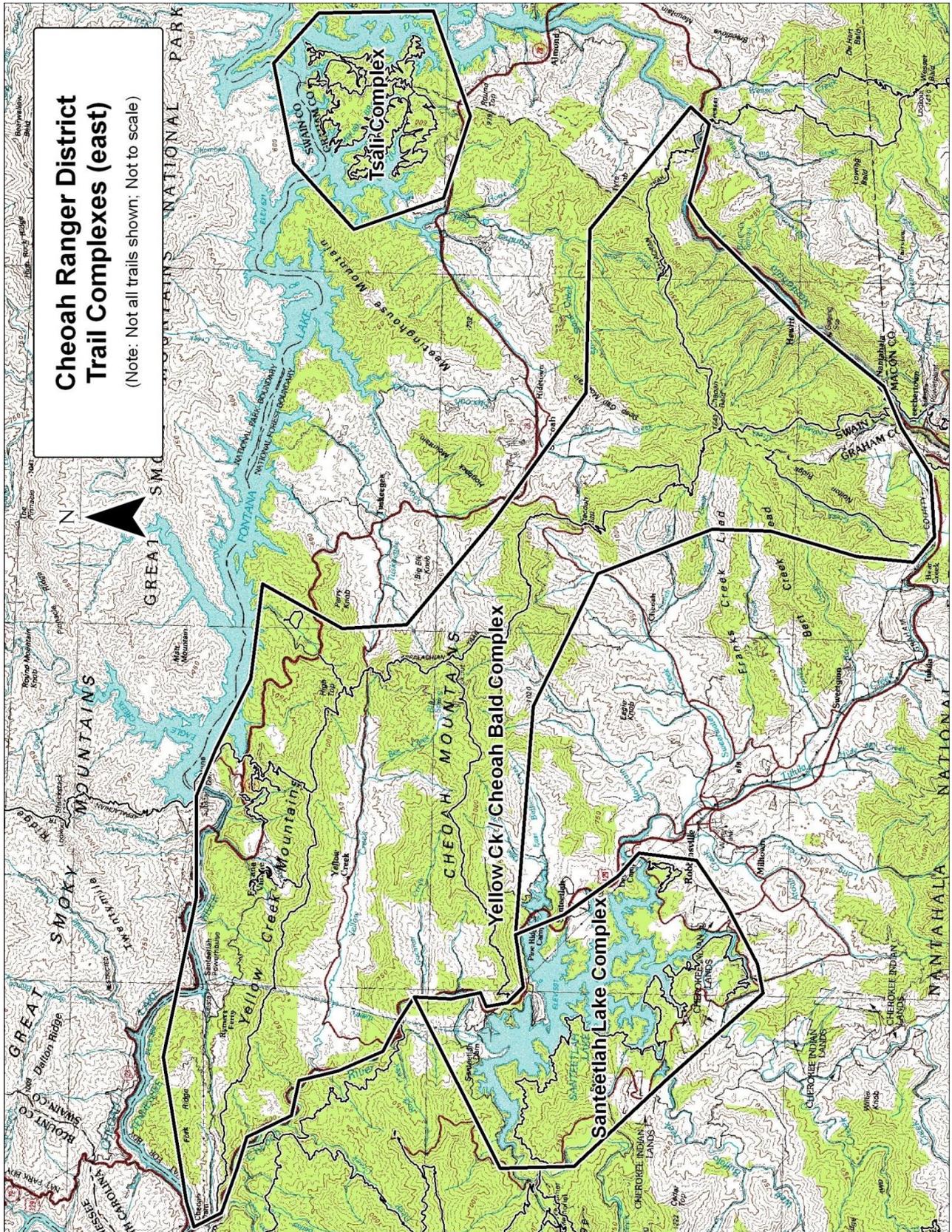
Cheoah- District Wide - Ongoing trail maintenance work provided by volunteer groups

The following Cheoah District vicinity maps show the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

Cheoah District-West- Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Cheoah District-East- Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Cheoah District – Collaborator Comments

The following sections provide information on trail complexes that were identified within the Cheoah District. The trail complex sections contain a table of collaborator comments and District input relating to each comment. Following the trail complex-specific tables, there is a table of ‘District-Wide’ collaborator comments with District input that do not relate to any specific complex trails.

As District personnel begin to prioritize projects identified in collaborator recommendations, the primary focus will be on maintenance items which can be implemented with minimal funding or planning; especially if work can be accomplished with volunteers. These projects could typically be completed in a shorter time frame, as opposed to more complex or costly projects. Recommendations of a larger scope requiring comprehensive analysis, extensive planning, significant funding and possible grant applications may still be considered, but implementation schedules would be impossible to predict.

Please note that where Forest Service responses indicate agreement with or consideration of collaborator recommendations, this is not a guarantee of implementation. Many of these recommendations would require funding for planning, environmental reviews, and construction; as well as long-term commitments for volunteer maintenance. Without these elements in place, it is unlikely a recommended project could be implemented.

Joyce Kilmer - Slickrock Wilderness Trail Complex

Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness area located along the North Carolina-Tennessee State Line. This Wilderness is comprised of 17,394 acres (with 13,562 acres in North Carolina and 3,832 acres in Tennessee). The area is well known for the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, an old-growth forest offering a 2-mile looped trail through towering trees as old as 450 years.

There are approximately 55 miles of hiking trails offering numerous loop opportunities within this complex. Like other wildernesses, the area is managed to protect naturalness and solitude. No motorized or mechanical vehicles or equipment, such as cars, chainsaws, or bicycles, are allowed within the wilderness. The trails are maintained to the most primitive standards, with few, if any, signs or blazes. Visitors to the area you are encouraged to carry a topographic map and a compass as this is a very remote wilderness.

There are several access points; from Tapoca, Maple Springs, Wolf Laurel, Big Fat Gap and Joyce Kilmer trailheads. The area shares a common boundary along the Unicoi Mountains with Citico Creek Wilderness on the Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee.

Cheoah District – Joyce Kilmer - Slickrock Wilderness Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Beech Gap		Safety	Interested in constructing a new and better trailhead at Beech Gap on NC/TN line on Cherohala Skyway. Badly needed. Has existing safety hazard from traffic and no place to park.	Agreed- Parking Lot expansion has been reviewed. Project planning in progress.
2	Big Fat	41	Comment	How much traffic is there from Big Fat Gap (TR41) to Yellow Hammer Creek (TR49) and Belding (TR52) (RGE1, Map 2	Noted- Trail counts are planned in future project.
3	Deep Creek	46	Maintenance	Deep Creek Trail- (Joyce Kilmer Wilderness)- upper section is hard to navigate at the 2nd switchback.	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
4	Haoe Lead	53	Maintenance	Haoe Lead (J.K.)- trail side hills are in bad need of grading. Falling off the mnt. In places.	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.

Cheoah District- Joyce Kilmer - Slickrock Wilderness Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
5	Cherohala Skyway		Maintenance	Existing trails need regular maintenance. FS roads could be utilized for hiking or horse traffic. This is especially true in Cherohala Skyway. Trails in J.Kilmer-Slickrock are in much need of heavy maintenance.	Agreed- Gated FS roads are generally open to horse/bike/hike use. Efforts are underway to maintain trails in JK/Slickrock Wilderness in cooperation with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards
6	Sassafras Creek	65	Maintenance	Lots of dead and down trees from Junction to Sassafras Creek. Willing to organize and coordinate team to keep maintained. (R. Davis)	Agreed- Need volunteer help to re-open these trails. Some private land. Please contact Ranger District Office.
7	Hangover Lead	56	Tread- Quick Fix	Hangover Lead(TR56) south of Big Fat Gap Trail Head about 3000 ft needs tread repair(BH1, Map 1)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
8	Hangover Lead	56	Tread- Quick Fix	Hangover Lead (TR56) between Naked Ground (TR55)and Stratton Bald (TR54) need tread work(BH6, Map 1)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
9	Hangover Lead	56	Tread- Quick Fix	Hangover Lead (TR56) at the junction of Deep Creek (TR46) needs about 3,000 feet of side hill reconstruction(BH7, Map 1)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
10	Deep Creek	46	Brushing- Quick Fix	Both Deep Creek(TR46) and Haeo Lead(TR53) need brush cleared(BH4, Map 1)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
11	Slickrock Creek	42	Brushing- Quick Fix	Slickrock Creek (TR42) north of the junction of Naked Ground (TR55) about 1000 ft needs about 11,000 feet of brush clearing(BH5, Map 1)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.

Cheoah District- Joyce Kilmer - Slickrock Wilderness Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
12			Maintenance	Joyce Kilmer Trails- Need major restoration work. Shining Rock Trails suffer from human impacts (lack of LNT). Training & certifications need to be streamlined.	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards in Wilderness on maintenance issues.
13	Deep Creek	46	Multi-Use	Deep Creek Trails- multiple access. More access to bikers and hikers with dogs.	Noted- Deep Creek Trail on Cheoah District is in Wilderness, bike use is not allowed.
14	Big Fat	41	Comment	Big Fat Gap (TR41) is a very steep trail, but gets heavily used(RGE3, Map3)	Noted

Snowbird Trail Complex

The Snowbird backcountry area lies in the Snowbird Creek basin near the convergence of the Snowbird and Unicoi mountain ranges. For centuries the area was hunted by the Cherokee, and due to its steep and rugged terrain, it was one of the last areas in Western North Carolina to be settled by European pioneers.

Snowbird is in a Wilderness Study Area that provides many miles of backcountry hiking trails. The complex is located adjacent to, and includes trails connecting to, the Cherohala Skyway.

Miles of hiking trails ascend the surrounding ranges and follow the Snowbird and Sassafras creeks. Like the nearby wilderness trails, these are purposely kept primitive and rugged; Big Snowbird Trail (TR64), for example, crosses the stream numerous times without the aid of bridges or footlogs. Sassafras Falls, Big Falls, Middle Falls, and Upper Falls are four waterfalls within the Snowbird Creek basin. These falls are all accessed off Big Snowbird Creek Trail, and some strenuous hiking is required to reach them.

Other trails in the area include Burntrock Ridge (TR65A), King Meadows (TR63), Middle Falls (TR64A), Mitchell Lick (TR154), Sassafras Creek (TR65), and Snowbird Mountain (TR415).

Cheoah District – Snowbird Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Big Snowbird	64	Maint.	Big Snowbird (TR64) to the junction of Middle Falls (64a) needs blow down removed(Map2)	Agreed- Working with Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards on maintenance issues.
2	Snowbird Mountain	415	Connector	Snowbird Mountain Trail (TR415) add connector to Benton Mackaye Trail near Cherohala Skyway(BH3, Map 2)	Will consider- need more information
3	Snowbird Mountain	415	Maint.	Big Snowbird Mountain (TR415) near Cherohala Skyway south to Hogjaw Gap needs restore (BH2, Map2)	Noted- need more information
4			Connector	There are many trails (old road) north of Andrews in Snowbird and south in Valley River Mnts need network.	Noted- more information needed

Santeetlah Lake Trail Complex

Santeetlah Lake Trail (TR156) is 22-mile trail extending from Snowbird Creek, along the western shore of the lake, ending near Rattler Ford Campground. This trail utilizes a series of Forest Service roads and connecting trails to provide hiking and horse-back riding opportunities. This complex includes Rattler Ford Group Camp, Horse Cove Campground, and Cheoah Point Campground. Hiking loop opportunities, near the Cheoah Ranger Station, include the 0.6-mile Massey Branch Fitness Trail (TR39) and the 2.4-mile Cheoah Trail (TR407).

Cheoah District – Santeetlah Lake Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Santeetlah Lake	156	Comment	Santeetlah Horse Trail needs to be reopened/opened in Graham County and designated as a bike trail. Trail is developed but needs to be upgraded and maintained. This would encourage more visitors and increase economic activity in a distressed ,tier 1 county in NC	Agreed- District is working with Graham County Revitalization Economic Action Team (GREAT) committee and a bike club-volunteer group has been organized to maintain this trail. In progress.
2	Santeetlah Lake	156	Comment	Would like to see old trail around lake Santeetlah opened. It was originally opened as a horseback trail, but gets minimal use. Would operate as a good beginner/family biking trail. I myself am willing to help with maintenance and know of others who would help.	Agreed- District is working with Graham County Revitalization Economic Action Team (GREAT) committee and a bike club-volunteer group has been organized to maintain this trail. In progress.
3	Santeetlah Lake	156	Maint.	Farley Santeetlah Cove (TR156) needs lots of work, trees in trail, heavy brush(Map 1)	Agreed- District is working with GREAT committee and a bike club-volunteer group has been organized to maintain this trail. In progress.
4	Santeetlah Lake	156	Comment	Farley Santeetlah Cove should be re-designated to multi use(Map 1)	Agreed- District is working GREAT committee and a bike club-volunteer group has been organized to maintain this trail. In progress.

Yellow Creek / Cheoah Bald Trail Complex

The Yellow Creek / Cheoah Bald complex includes the National Forest lands adjacent to Fontana Village. The Yellow Creek and Cheoah Mountains form the southern boundary of the complex which contains only hiking trails. The Appalachian Trail comes into the area at the Nantahala River Gorge (Wesser), runs up past Cheoah Bald, then continues in a northwesterly direction into the Yellow Creek area before crossing Fontana Dam.

Other hiking opportunities also include a number of connected trails out of Fontana Village, including the Lookout Rock Trail (TR40; located at the far end of Fontana Village) and the Lewellyn Cove Nature Trail (TR50), which features 50 trees and shrubs labeled for easy identification. Yellow Creek Mountain Trail (TR48) and the Wauchechea Trail (TR47) are long distance, ridge-top trails in this area.

Cheoah District-Yellow Creek / Cheoah Bald Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. TR-	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Benton Mackaye	2	Relocation	Part of AT has become Benton Mackaye Trail North Near Great Smoky Mountains National Park, proposed reroute into park. (RGE2, Map2	Noted- need more information

Tsali Trail Complex

The Tsali Complex, located on the shores of Fontana Lake, is nationally known for its 42-mile trail system. The 4-loop network is a very popular mountain bike and horseback riding complex, also open to hikers. The trails offer views of the lake and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The trail network surrounds a 42-site campground; the closest national forest campground to the popular Nantahala Gorge. A nearby boat ramp, providing lake access, is especially popular with anglers

Cheoah District – Tsali Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Tsali Right Loop & Tsali Left Loop	TR38	Comment	Change Right/Left days for cyclists on the weekend (Saturday)	Will consider- Info-gathering, analysis underway
2	Mouse& Thompson	152A	Comment	Change Mouse/ Thompson days for cyclists on the weekend (Sunday)	Will consider- Info-gathering, analysis underway
3	Tsali		Comment	Tsali- limited parking and no H2O access for horse trails. Were told to not get water or bathroom use at bike lot. Have never ridden on horse trail that bikes were not on them.	Noted - District reviewing schedule change to address bike/horse use conflicts. OK to obtain water for horses at bike washing station. Law Enforcement will enforce horse-trailer only parking during daylight hours.
4	Tsali		Maint.	Increase signage to make the trails easier to identify	Will consider- RD working with SORBA to implement
5	Tsali Left Loop	38A	Connector	Create Beginner loops on Mouse & Left Loop (NAS)	Will consider- beginner trail on Left Loop is being considered
6	Mouse Branch Connector	152A	Connector	Add Connector on Mouse Trl from overlook back to upper section (NAS)	Will consider- need more information
7	Tsali		Connector	Add beginner loop near parking lot at Tsali (LBS, IMBA Ride Center, AZ1, BG3)	Will consider- beginner trail on Left Loop is being considered

Cheoah District- Tsali Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. TR-	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
8	Tsali		Comment	Tsali rec area would benefit from addition of a family/kids level trail. Lemmons Branch area?	Will consider- beginner trail on Left Loop is being considered
9	FS 2552/ FS2552a/ Thompson Connector	152B	Relocation	Create singletrack trail to get bikers off road (BG2)	Noted- FS2552 is a gated road
10	Tsali		Comment	Change directions on trail-usage to allow folks to ride the trails backwards, maybe Tuesday & Wednesday.	Noted- changes in direction may cause additional confusion and safety issues
11	Tsali		Comment	Tsali- getting the word out to bikers and horse people to respect each other's days of use.	Noted

Cheoah District -District-Wide Comments

Cheoah District Wide Comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Massey Branch Fitness	39	Connector	Upgrade, enhance and maintain Cheoah District Trail and construct connector with existing Fitness Trail at Massey Branch in Graham County. Connection to existing trails in Town of Robbinsville.	Agreed- Fitness Trl connector: trail planning underway, connector to be constructed in near future. Noted- 'Town of Robbinsville' connection proposed is on private land, requires analysis.
2	Massey Branch Fitness	39	Connector	construct the connector for Cheoah District Trail and excersise Trail	Agreed- Massey Branch Fitness Trl connector: trail planning underway, connector to be constructed in near future.
3	Massey Branch Fitness	39	Connector	Interested in improving and enhancing the Cheoah Trail system around the Cheoah Ranger Station.	Agreed- Fitness Trl connector: trail planning underway, connector to be constructed in near future. Noted- 'Town of Robbinsville' connection proposed is on private land, requires analysis.
4			Maintenance	The trails on the Cheoah District in Graham County for the most part are overgrown with fallen trees across them. This causes hikers to become lost and/or injured. This also makes search & rescue efforts more difficult.	Agreed- Efforts are underway to maintain trails in Cheoah RD in cooperation with volunteer groups
5	Tatham Gap		Facilities	Mile markers, maps, trail condition, direction sign; Put a trail system with information plaques. Tatum Gap in particular	Noted- Bartram Trail Society is working on maintenance, re-opening this trail.
6	Cheoah Trail	407	Connector	Work with city/county government and private landowners to connect with town of Robbinsville. (there are \$\$ already available to help do this connection to Robbinsville)	Noted- 'Town of Robbinsville' connection proposed is on private land, requires analysis.

Cheoah District Wide Comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
7	Tatham Gap Rd		Comment	Keep Tatham Gap Rd. open in winter. Best trails from Gap west of Beaver Creek.	Noted - road is closed in winter due to freeze/thaw cycle impacts. Road maintenance issue.
8			Multi-Use	Most trails in the Cheoah and Nantahala NF are hiking only. Could we have more biking allowed in these areas?	Noted
9			Maintenance	On popular- heavy use trails- need to identify sections of trails that need more regular maintenance than others (such as areas affected by wildfire).	Noted
10			Comment	Canoe trails with access to rivers and lakes.	Noted
11			Comment	More cross use trails? i.e. hike-bike-etc.	Noted
12			Comment	Review existing trail systems to keep or drop-remove from maps. Maintain system trails.	Noted
13			Facilities	Trailhead parking and maintenance	Noted
14			Connector	Loop trails allowing varied lengths	Noted
15			Volunteers	Need to have organized trail maintenance training in Cheoah District.	District trains volunteer groups & offers chain-saw certifications
16			Comment	I am interested in getting more trails in Graham County, especially bike trails. I am even willing to help organize maintenance groups. Thanks. (J. S.)	Noted- Contact District Office to volunteer
17	Panther Creek	68	Maintenance	Would love to use Panther Creek/Shellstand Rd. area more. Panther Creek side needs cleaning/ditching.	Noted- Trail is unsustainable & was decommissioned in the past

Nantahala District

Background - The Nantahala Ranger District was formed in 2008 by combining the Highlands and Wayah districts of the Nantahala National Forest. The district stretches from the Nantahala Gorge in the west, to the Transylvania County line in the east.

The eastern edge of this district lies along the Blue Ridge Escarpment, a sharp drop in elevation between the Mountains and the Piedmont. Above the escarpment, there are high plateaus and tall, rounded mountains. Numerous waterfalls cascade over massive rock cliffs up to 400 feet high, and round granite domes with cliffs approaching 1000 feet provide for incredible viewpoints.

The western half of the district is dominated by the Nantahala Mountains, with their popular scenic vistas at Wayah and Wesser Balds. Both the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and Bartram National Recreation Trail traverse these mountains. The Nantahala Ranger District also has the most visited attraction on the Nantahala National Forest, the Nantahala River. Approximately two hundred thousand visitors raft and kayak the Nantahala River each year. Trails are also a major attraction on this district, which offers a huge variety of experiences such as primitive wilderness trails, horse and bike trails, and highly developed waterfall trails.

The Nantahala District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Highlands Complex

- Construction of new steps at Whitewater Falls (TR437, hike-only)
- Renovations of the Observation Platform at Whiteside Mountain (TR70, hike only)
- Replacement of asphalt trail tread & railings, reconstruction of retaining walls at Dry Falls (TR9, hike only)
- Construction of new interpretive hiking trail at Ranger Falls (TR24G, hike only)
- Maintenance on several miles of Glen Falls Trail & construction of new steps and viewing platforms (TR8, hike only)

Panthertown Complex

- Construction of a relocation of Black Rock Mountain Trail (TR488, hike only)
- Maintenance on Great Wall Trail & construction of a new foot-bridge (TR489, hike only)
- Maintenance on several miles of Devil's Elbow Trail (TR448, hike-bike-horse)

Appletree / Nantahala Gorge Complex

- Installed privy at Rufus Morgan Shelter on the Appalachian Trail
- Constructed relocation along the Appalachian Trail, north of Wesser

Projects - Work continues as the Nantahala District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

Highlands Complex

- Relocation of three miles of Yellow Mountain Trail; the first mile work is underway (TR5, hike only)
- Grant application to fund Whiteside Mtn Trail tread maintenance (TR70, hike only)
- Project planning underway for Chattooga River Access Trails (TR432, hike only): Greens Creek, County Line, Bullpen Bridge

Standing Indian Complex

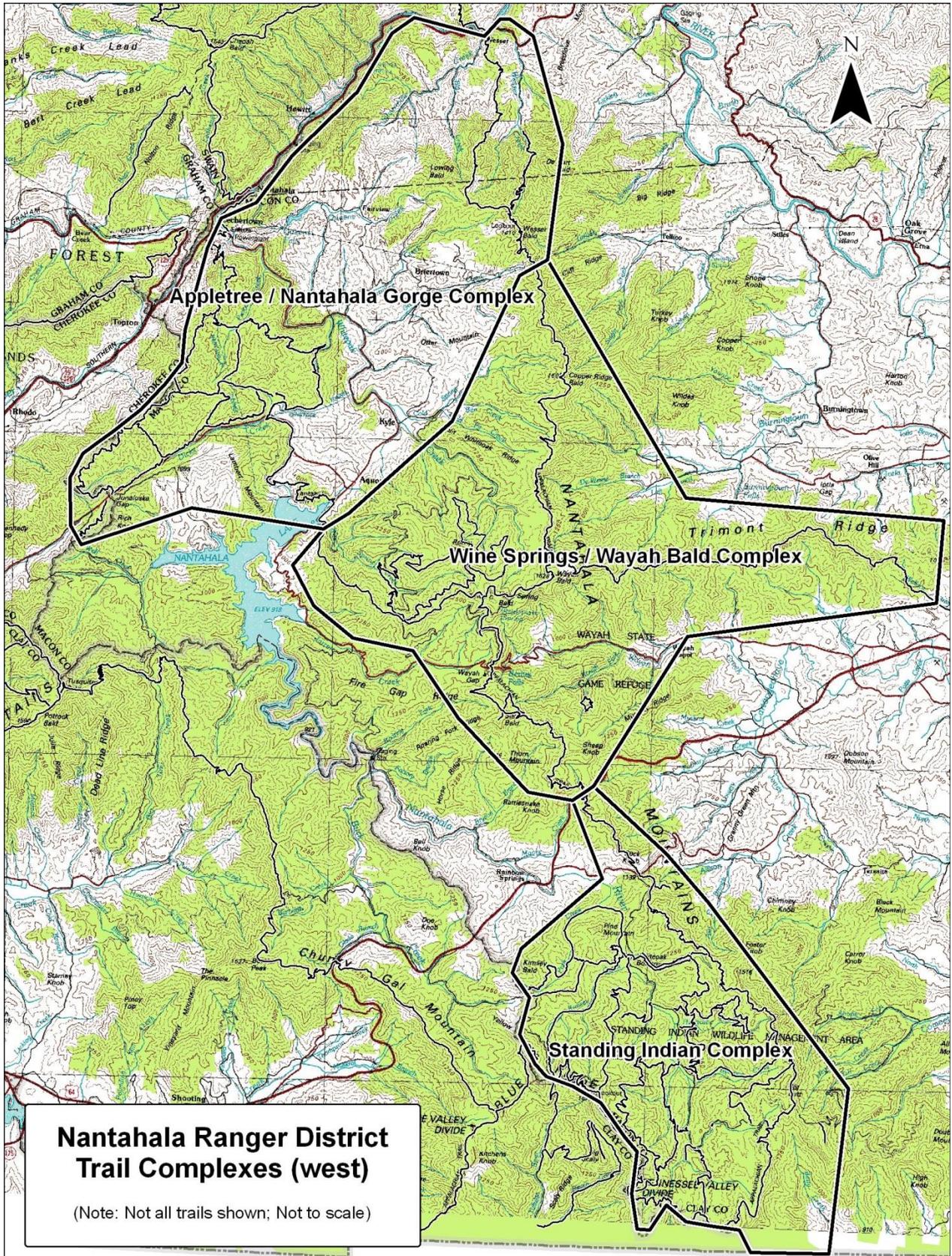
- Completed the new Long Branch Shelter on the AT. sections on Wilson Creek.
- Closing & naturalizing Big Springs Gap Shelter: Nantahala Hiking Club

Appletree / Nantahala Gorge Complex

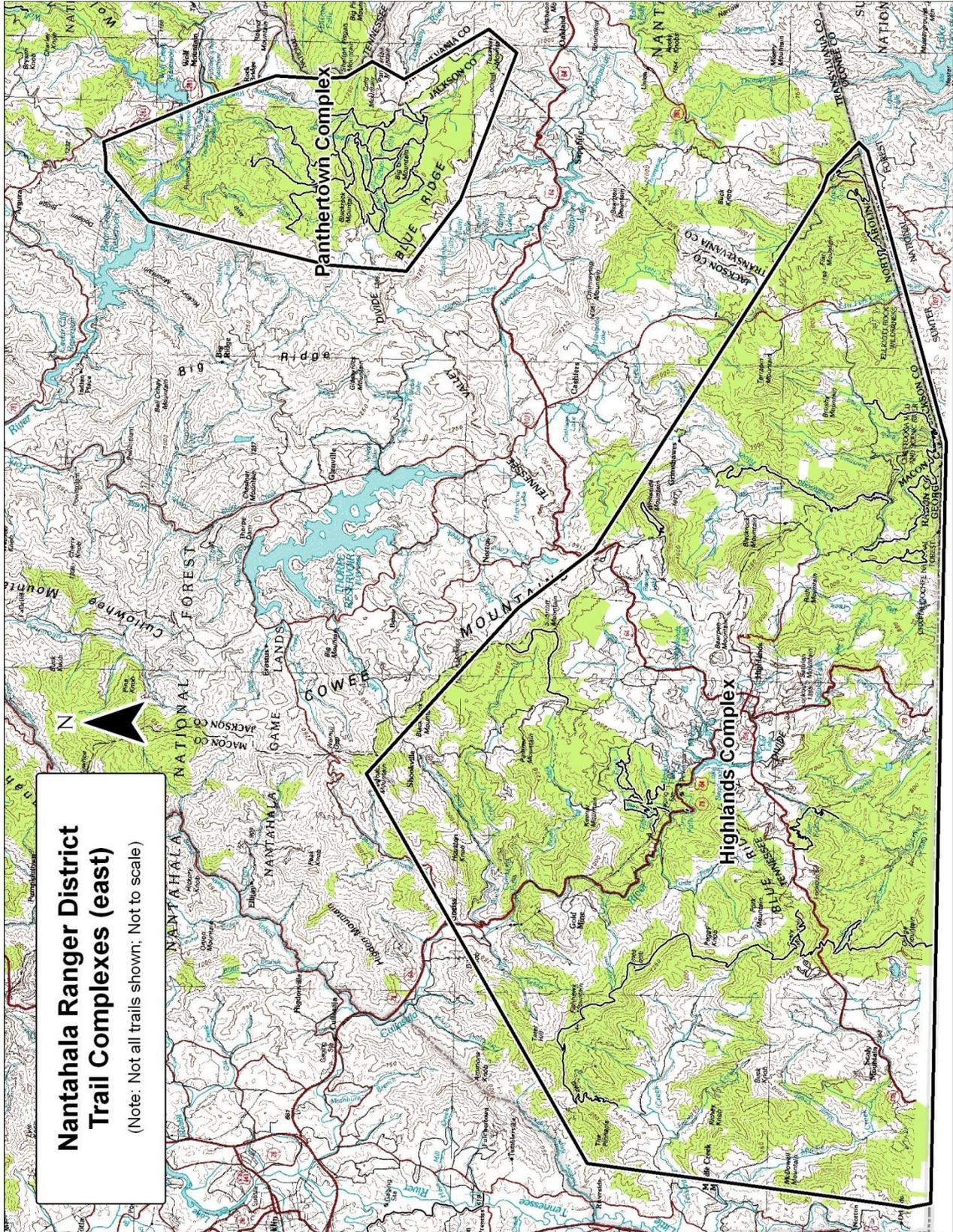
- Rehabilitation of Wesser Creek Trail (TR26, hike only): ATC & NHC

The following Nantahala District vicinity maps show the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

Nantahala District - West - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Nantahala District – East - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Nantahala District - Collaborator Comments

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Appletree / Nantahala Gorge Trail Complex

With the exception of the paved Nantahala River bike trail, all trails in this complex are hike only. Appletree trails offer a range of difficulty levels and many loops from Appletree Group Campground. Wesser and Appletree areas each have long-distance hiking options with the AT and Batram Trails, and a loop exists combining the AT with Wesser Creek Trail. Attractions in the area include Wesser Bald observation area, Nantahala River Gorge, Appletree Group Campground, and numerous commercial and private whitewater rafting and kayaking opportunities.

Nantahala District – Appletree / Nantahala Gorge Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Wesser Creek Trail		Maint.	Wesser Creek Trail- large landslide about a mile and a half up from the TH.	Noted- Repaired.
2	Pearcy Creek Trail		Safety	Pearcy Creek Trail- the large number of dead hemlock trees make camping in the area hazardous.	Noted- Maintenance Item
3	Appletree-Nantahala Gorge		Comment	Any possibility of allowing mountain biking at Appletree? SS1	Noted : Current location not sustainable for Bikes. Tsali is 30 minutes away.
4	Appletree-Nantahala Gorge		Comment	We want to ride bikes on Apple Tree trails. Rarely used. Good distance and terrain.	Noted-Due to terrain in this area, bike trails would not be sustainable

Wine Springs / Wayah Bald Trail Complex

The Wine Springs area offers remote horse trails centered around Wine Springs Horse Campground. There are has many miles of riding opportunities on old logging roads connected by purpose-built equestrian trails. To the east the AT and Bartram Trails intersect atop Wayah Bald, which is home to a recently restored rock fire tower and incredible long-range views of the Nantahala Mountains.

Nantahala District – Wind Springs / Wayah Bald Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Wine Spring Loop at creek	379A	Safety	Put some type of coating on bridge for secure footing on boards RW2	Noted- District reviewing options. Maintenance item.
2	Wine Springs Loop & FR711F	379A	Connector	Construct Connector trail. Open woods area. Local Club will provide work to complete. RW1	Will consider- requires planning & funding.
3	Rocky Bald Loop & FR69B	379B	Connector	Connect old trail road bed already exists trail to gravel road RW3	Noted- Not consistent with management objectives. Other loop opportunities available in this area.
4	Bartram Trail	67	Connector	On the Bartram Trail at Wallace Branch. The main trail would be moved back onto Triment Ridge and head due east towards Franklin. This will give the Bartram Trail a better connection to the Greenway Northern Portion. The Greenway folks have already approved the Bartram Trail on the Greenway. Wallace Branch would be a side trail. TW3	Will consider a proposal adding trail to east if private land access can be secured. BT priority to reroute short sections from wallace branch to wayah bald around knobs instead of straight up and down.

Standing Indian Trail Complex

The Standing Indian area contains the highest concentration of recreation opportunities on the Nantahala Ranger District. This area offers many miles of hiking trails connecting Standing Indian Campground and Kimsey Creek Group Campground to beautiful streams, mature hardwood forests, and mountain-top views in the headwaters of the Nantahala River. Hiking trails also connect with the nearby Southern Nantahala Wilderness. Horseback riders enjoy the equestrian trails and camping at Hurricane Creek Horse Campground. The AT is located along the high ridges to the south and east, where there are several connecting trails and trail head access points. A popular attraction along the AT is Albert Mountain fire tower, with beautiful views of Coweeta in the foreground and Big Scaly Mountain in the distance

Nantahala District – Standing Indian Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Blackwell Gap Loop	366	Safety	Move "Horse Caution" sign before arrival of Blackwell Gap Trailhead. 4 miles down road. RW6	Agree- Completed by Macon Co. Horse Assoc.
2	Big Indian Loop	34	Maint.	Big Indian- washed out. Needs a backhoe. Wash 200'LH1	Agree-Horse Club noted they would add to club maintenance (No motorized equipment allowed in Wilderness)
3	Beech Gap	35	Comment	Needs signage so horses do not get on AT LH2	Noted- Dist has replaced signs recently. Will check for missing signs to replace
4	Long Branch	86	Maint.	TR86 near FR7282 Big hole in trail LH	Will consider- Hike-only trail. Maintenance Item.
5	Beech Gap		Comment	Separate horse trails and hiking trails. Example- Beech Gap in Standing Indian. Erosion from horses + H2O makes it a hazard in places.	Noted- Maintenance Item
6	Blackwell Gap Loop	366	Relocation	Relocate trail out of Creek LH3	Will consider- requires planning & funding.
7	FR67		Facilities	Trailer parking in old road bed beside Forest Service Road 67 RW5	Will consider-Requires extensive planning & funding
8	Albert Mountain	36A	Comment	TR36A not a horse trail	Noted- Mapping error to be corrected

Highlands Trail Complex

The Highlands Complex contains the Cliffside-Van Hook area, the Shortoff Mountain area, and the Chattooga River area.

The Cliffside-Van Hook area is centered around the Cullasaja River Gorge, arguably one of the most scenic river gorges in western North Carolina. Cliffside picnic area is a historic CCC-era facility which offers several short to moderate length hiking trail loops, including a lake-side trail and one to nearby Ranger Falls. Other attractions in the area include Dry Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, and several access points to the Bartram Trail.

The Shortoff Mountain area includes two hiking trails: Whiteside Mountain Trail and Whitewater Falls Trails, both very popular attractions in the Cashiers area.

The Chattooga River area contains the Chattooga National Wild & Scenic River corridor, and Ellicott Rock Wilderness area. All trails in this area are hike only, and include Ellicott Rock Trail, Chattooga River Trail and Granite City Trail, among others. This is an extremely rugged and remote area with many opportunities for challenge and solitude.

Nantahala District – Highlands Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Devil's Court House		Connector	Could we look into developing an official loop trail to Devil's Court House from behind the bathrooms up to the White Side Overlook MWK1	Noted-Proposal appears to be for unsustainable and unsafe access
2	Bartram Trail	67	Maint.	This part of the Bartram Trail (from SR106 to TR67A) needs reroute. The length required is about 300 yards badly eroded. TW2	Will consider- Requires planning & funding
3	Bartram Trail	67	Facilities	On the Bartram Trail when the Fishhawk Route is complete hopes are to re-establish a parking area next to Hickory Knob Rd TW1	Noted:- No FS access, private land

Panthertown Trail Complex

The Panthertown Valley area is unique for western North Carolina. With its rounded granite plutons and numerous waterfalls, this area is sometimes called the Yosemite of the east. The area offers many miles of hike, bike, and horse trails accessed from three trail heads.

Nantahala District – Panthertown Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Salt Rock		Maint.	Entrance road from Breadlov Road to Salt Rock entrance needs to be re-graded MWK	Agreed- This was completed in 2012
2	Carlton's Way		Connectors	Existing footpath is highly used and makes connecting loop between overlook trail. JK1	NEPA Complete- planning phase
3	Wilderness Falls	490	Relocation	Wilderness Falls reroute in works now to improve trail (obvious steep section to be removed)JK6	NEPA Complete - planning phase
4	Turkey Knob	469	Facilities	Horse trailer parking needed at TR469 TrailheadDS3	Agree -Project planning complete, requires funding
5	Salt Rock		Facilities	Horse trailer parking needed at Salt Rock Trailhead DS1	Agree- Planning underway, Friends of Panthertown have received grant to fund work
6	Buck Knob	468	Facilities	Horse trailer parking needed at TR467/TR674 TrailheadDS2	Noted-No access to horse trails from Cold Mtn parking area. Horse trailer parking under development at Flat Creek
7	Panthertown		Comment	Panthertown Valley- some trail users ignore the usage designations on maps and signage.	Noted- Working on new Panthertown map with trail designations. Additional decommissioning planned.
8	Panthertown		Connector	There are many footpaths (unofficial trails) in Panthertown that are well used and offer incredible recreation opportunities, loops and long-distance backpacking access that should be added to our trail system. Single-track bike in north, hike in south. Thanks. 1) Flat Creek Path (Off Turkey Knob) for single-track bike. 2) West Fork Way/Big Pisgah (off Devil's Elbow) for backpack. 3) Hogback Mountain (off Mac's Gap trail). 4) Great loop: Carlton's way (off overlook trail and north Rd), per many users.	Will consider-proposals for sustainable trail locations

Nantahala District – Panthertown Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
9			Facilities	There are tons of old logging roads and trails in Pisgah that could be made into loop trails which would create a better trail experience in the forest. With a horse trailer there is always is a concern with parking- it would be nice to have more places to park. Loop trails for Panthertown Valley for horses.	Noted-No access to horse trails from Cold Mtn parking area. Horse trailer parking under development at Flat Creek
10	Mac's Gap (TR482)	482	Maint.	Mac's Gap (TR482) recent drainage structures are made of soft soil. "water bar" style. Need to be reworked to <u>grade dips, niks, ect. SS1</u>	Will consider- Maintenance Item. Possible volunteer task.
11	Black Rock (TR447)	447	Maint.	Black Rock (TR447) rough, loose rocks. Needs to be reworked to flow&drain SS2	Will consider- Maintenance Item. Possible volunteer task.
12	Flat Creek Trail to Turkey Knob	447	Connector	Flat Creek Trail (TR4670) to Turkey Knob (FR469) Connection exists on Ground but not official recognized by Forest Service as biking and hiking trail. JK2	Will consider Proposal.
13	Devil's Elbow	448	Connector	Connect Big Pisgah footpath to Devil's Elbow (uses: hiking/ backpacking) JK5	Noted- Requires extensive planning & funding
14	Bog Boardwalk		Facilities	Bog Boardwalk Viewing Area unique feature with environmentally sensitive area. Currently many user created paths to access. In need of on point of entry with restricted viewing. JK7	Will consider -Requires assessment, & extensive planning & funding
15	Bonas Defeat		Connector	Bonas Defeat add access to this backcountry recreation area via Tanassee Creek and Rock Bridge Road (uses: hikers paddlers horses and bikers) JK4	Noted-Cross-country foot travel allowed. By definition some back country areas remain difficult to access as part of the experience
16	Devil's Elbow	448	Connector	Devil's Elbow (TR448) would be more enjoyable if it connected to Rattlesnake Knob SS3	Noted- Topography does not lend itself to sustainable trails in this area
17	Warden's Falls / Devil's Elbow	448	Connector	Access to Warden's Falls from Devil's Elbow JK8	Noted- Topography does not lend itself to sustainable trails in this area
18	Tuckasegee River / Devil's Elbow	448	Connector	Access to Tuckasegee River from Devil's Elbow JK8	Noted- Topography does not lend itself to sustainable trails in this area
19			Conflict	Please don't mix horses and bikes on trails.	Noted- Previous evaluations minimized mileage of dual-designation trails

Nantahala District – Panthertown Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
20	Bonas Defeat		Comment	Bonas Defeat Gorge- it is one of a handful of places in NC where canyoneering is possible. This tract is truly one-of-a-kind. Access to this gorge is almost non-existent. Duke Power owns all access to this area. One must trespass to gain access to the FS land. Please take steps to ensure public access to this parcel.	Noted-Cross-country foot travel allowed. By definition some back country areas remain difficult to access as part of the experience. Access is available from FS land without crossing Duke property. Trail Head to be established on Grays Ridge Road.

Nantahala District -District-Wide Comments

Nantahala District Wide Comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Bike Trails		Comment	Only 14 miles of bike trails in Nantahala, lots of trails that can be multi use. Biking will bring major tourism to area. Local bikers will maintain and have large pool of volunteers.	Noted: we are considering site options. Bike use is allowable on most gated FS roads
2	Horse Trails		Facilities	Equine parking- remains inadequate- and some places gotten smaller in order to enjoy the beautiful mtns & woods- we need access.	Noted-Horse trailer parking is planned for Flat Creek Rd., Hurricane Creek area will take extensive planning and funding.
3	Horse Trails		Facilities	My main concern with existing trailheads on FS land is lack of sufficient safe parking for trailers.	Noted-Horse trailer parking is planned for Flat Creek Rd., Hurricane Creek area will take extensive planning and funding.
4	Horse Trails		Comment	Our family of four is very concerned about the possibility of the closing of horse trails. As lovers of these mountains we want to raise our children with an appreciation of the area. There are such few opportunities for our youth to enjoy the mountains. We ask that the existing horse trails continue to be enjoyed.	Noted : only considering sustainability of trails for each use types, not closing access for any specific use.
5	Cowee Mountain		Comment	We want to ride bikes on Cowee Mnt and access roads from Greens Creek, Connelly Creek, Alarka, etc	Will consider- Requires extensive planning & funding. Would require assessment to identify multiple connector trails

Tusquitee District

Background - The Tusquitee District is a 158,900-acre district that lies in the far southwestern tip of North Carolina in Cherokee and Clay Counties. This district's claim to fame is the water recreation, with several large lakes, opportunities abound for boating, canoeing, swimming, and fishing.

There are over 100 miles of hiking trails on the Tusquitee District, ranging from some of the most remote, back-country trails on the Forest to popular trails such as those located near Jackrabbit Mountain Campground, the largest campground in the Nantahala National Forest

The Tusquitee District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Hanging Dog Trail Complex

- Clearing tornado damaged trees at Hanging Dog bike trail system

Chunky Gal / Southern Nantahala Trail Complex

- AT trail maintenance in Southern Nantahala Wilderness

Jack Rabbit Trail Complex

- Construction of beginner skills trail at Jackrabbit bike trail system
- Installation of vault toilet at Jackrabbit bike trail head

Fires Creek Trail Complex

- Trail head improvements and bridge replacement at Fires Creek Picnic Area (Leatherwood Trail & Cover Trail)

Projects - Work continues as the Tusquitee District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

Jack Rabbit Trail Complex

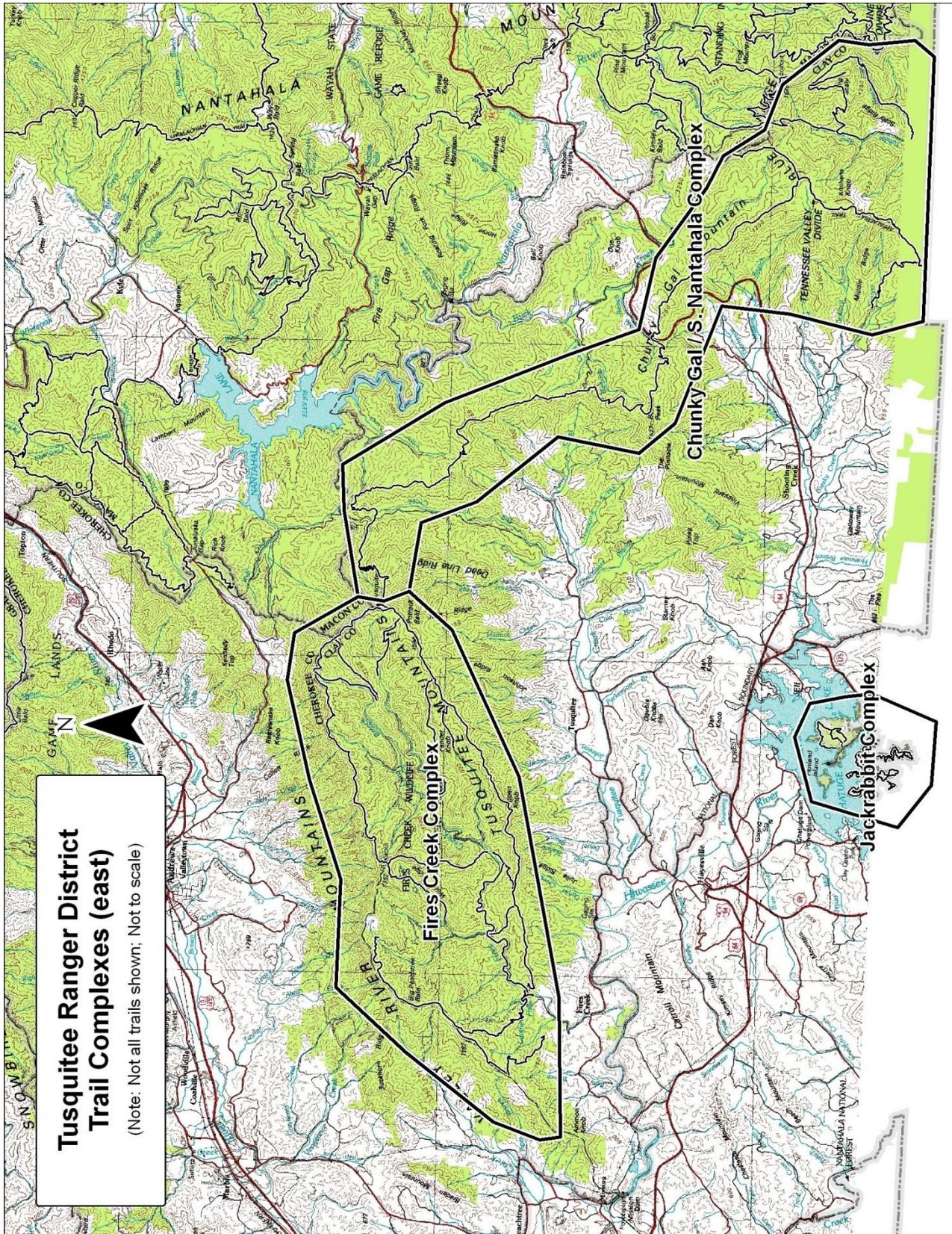
- Connector trail between Jackrabbit bike trail head and Jackrabbit Campground

Fires Creek Trail Complex

- Relocation of Rim Trail in Laurel Creek area
- Replacement of bridge on Leatherwood Loop Trail
- Replacement of bridge on Bristol Trail

The following Tusquitee District vicinity maps show the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

Tusquitee District - East - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Tusquitee District - Collaborator Comments

The following sections provide information on trail complexes that were identified within the Tusquitee District. The trail complex sections contain a table of collaborator comments and District input relating to each comment. Following the trail complex-specific tables, there is a table of 'District-Wide' collaborator comments with District input that do not relate to any specific complex trails.

As District personnel begin to prioritize projects identified in collaborator recommendations, the primary focus will be on maintenance items which can be implemented with minimal funding or planning; especially if work can be accomplished with volunteers. These projects could typically be completed in a shorter time frame, as opposed to more complex or costly projects. Recommendations of a larger scope requiring comprehensive analysis, extensive planning, significant funding and possible grant applications may still be considered, but implementation schedules would be impossible to predict.

Please note that where Forest Service responses indicate agreement with or consideration of collaborator recommendations, this is not a guarantee of implementation. Many of these recommendations would require funding for planning, environmental reviews, and construction; as well as long-term commitments for volunteer maintenance. Without these elements in place, it is unlikely a recommended project could be implemented.

Benton Mackaye Trail Complex

The Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) is a footpath of nearly 300 miles through the Appalachian mountains. It is designed for foot travel in the tradition of the Appalachian Trail (AT).

From Springer Mountain in Georgia to Davenport Gap on the northern edge of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the BMT passes through some of the most remote backcountry in Georgia, Tennessee and North Carolina, including eight federally designated Wildernesses and Wilderness Study Areas. There are numerous access points and trailheads along the BMT route creating many options for one-way and loop hikes, and several more in combination with local trails.

The 5.6 mile section of the BMT that lies on the Tusquitee District (labeled as TR82) follows the North Carolina – Tennessee State Line between Six-Mile Gap and Beaverdam Bald, in the Unicoi Mountains.

Tusquitee District – Benton MacKaye Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Benton Mackaye	2	Maint.	From Hazelnut Knob about 1.5 miles needs to be fixed to fall line and brushed(BH)	Will consider-Maintenance item. Requires assessment & funding
2	Benton Mackaye	2	Relocation	near Sled Runner Gap needs to be rerouted off fall line(BH)	Will consider- needs to be evaluated as to a new relocation for this section along with exploring funding opportunities which most likely will have to come from outside USFS funding.
3	Benton Mackaye	2	Relocation	3/4 mile NE of Tate Gap, needs to be moved off fall line(BH2)	Will consider- needs to be evaluated as to a new relocation for this section along with exploring funding opportunities which most likely will have to come from outside USFS funding.
4	Benton Mackaye	2	Comment	From Moss Gap down the ridge, illegal ATV use(BH)	Noted-District is aware of these issues. This is a very remote area and law enforcement (L.E.) coverage is very limited at best.

Hanging Dog Trail Complex

Hanging Dog Recreation Area is located northwest of Murphy. Boating enthusiasts will find easy access to the water at the Hanging Dog Recreation Area on Lake Hiwassee with a campground, picnic area, hiking trails, and a boat launching ramp. The area's mountain bike trail system is of one of the lesser-used bike systems. However the area is gaining popularity among mountain bike enthusiasts. There are several miles of bike trail loop opportunities adjacent to Hiwassee Lake and Hanging Dog Campground. Ramsey Bluff Trail (TR82) & Mingus Trail (TR630) are hike only. Ramsey Bluff Trail (TR82) starts near the boat launch, and offers great Hiwassee Lake views.

Tusquitee District – Hanging Dog Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Hanging Dog		Comment	Have the volunteer group in place to improve the Hanging Dog trail system in Murphy and do not feel I have the support of the local USFS. (E. Sylvester)	Pending completion of the tornado timber salvage which severely impacted some of these trails, the district will evaluate with the volunteer group improvement needs, re-location needs, etc.
2	Hanging Dog		Comment	Make connector trail from murphy to Hanging Dog Trail system	Noted-Feasible but difficult to build due to terrain & water crossings. Also would be very expensive to build and maintain. Would require a large investment of funding and time.
3	Hanging Dog		Facilities	Hanging Dog Facilities all in place and under used	Noted-Potential does exist for expansion of trail systems at Hanging Dog. District recognized maintenance need on existing trail system in light of the impacts from the tornado damage and salvage logging.

Fires Creek Trail Complex

The Fires Creek area, offering horse and hiking trails, is in a very remote area, accessed from Hayesville, NC. From the Fires Creek / Leatherwood Falls Picnic Area, a 0.7-mile loop, Leatherwood Loop Trail (TR73) leads to Leatherwood Falls. The complex also includes Bristol Horse Camp and Fires Creek Hunt Camp.

The 25-mile Rim Trail (TR72), as the name implies, climbs the ridge around Fires Creek and traverses the rim of the entire watershed, with multiple connecting trails to the valley floor. The Rim Trail, a hiking trail with some sections open to horses, offers vistas as it crosses several high elevation balds

Tusquitee District – Fires Creek Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Leatherwood Falls picnic area	73	Comment	Trails 72 & 72 (?) - Information signage needed for trail users such as names and numbers of trails, distance, difficulty, water availability, etc. (JQ1)	Agree- Completed-This information has already been posted on the new kiosk located at the Fires Creek picnic area
2	Rim	72	Comment	Rim Trail- Fires Creek Bear Sanctuary. This trail needs to stay on the Rim and the Laurel Creek property owners should be denied road construction permit.	Noted- Due to access issues across private land, planning for a re-route around Laurel Creek property is underway. Construction of relocation will require funding
3	Rim Trail	72	Relocation	Northwest section of Rim Trail east of Will King Gap. Better and less arduous reroute of Rim Trail needed to avoid private property. MHH could assist in this effort. Use portion of Phillips Ridge Trail beginning at Will King Gap. (JQ2)	Agree-This project is already in the planning stage. New trail re-route to avoid private property will be field located this year.
4	Rim Trail	72	Comment	Southwest section, west of Graveyard Hightop. The map provided does not have Rim Trail shown in heavy or bold black line from west of Graveyard Hightop to intersection with FS 340D. Perhaps this section did not have recent GPS survey? (TS10)	Noted - mapping error on old map. The new map does have this section shown.
5	Little Fires Creek	386	Comment	Upper end. The map provided does not have the upper end of Little Fires Creek Trail indicated as Pack – Pack and Saddle with yellow/orange color. Perhaps this section did not have recent GPS survey? (TS 11)	Noted- mapping error on old map. The new admin map does have this section shown properly as hiking and horses allowed.

Tusquitee District- Fires Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
6	Sassafras	632	Maint.	Lots of dead and down trees from Junction to Sassafras Creek. Willing to organize and coordinate team to keep maintained. (R. Davis)	Will consider- Maintenance Item. Will discuss with Volunteer Group
7	Rockhouse Creek	387	.enance	Upper end. Water erosion. MHH did some work to alleviate; more required.(JQ3)	Will consider- Maintenance issue - will be prioritized against all the other mtc. needs/issues in our trails program.
8	Bald Springs	78	Decomm.	Beginning of trail at FR340. Possible reroute across creek needed. Creek crossing can be hazardous for hikers. Trail is possible candidate for decommissioning. (JQ6)	Agree- Re-route would require a very expensive bridge. Most of the trail is in a bad location, too close to the stream, steep, etc. District would support decommissioning of this trail.
9	Hunters Camp		Comment	At Huskins Branch (Intersection of FS 340H with SR1344). Signage needed to explain layout of trails and facilities in Fires Creek area. Could duplicate the information posted as suggested in JQ-1. This would be the first information sign in the Fires Creek area. (TS1)	Noted-There is an existing info board at this location which needs to be replaced. In the short term, district will post updated information.
10	Rim Trail	72	Maint.	North of upper crossing of FS 6176. Treadway in this area needs work, falling away in several sections. (TS3)	Noted-maintenance item. Requires funding and/or volunteer help.
11	Bald Springs		Maint.	Upper end. Trail markings obscure at area near where Bold Spring Trail meets Rim Trail. Lower end of trail has been recently maintained, but upper end needs work if trail is to remain. (TS 5)	Agree- Re-route would require a very expensive bridge. Most of the trail is in a bad location, too close to the stream, steep, etc. District would support decommissioning of this trail.

Tusquitee District- Fires Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
12	Rim Trail	72	Maint.	East of Sassafras Trail junction. Location with large rock in trail where the treadway west of the rock has fallen away. Needs tread work. (TS6)	Will consider- Maintenance item. Need funding and/or volunteer help.
13	Rockhouse Creek	387	Safety	Lower end. Creek crossing needs improvement. Wooden bridge would be very helpful to mitigate safety issue. (JQ4)	Will consider- need to be evaluated in the field to determine if a bridge is indeed needed and if so determine proper location and get on the priority needs list for funding etc.
14	Trail Ridge	520	Relocation	South end. Trail is prone to erosion and is steep and arduous – suggest some rerouting. (JQ5)	Will consider- need to be evaluated in the field to determine if a relocation is indeed needed. Requires extensive planning & funding
15	Rim Trail	72	Relocation	Southeastern section. Intermittent sections of trail along fall line with many ditch-like eroded sections. (JQ7)	Will consider - This is a problem on many sections of the RIM Trail due to its location on the ridgeline of the Fires Crk watershed. The location is what is unique about the trail but it does create maintenance issues. Potential re-route needs exist periodically along the entire length of the RIM trail where trail is either entrenched or too steep. Requires extensive planning & funding
16	Far Bald Spring	389	Safety	Upper end. Water crossing needs attention and improvement for safety. Possible short reroute may be appropriate. (JQ10)	Will consider- maintenance item and possible re-route need. Will need field inspection/verification and location for re-route if needed. Requires extensive planning & funding
17	Rim Trail	72	Maint.	West of Carver Gap and over Julie High Top. Rim Trail has significant erosion problems where trail follows fall line along ridge line. Steep areas showing significant erosion. (TS2)	Will consider - This is a problem on many sections of the RIM Trail due to its location on the ridgeline of the Fires Crk watershed. The location is what is unique about the trail but it does create maintenance issues. Potential re-route needs exist periodically along the entire length of the RIM trail where trail is either entrenched or too steep. Requires extensive planning & funding

Tusquitee District- Fires Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
18	Tusquitee Bald		Comment	Need better access to Tusquitee Bald area.	Noted- need more information. Area is accessible by Rim & Chunky Gal Trails
19	Shinbone	80	Comment	Current map shows Shinbone Ridge Trail #80 as Pack – Pack and Saddle. Earlier map shows no horses allowed on Shinbone Trail. Trail is too steep to maintain for horses.	Noted- Mapping Error-New district administrative map shows this trail as hiking only which is the correct designation.
20	Rim Trail	72	Comment	The Rim Trail between the intersection with the Sassafras Trail and Tusquitee Bald is shown as no horses on earlier map and as Pack – Pack and Saddle on the current map. Also, horses are shown as allowed on the Rim Trail between Shortoff Knob and Will King Gap at intersection of Phillips Ridge Trail on the earlier map. This is not shown on the current map. (JQ/TS)	Noted- Mapping Error-On the new admin map it shows all of the RIM trail as horse and hiking which is incorrect. In the short term we will have to try to mark each segment of the RIM trail on the ground as to allowed uses and possibly do an interim locally produced map to give to the public indicating which sections are open to horses.
21	Rim Trail	72	Comment	Careful clarification of where horses are allowed and much improved signage in the Fires Creek area might lead to reduced damage to some trail sections from inappropriate horse use. (JQ/TS)	See comment above. Mapping Error-
22	Cover	74	Comment	Discussion of the future of this trail is needed. The trail is not currently being maintained by MHH. (TS12)	Noted-Volunteer group does not maintain this trail. This trail has many major creek crossings as it crosses and re-crosses Fires Creek numerous times between the F. Crk Picnic Area and Bristol Campground. It is mostly used by visitors fishing Fires Creek - district will retain this trail on the system. Mtc needs are covered by the district personnel.
23			Comment	Multi-use trail system signage on major trails. Willing to offer assistance. Reside in Clay County Fires Creek area.	Noted- Please contact District office for volunteer opportunities

Jack Rabbit Trail Complex

Bordering Chatuge Lake’s 130-mile shore line, Jack Rabbit Mountain Recreation Area, offers plenty of outdoor recreation including camping and hiking. The area is adjacent to Jackrabbit Campground and Picnic Area, with a nearby swimming beach, fishing pier & boat ramp.

The complex includes 14 miles of recently constructed mountain bike trails located ½ mile from the campground and day-use area. It also contains the Jackrabbit Mountain Trail (TR384), which is a 2.4-mile hike-only loop trail through open woods, offering glimpses of Chatuge Lake.

Tusquitee District – Jack Rabbit Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Jackrabbit	384	Connector	Mountain bike trails need to be over 10 miles but optimally 15-20 miles +-. Jackrabbit needs a connector trail to campground and add additional trails at existing hiking trail (2-3 more miles) at site of higher elevation to add a challenging trail to accommodate more advanced cyclists.	Will consider- Planning underway. Connector trail is currently in the process of being analyzed etc. Location is flagged and in the GIS system. Meetings with TVA/DOT will determine if the route west and south of the state road will be allowed. If not trail will have to be moved to the east and north side of the highway. After this trail is completed (assuming grant money is obtained for construction and the EA is completed) then at a later time proposals for additional trails on Jackrabbit Mtn. will be evaluated etc.
2	Jackrabbit	384	Connector	Connect trail from hiking/biking trail off road to campground for safety to keep users off busy roads (JA1)	Will consider- Planning underway. Connector trail is currently in the process of being analyzed etc. Location is flagged and in the GIS system. Meetings with TVA/DOT will determine if the route west and south of the state road will be allowed. If not trail will have to be moved to the east and north side of the highway. After this trail is completed (assuming grant money is obtained for construction and the EA is completed) then at a later time proposals for additional trails on Jackrabbit Mtn. will be evaluated etc.

Tusquitee District – Jack Rabbit Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
3	Jackrabbit	384	Comment	Mtn bike specific trails on south east side of jackrabbit mtn, this would allow for hiking specific trails to remain on western aspect of mtn. this would also allow more diverse mtn bik trails for more intermediate- advanced riders as opposed to the begginer- intermediate trails built on the hiking/ biking trails.	Will consider- Planning underway. Connector trail is currently in the process of being analyzed etc. Location is flagged and in the GIS system. Meetings with TVA/DOT will determine if the route west and south of the state road will be allowed. If not, trail will have to be moved to the east and north side of the highway. After this trail is completed (assuming grant money is obtained for construction and the EA is completed), then at a later time proposals for additional trails on Jackrabbit Mtn. will be evaluated etc.
4	Jackrabbit	384A	Maint.	old jackrabbit trail very well worn, need to determin if a re route is necessary to avoid further erosion(JQ8)	Will consider-Maintenance item. Requires assessment & funding
5	Jackrabbit	384	Comment	Jackrabbit trails have increased numbers of users (doubled) in short time open-The only repeated comment is the need for additional trails geared toward advanced rider with more challenge-Because of the close proximity to town, it is easily maintained-We have gained new members and volunteers due to Jackrabbit popularity-This trail is ideal in that it is stacked loop, sustainable and well planned- We are willing to write grants and obtain funding if FS can help with NEPA, etc.	Will consider- Planning underway for campground connector trail. Proposals for additional trails on Jackrabbit Mtn. will be evaluated at a later time. Requires funding.
6	Jackrabbit Mtn	384	Comment	Well worn day use trail. No reroute required, but trail could be converted to multi-use (bike/hike), possibly in lieu of bike trail expansion. (JQ11)	Noted-most trails in the Jackrabbit complex are already hike/bike designation. This trail is heavily used for fishing access and therefore designated hike only. District is already in process of planning a connector trail and possibly additional bike/hike trails on the east side of Jackrabbit Mountain.

Chunky Gal / Southern Nantahala Trail Complex

The 21-mile Chunky Gal Trail (TR) crosses Chunky Gal Mountain, connecting the Rim Trail (TR72) in the Fires Creek Area with the AT at the Southern Nantahala Wilderness. This trail goes through a very remote, little-used, part of the Forest. The Southern Nantahala Wilderness contains several other hiking trail loop opportunities between the Tallulah River and the AT.

Tusquitee District-Chunky Gal / Southern Nantahala Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Chunky Gal	77	Maint.	North of FR 6271. Residual storm damage after clearing by MHH. Two large oak trees are across trail, but passage is not impeded. Chain saw work needed to remove. (JQ8)	Agree- Project underway by District crew
2	Chunky Gal	77	Comment	Hwy 64 at Glad Gap. Signage visible to motorist needed at Glade Gap where Chunky Gal Trail crosses Hwy 64 to identify trail crossing and provide hiker information. (TS4)	Agree- Funding needed.
3	Chunky Gal	77	Maint.	NW end of Chunky Gal between Tate Gap and Bob Alison Campground. Many sections of trail where treadway has fallen away and treadway with proper camber needs to be restored. (TS7)	Agree- Maintenance item. Need funding and/or volunteer help.
4	Chunky Gal	77	Comment	west of Bob Allison CG where trail crosses SR1311. Suggest sign is needed here regarding the distance, difficulty of the trail and number of water crossings on route to Tusquitee Bald. (TS8)	Agree- requires funding. Considered lower priority than other signage needs.
5	Chunky Gal	77	Comment	East side of Bob Allison CG where Chunky Gal Trail crosses bridge. Sign needed to advise that it is four miles to the next road crossing when traveling eastward on Chunky Gal Trail. (TS9)	Agree- requires funding. Considered lower priority than other signage needs.
6	Chunky Gal	77	Comment	At Boteler Peak. Currently unnumbered side trail to views from Boteler Peak needs a formal designation/number. Trail leads approx. 1/4 to 1/3 mile to beautiful lake and mountain views. (JQ9)	Will consider- Requires extensive planning & funding. This would be an addition to the trail system. - The district supports this project - will need field inspection to ensure location is correct for the long term and to evaluate environmental impacts

Tusquitee District - District-Wide Comments

Tusquitee District Wide Comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1			Connector	There are many trails (old road) north of Andrews in Snowbird and south in Valley River Mnts need network.	Noted- Proposal has been reviewed in the past. It is for new trail system in an area with minimal infrastructure to support it. District does not have the resources to maintain/manage additional trails and volunteers.
2	Tatham Gap Rd		Comment	Keep Tatham Gap Rd. open in winter. Best trails from Gap west of Beaver Creek.	Noted: Not consistent with road maintenance objectives. There are no existing system trails in this area.
3	Murphy River Walk		Connector	Connect Murphy River Walk to USFS Tusquitee Track	Will consider - would require partnering with TVA, the Riverwalk volunteer group, Town of Murphy, and NC DOT to coordinate the location. Amount of construction on NF lands would be minimal to complete the connection.
4			Comment	Make sustainable new biking, hiking, horse complex user friendly to all groups(horse use could be opposite Tsali horse days)	Noted-Design and management issue to be considered for all trail systems. Details would depend on which system(s) etc. More information needed.

Pisgah National Forest Districts

Appalachian District

Background - The Appalachian Ranger District is located north the city of Asheville along the Tennessee/North Carolina State line, and includes both popular and remote, little-used hiking trails. The District offers soaring views of the French Broad River, a trail that climbs up the East's highest mountain (Mount Mitchell), trails that wind through vast natural rhododendron.

This district was once officially divided into two ranger districts which have since been consolidated and now is the Appalachian Ranger District. They were called the French Broad and Toecane Districts, named after the major rivers that flow through them, and you may still see references to them in several places.

The Appalachian District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Harmon Den Complex

- Maintenance on Cherry Ridge and Cherry Creek Horse Trails (TR301, TR300)
- Constructed a connector for Cherry Ridge Horse Trail (TR301)

South Toe River Complex

- Maintenance on Mount Mitchell and Black Mountain Crest Trails (TR190,TR179)

Roan Mountain Complex

- Paving Roane on Garden Trail (TR1002)
- Completed NEPA for relocation of a section of the AT at Hughes Gap South

Big Ivy / Big Butt Complex

- Maintenance on Big Butt Trail (TR161)

Volunteers

- The District holds chain saw certification training annually; recently certified eight volunteers.
- The District procured 24 chaps for ATC volunteers
- Approximately 30% of trail maintenance on the District is done by volunteers.

Projects - Work continues as the Appalachian District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

South Toe River Complex

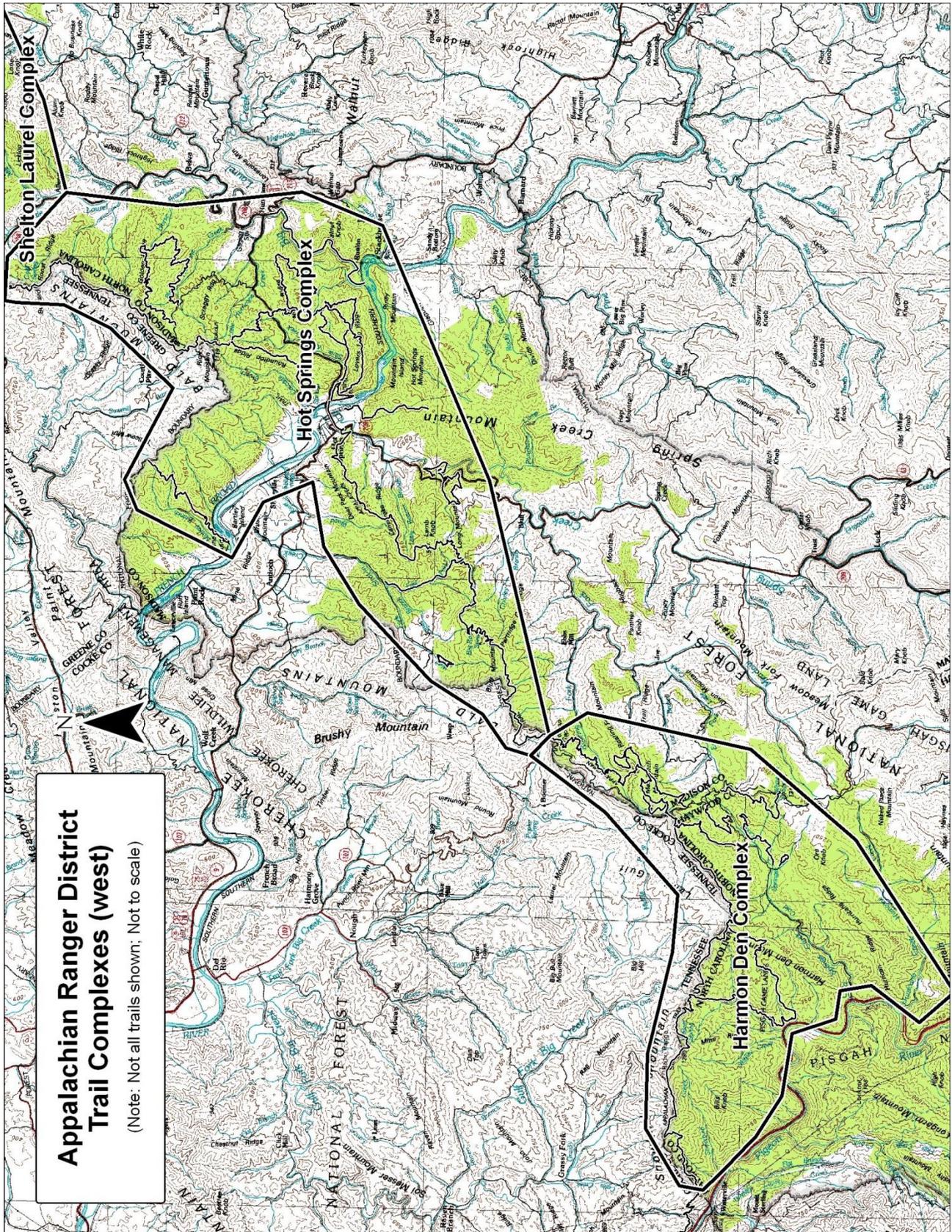
- Reviewing alternatives for a trailhead relocation - Black Mtn Crest Trail (TR)
- Requested permanent right-of-way from private landowner for Ray Mines trailhead to replace the north end of Boldens Creek trailhead.

Appalachian District-Wide

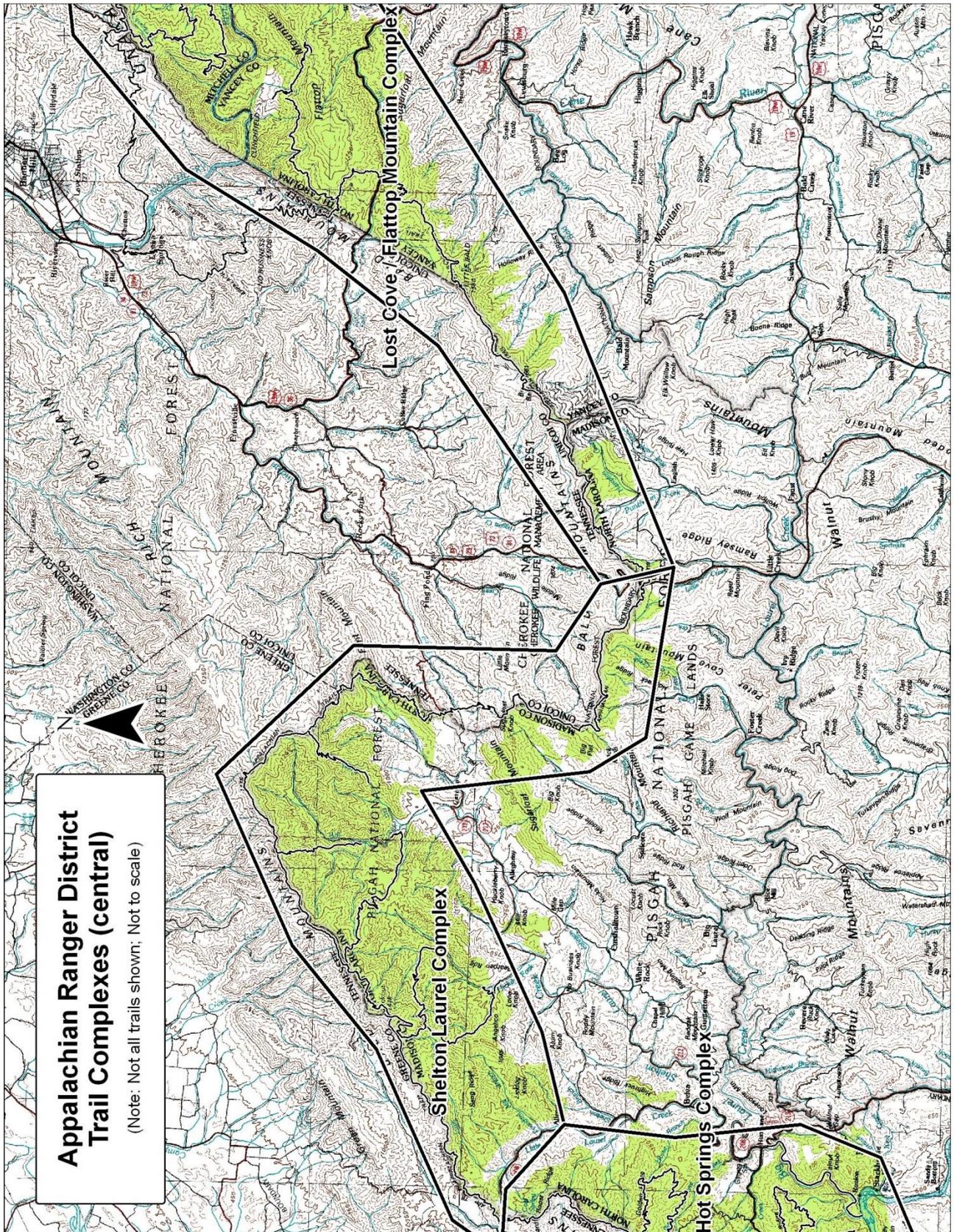
- Conducting an on-going area analysis and trail systems review for improved trail systems throughout the District

The following Appalachian District vicinity maps show the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

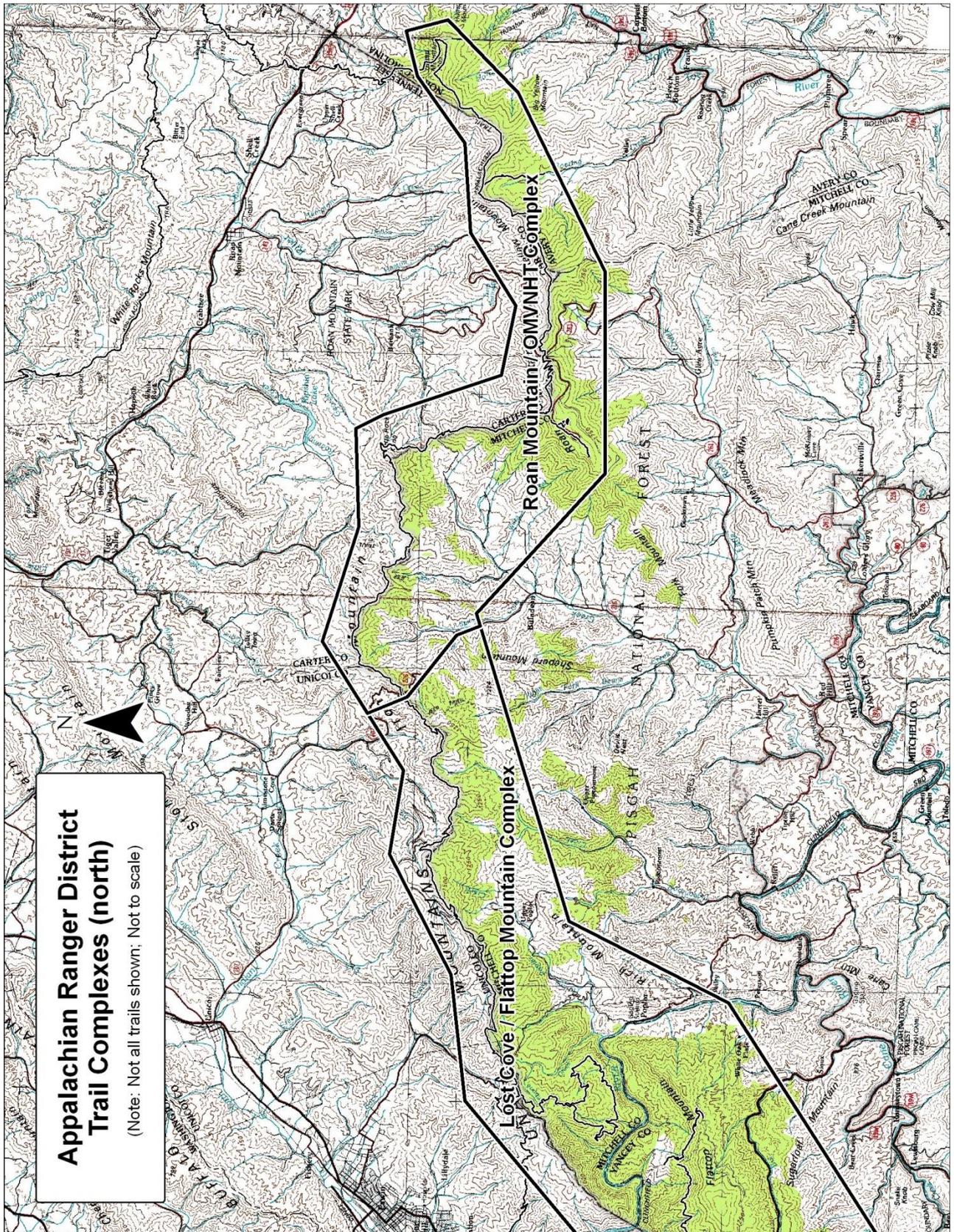
Appalachian District - West - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



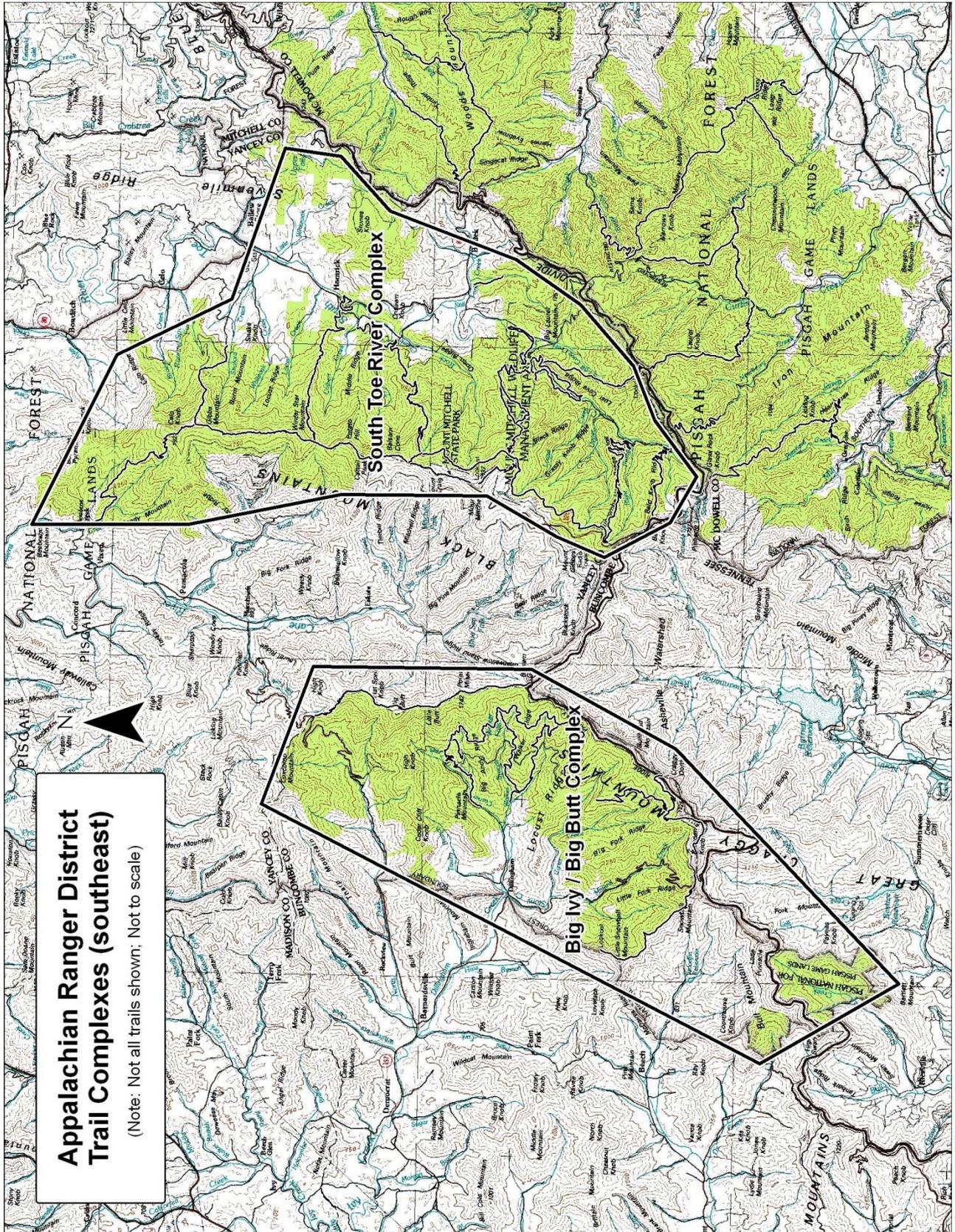
Appalachian District - Central - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Appalachian District - North - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Appalachian District - Southeast - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Appalachian District - Collaborator Comments

The following sections provide information on trail complexes that were identified within the Appalachian District. The trail complex sections contain a table of collaborator comments and District input relating to each comment.

As District personnel begin to prioritize projects identified in collaborator recommendations, the primary focus will be on maintenance items which can be implemented with minimal funding or planning; especially if work can be accomplished with volunteers. These projects could typically be completed in a shorter time frame, as opposed to more complex or costly projects. Recommendations of a larger scope requiring comprehensive analysis, extensive planning, significant funding and possible grant applications may still be considered, but implementation schedules would be impossible to predict.

Please note that where Forest Service responses indicate agreement with or consideration of collaborator recommendations, this is not a guarantee of implementation. Many of these recommendations would require funding for planning, environmental reviews, and construction; as well as long-term commitments for volunteer maintenance. Without these elements in place, it is unlikely a recommended project could be implemented.

Harmon Den Trail Complex

Set in a remote area and accessed by Interstate-40, Harmon Den offers a variety of recreation opportunities from horseback riding, hiking, picnicking, hunting and fishing. The Harmon Den Horse Camp, nestled in a cove below Hurricane Mountain, is an ideal base for exploring the miles of nearby trails.

This complex contains a concentration of horse trails and gated Forest Service system roads that form multiple horse trail loop opportunities on both sides of Cold Springs Road. The hike-only trail opportunities in the area include the Appalachian Trail (AT), Groundhog Creek Trail (TR315), Rube Rock (TR314), & Max Patch Loop Trail (TR306). Max Patch is a bald mountain on the North Carolina-Tennessee border. It is a major landmark along this section of the AT, known for 360 degree views of the surrounding mountains.

Appalachian District – Harmon Den Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Shiffley Creek		Connector	Shiffley Creek loop for horses starting at Cold Springs Parking Lot around to Deep Gap	Noted- Requires extensive planning, funding & coordination with ATC & CNF. Loop opportunities exist on other trails in the Harmon Den area.
2	Buckeye Ridge Horse	304	Connector	Buckeye loop extension across Max Patch for Horses (DC)	Noted- short loop opportunity exists. Additional horse trails on Max Patch are not consistent with current management objectives

Hot Springs Trail Complex

The town of Hot Springs is becoming ever more popular as a modern tourist destination. Outdoor recreation is abundant in the area. The location of the town along the French Broad River also provides easy access for whitewater rafting, canoeing, tubing, and kayaking.

The AT runs through downtown on Bridge Street and climbs the mountains on either side of the river. There are numerous other hiking, mountain-biking, backpacking, and sightseeing opportunities in the area. Several AT access points are located within the complex. Lovers Leap Trail (TR308), one of the most popular AT side hikes in the area, leads to an overlook offering a grand view of the French Broad River 500 feet below.

Mill Ridge Trail (TR280) and Golden Ridge Trail (TR294) offer easy loop opportunities for hikers and mountain bike riders. Laurel River Trail (TR310) is a popular hike/bike trail between the Laurel and French Broad Rivers.

Murray Branch Recreation Area is located 6 miles down the French Broad River from Hot Springs. The area offers recreational opportunities for picnicking, fishing, and canoe access to the river. An easy, 1-mile loop trail is adjacent to the area, Jacks Branch (TR299), provides a bird's-eye view of the French Broad River and the surrounding valley. Also contained in the complex are Silver Mine Group Camp and Rocky Bluff Campground.

Appalachian District – Hot Springs Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Roundtop Ridge	295	Comment	TR295 to Hike only	Noted- this trail is already designated as hike only
2	Golden Ridge	294	Decomm.	Decommission Golden Ridge Trail	Noted-Would require a comprehensive analysis of bike trail system. Will require extensive planning & funding
3	Mill Ridge	280	Connectors	Create a smaller loop inside the TR280 loop	Noted-Would require a comprehensive analysis of bike trail system. Will require extensive planning & funding
4	Hot Springs		Comment	We need bike trails in the Hot Springs Area. The App RD only has 25% of its trails open to bikes as compared to approx. 50% of trails in Pisgah and Cherokee.	Noted-Would require a comprehensive analysis of bike trail system. Will require extensive planning & funding

Appalachian District – Hot Springs Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
5	AT		Relocation	AT northbound section climbing toward Lover's Leap is very badly eroded beyond maintenance volunteer capability.	Will consider- would work with ATC & CMC for project proposal
6	TR299		Connectors	Connect TR299 to Rich Mtn	Noted- Requires extensive planning, funding & coordination with ATC & CNF.
7			Facilities	Create a Trail Head at Rich Mtn	Noted- Requires extensive planning, funding & coordination with ATC & CNF.
8	Roundtop Ridge	295	Comment	TR295 to Hike/ Bike	Noted- this trail is not designed to accommodate bike use & would not be sustainable as such. Use designation changes are beyond scope of Trail Strategy project.
9	Jack Branch	299	Comment	TR299 to Hike/ Bike	Noted- this trail is not designed to accommodate bike use & would not be sustainable as such. Use designation changes are beyond scope of Trail Strategy Project.

Shelton Laurel Trail Complex

The Shelton Laurel Backcountry Area is located in the valley of Shelton Laurel Creek, a remote area with coves, tributaries, and mountains lining it to its north. The AT and Tennessee State Line run along the mountains' spine. Trails climb from the valleys below up to the AT. Loop options for day hiking exist, some of which involve a climb up to the AT on one trail and a climb back down on another, although some of these are better-suited to backpacking trips.

Hiking opportunities include Hickey Fork Trail (TR292), a short out-and-back hike to a waterfall on the West Prong of Hickey Fork, Jerry Miller Trail (TR286), Green Ridge Trail (TR287) White Oak Trail (TR 293), and Fork Ridge Trail (TR285).

Appalachian District – Shelton Laurel Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	AT		Maint.	AT southbound section between Devil Fork Gap and Big Butt is diminished to a rock slide and beyond maintenance volunteers capability.	Will consider- requires working with ATC & CMC for relocation project proposal
2	AT		Relocation	Relocate from Big Butt to 3/4 mile north of Flint Mountain	Noted- requires working with ATC, TEHCC & CMC for relocation project proposal
3	AT		Connector	Connect AT to old AT Tread about 1 mile north of Flint Mountain	Noted- requires working with ATC, TEHCC & CMC for relocation project proposal
4			Comment	ATV activity at top of ridge how do we prevent this, near cemetery	Noted- requires working with ATC, TEHCC & CMC for relocation project proposal

Lost Cove / Flattop Mountain Trail Complex

This complex includes the 8.4-mile Shinbone Trail (TR187), a horse trail that follows an old logging road and parallels Shinbone Creek, providing views of the Unaka Mountains and the Nolichucky Gorge. The 2.2-mile Devils Creek Trail (TR188) is a hike only trail, as is the Lost Cove Trail (TR196) which accesses the deserted Lost Cove Community. The community was developed in the 1900s for establishment of a Civilian Conservation Corps Railroad.

The AT runs through this complex along its northern boundary, the Tennessee border, passing through Beauty Spot, a high-elevation, grassy bald with 360 degree, long-range views.

Appalachian District – Lost Cove / Flattop Mountain Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Lost Cove	196	Connectors	Need to connect TR196 to TR188	Complete. High Peaks Trail Assoc. (volunteer group) has re-opened the existing connection
2			Comment	FS Road near Hensley Ridge only open to property owners?!?	Not FS Road. Wolf Laurel Development reciprocal right-of-way for administrative purposes only

Roan Mountain / OVNHT Trail Complex

Roan Mountain, with its caps of open grasslands, is thought by some to be the most beautiful mountain east of the Rockies. One of the most popular, high-elevation balds in the southern Appalachians, Roan Mountain is actually a massif, or mountain mass, with two summits. It is part of a ridge known as the Roan Highlands, and is the highest peak in the Unaka Mountain Range.

The AT passes through this complex from Roan Mtn. to Hump Mtn. Much of the AT through this area passes across the Roan Highlands. The Roan Mtn. Gardens trail (TR1002) is an easy, 1-mile loop that passes through the natural rhododendron gardens and high elevation Spruce/Fir forest. This trail is fully accessible. Cloudland Trail (TR1000) leads from the Cloudland Parking area to an overlook on Roan High Bluff – offering beautiful panoramic views of Iron and Unaka mountain range.

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) is a 330-mile route that commemorates a heroic event of the American Revolutionary War. A 1.6-mile section crosses the Appalachian District near the Roaring Creek area (northwest corner of Avery County). The trail provides views of Yellow Mountain to the west and Rye Ridge to the east.

Appalachian District – Roan Mountain / OVNHT Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Grassy Ridge	193A	Relocation	Grassy Ridge Trail relocation from AT to Grassy Ridge (BJ)	Agree- requires planning & funding

Big Ivy / Big Butt Trail Complex

This complex contains several high-elevation, ridge-top hiking trails such as the Mountains to Sea Trail (MST) along the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP), Snowball Trail (TR170), and Big Butt Trail (TR161), which offers long range views. All of these trails are accessed from the BRP.

The trails in Big Ivy are very remote with access on Forest Service Rd. 74 (Big Ivy Road) and the BRP via Forest Service Rd.63 (Stony Fork Road). There are several miles of hiking, horse & bike trails in this area. Trails in Big Ivy and Corner Rock are very popular with hikers, horse-back riders and an increasing interest from mountain bikers.

At the southern end of this complex is Craggy Gardens along the BRP. The Douglas Falls Trail (TR162) is a popular trail in this area, although the first 1/2 mile of the trail is by far the most used as it leads to the falls.

Appalachian District – Big Ivy / Big Butt Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Bear Pen	176	Safety	Remove bridges, jumps, etc. Built by bikers- eroding trails & dangerous (KT1)	Agreed- maintenance item
2	entire area		Safety	Hunters not far enough off trails/ roads shell casings found on roads & trails (KT6)	Will consider development of trailhead with information boards emphasizing hunting & trail use regulations
3	FS 74		Relocation	Relocate or create loops to avoid FS74 (KT3/ AS1)	Will consider- Comprehensive analysis of Big Ivy area is required. Requires extensive planning & funding
4	FS 74		Safety	Excessive speeding creating hazard for hikers to be on road/trail (KT5)	Noted- Comprehensive trail use & safety analysis of Big Ivy area is required. Requires extensive planning & funding
5	Stair Creek	183	Comment	Multi use trails- times for bikers & horse & only Hikers(KT4)	Noted- Comprehensive trail use & safety analysis of Big Ivy area is required. Requires extensive planning & funding
6	Laurel Gap	184	Connectors	Hiking connector to Big Butt Trail from Laurel Creek Road, which would add loop option to climb up to views, already existing user trails (JM1)	Will consider- Comprehensive analysis of Big Ivy area is required. Requires extensive planning & funding

Appalachian District – Big Ivy / Big Butt Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
7	Big Ivy		Comment	Mountain Biker Groups be involved in policy the rules and/or designations for trail use	Will consider- Comprehensive analysis of Big Ivy area is required. Requires extensive planning & funding
	Big Butt	161	Comment	New proposed bike trail in Mtn Mitchell area from Balsam Gap/Big Butt TH around near Clingmans peak along Wilson Ridge to Ogle Ridge.	Noted- Much of this land is BRP, State, & Private. Topography not conducive to support sustainable bike trail in this area
	FS-Rd-220		Comment	Shope Creek Area - Close to Asheville, user created trails already forming! Might be worth designating trails now to avoid resource issues later. People like close to population centers! Gas is \$\$\$\$. (JM2)	Noted- Proposal is for new trail system in an area with minimal existing infrastructure to support it. District does not have the resources to maintain/manage additional trails and volunteers.
	Coleman Boundary		Connector	New trails and connectors- Big Ivy loop opportunities- Lots of possibilities to N and E of FS Rd in Coleman Boundary old trails to re-establish old logging roads--> Comments? Comments potential from Stoney Fork Rd to Blackberry Inn area- lots of old trails on old maps...	Noted- Proposal is for new trail system in an area with minimal existing infrastructure to support it. District does not have the resources to maintain/manage additional trails and volunteers. FS cannot provide exclusive use trails to private property.

South Toe River Trail Complex

This complex is bounded to the west by Mt. Mitchell State Park and to the south and east by the BRP. The Black Mtn. Crest Trail (TR179) is a ridge-top trail with long-range views that runs the ridge north of the Park. The Crest Trail connects to hiking trails that lead down to the South Toe Valley, such as Colbert Ridge Trail (TR178) and Woody Ridge Trail (TR177). Both trails serve as laterals to the Crest Trail and provide loop opportunities that pass close to the Carolina Hemlock Recreation Area.

The complex contains a variety of trails leading from Black Mountain Camp Ground, Mt. Mitchell access trails, ridge top trails, river access trails, and multiple opportunities for day hikes & backpack trips. Also included is the Buncombe Range Horse Trail (TR191), which follows 8 miles of railroad grade.

Appalachian District – South Toe River Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Black Mtn Crest	179	Comment	TR179 near Low Gap no access to trailhead	Agreed - There is access at Bolens Creek. Alternative trailhead locations being analyzed
2	Buncombe Horse	191	Decomm.	TR191 near Maple Camp Ridge gets low use and should be decommissioned to Simmons Cem	Will consider
3	TR 186 & TR191	191	Connector	from TR186 to TR191 near Right Prong should be connected for hikers	Will consider- requires planning & funding. This is a short connector to create loop opportunities.
4	TR186 to TR182	186	Connector	from TR186 near FS472 to TR182 near Green Knob Lookout needs a hiking connector	Will consider- requires planning & funding. This is a short connector to create loop opportunities.
5			Connector	Create a connect from FS 5578 up near Johnson Cove then to Bolens Pyramid, then Blue Knob following FS4859	Under consideration - District is negotiating with private landowner for trailhead right-of-way. Requires extensive planning & funding
6	South Toe River	201	Comment	From Carolina Hemlocks Campground to Victor Fields needs to be a horse trail	Noted- Proposal is for new trail. District does not have the resources to maintain/manage additional trails and volunteers.

Appalachian District – South Toe River Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
7	FS 5523	191	Comment	From TR177 to TR 191 need to create new horse trail	Noted- Proposal is for new trail. District does not have the resources to maintain/manage additional trails and volunteers.
8	Buncombe Horse Range Ridge	191	Decomm.	from FS472 to Right Prong doesn't get used should decommission	Noted- FS472 trailhead provides access to & trailer parking for TR191
9	TR191		Comment	TR191 should be Hike and Bike	Noted- change in use designations are beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
10	Black Mtn Crest	179	Relocation	Relocate the existing hiking trail to FS 1102 area	Noted- Need more information
11	Black Mtn Crest	179	Connectors	Black Mountain Loop Trail- Combine Black Mountain Crest Trail, section of MTS Trail, Big Butt Trail and then about 10 miles on private land.	Noted- Beyond Trail Strategy Project scope
12	MST	440	Comment	MST- some sections on BRP which are primarily single track constructed for foot traffic only receive use by bikes and horses which causes erosion and general deterioration of the trail. Greater education should help greatly, but also designated use would help. (Central Blue Ridge Task Force- Black Mnt campground to Beacon Heights.)	Noted-Need more information. These sections of trail are on BRP land
13	Black Mountain	177	Comment	All Black Mountain Trails- poor maintenance low signage, few blazes. Treated as an after thought by local managers. It is the highest value backcountry resource in NC and is not blazed, signed, or kept cleared. Trail mileage is being lost. Trail mileage should be increased. It is the cheapest form of economic development in our region. The trail network in the Black Mountain region needs to be formally expanded. Local hunters are creating their own bootleg trails in The Blacks. In addition, the FS has tried to take other formal trails out of service (Woody Ridge) as well as closing forest service roads.	Noted - Woody Ridge Trail, TR177, has not been decommissioned

Grandfather District

Background - The Grandfather District includes lands along the Blue Ridge Escarpment northwest of the Black Mountains, stretching from Interstate 40 in the South to near the town of Blowing Rock in the north. Its borders roughly include Interstate 40 to the South, US Hwy. 70 to the East, US Hwy. 321 to the North, and the Blue Ridge Parkway to the West.

The Grandfather District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Linville Gorge Complex

- Partial relocation of the lower section of Hawksbill Trail (TR248, hike only)
- Hazardous tree removal on the Linville Gorge Trail (TR231, hike only)

Old Fort/Catawba Falls Complex

- Maintenance on several miles of Kitsuma and Kitsuma Peak Trails (TR205 and TR205A, hike/bike)
- Construction of a new trailhead parking area with information kiosk and an SST (odor-free, waterless vault toilet) at Catawba Falls Trail (hike only)

Woods Mtn / Armstrong Complex

- Maintenance on several miles of Woods Mtn Trail (TR218, hike/bike/horse)

Projects - Work continues as the Grandfather District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

Old Fort /Catawba Falls Complex

- Partnering with McDowell County in grant application to fund a footbridge at Catawba Falls Trail

Linville Gorge Complex

- Completion of relocation on the lower section of Hawksbill Trail
- Assessment of a possible relocation of the Mountains to Sea Trail connecting Linville River Trail to Shortoff Mtn Trail with a possible footbridge.

Wilson Creek/ Globe Complex

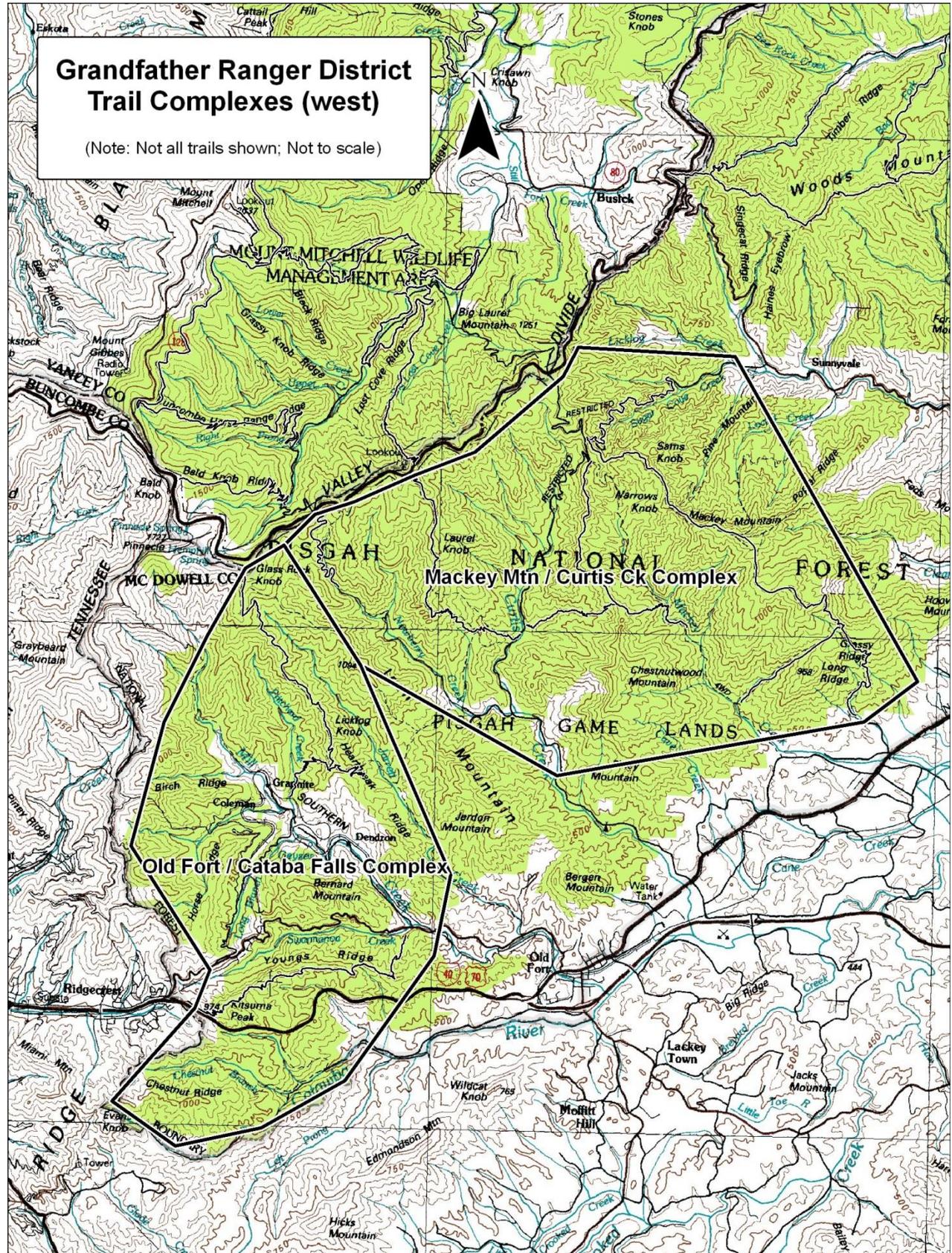
- Relocation of North Harpers Creek Trail (TR239, hike only) to move it away from steep, creek-side slope in an effort to avoid eroding bank sections on Wilson Creek National Wild & Scenic River.
- Analysis of possible relocation of Wilson Ridge Trail around private land.

Woods Mountain/Armstrong Complex

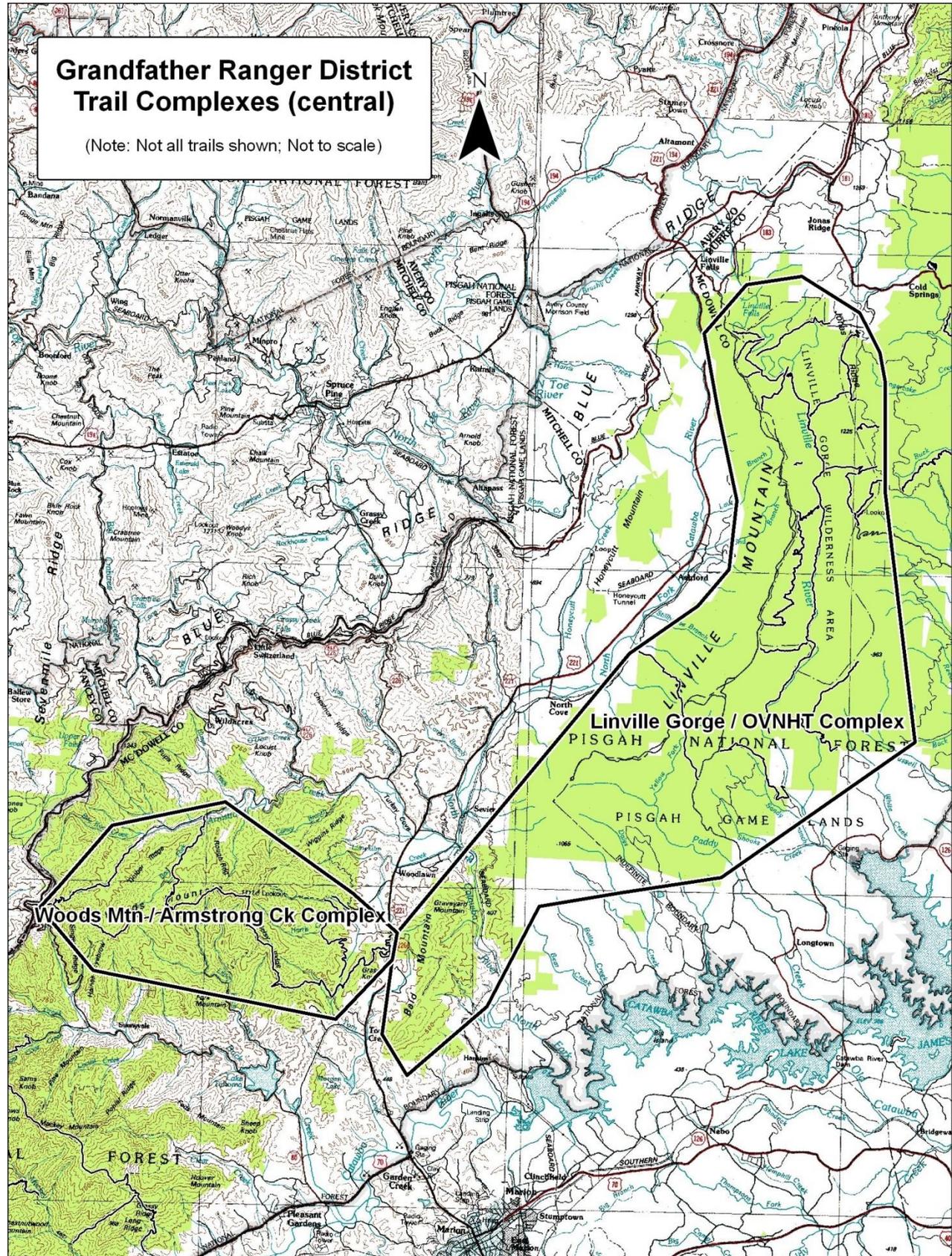
- Grant application to fund trail improvements on Falls Branch Trail and construction of an accessible viewing platform at the falls.
- Proposed CFLR project to perform maintenance on Armstrong Creek Trail.

The following Grandfather District vicinity maps show the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

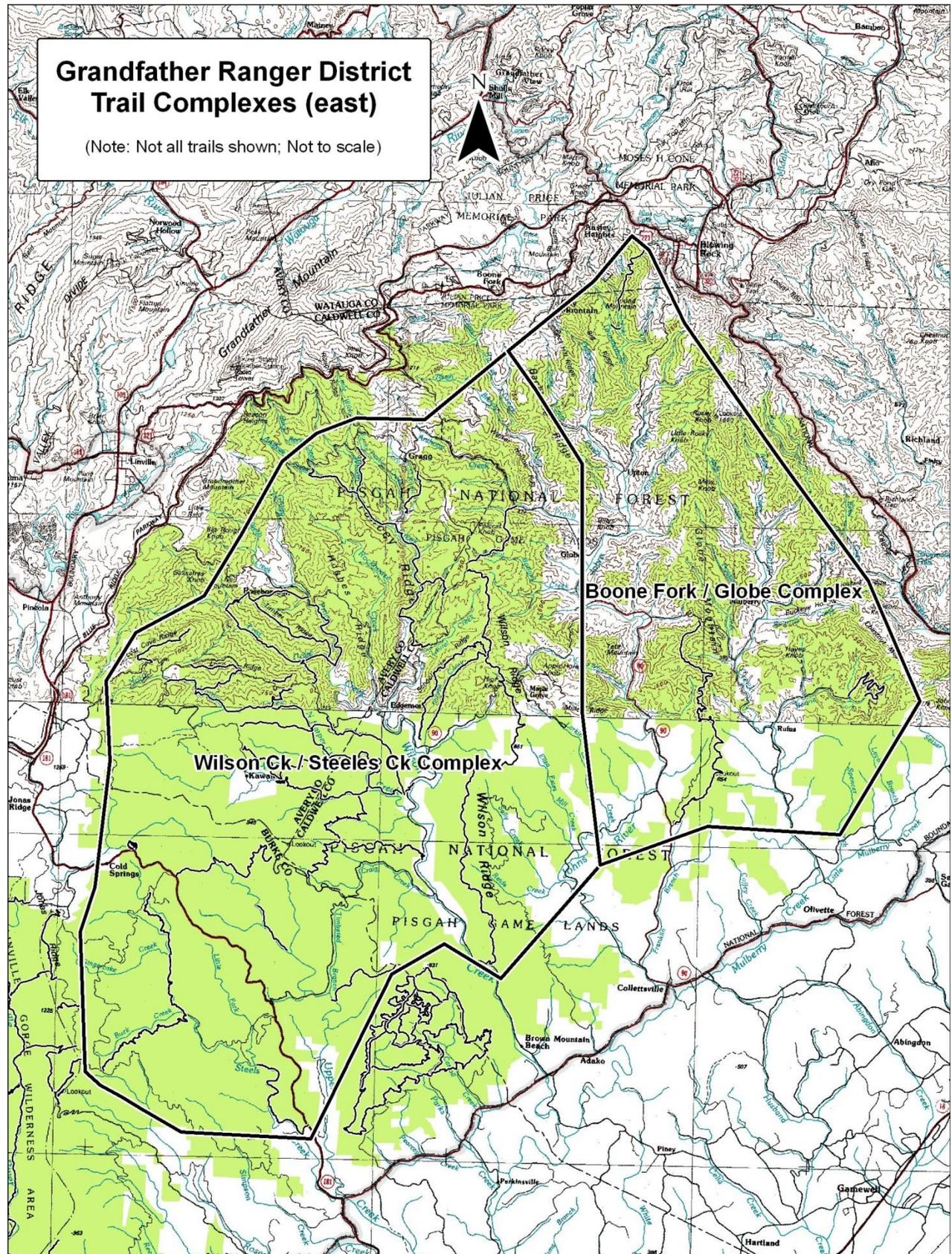
Grandfather District – West- Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Grandfather District – Central- Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Grandfather District - East - Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Grandfather District – Collaborator Comments

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Old Fort / Catawba Falls Trail Complex

Catawba Falls is one of Western North Carolina's exceptional Blue Ridge waterfalls - one which is along the steep escarpment where the higher mountain lands drop off to the Piedmont areas below. It's located near Old Fort, NC, at the southern end of the Grandfather Ranger District, just south of I-40. Catawba Falls Trail is a popular, hike-only trail.

Portions of the complex are known primarily for bike trails. Kitsuma Trail and Kitsuma Peak Trails (also known as Youngs Ridge) are popular mountain bike trails. Just north of Youngs Ridge, a new bike trail has been located, Point Lookout Trail, which utilizes Forest System roads. Heartbreak Ridge leads to the BRP, in the northern portion of this complex.

Grandfather District – Old Fort / Catawba Falls Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Heartbreak Ridge	208	Maint.	Maintenance needed at Heartbreak Ridge switchbacks halfway down trail from junction with TR208 to FR4032.	Noted- maintenance item
2	Chestnut Branch		Connector	Connector between Point Lookout Trail and Kitsuma along Chestnut Branch to a point east and slightly south of Assembly Lake, south to the Catawba River.	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
3	Heartbreak Ridge	208	Connector	Connector recommended between TR 186 and TR208 along the BR Parkway.	Noted- proposal is for National Park Service land
4	Heartbreak Ridge	208	Safety	Safety issue on trail from junction with TR208 down FR4032, continuing down FR4030 to SR 1227.	Noted- need more information
5	Kitsuma	205	Connector	Existing loop identified at TR 205, including FR 4026. (PW)	Noted- more information needed
6	Heartbreak Ridge	208	Connector	Unsure of trail on Iron Mountain to create loop with heartbreak ridge. (PW)	Noted- more information needed
7	Star Gap	209	Connector	Loop down Jarrett Creek and north to Star Gap, utilizing FR. (PW)	Noted- more information needed

Mackey Mountain / Curtis Creek Trail Complex

This complex is bounded by the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) on the northwest side. It is a remote, back-country area with several miles of hike-only trails, also containing Curtis Creek Campground. The Hickory Branch Trail (TR213) leads up to a ridge overlooking the Mackey Creek valley. The Mackey Mountain Trail leads along the ridge defining the east side of the Mackey Creek drainage.

All trails in this complex are hike-only designations. Numerous loop opportunities are available utilizing trails & Forest Service roads.

Grandfather District – Mackey Mtn / Curtis Creek Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Hickory Branch	213	Maint.	Maintenance and improvements needed along trail 213 from junction with FR482 east to TR212 and north to junction with FR 482.	Agree- maintenance item
2	Curtis Creek		Maint.	Many trails in the Curtis Creek area aren't under any volunteer group for maintenance. They still suffer greatly from the ice-storm two winters ago.	Agreed- maintenance required. Interested volunteers, please contact Grandfather Ranger Office.
3	Mackey Mountain	216	Maint.	Mackie Mnt Trail (from FS road to summit)- Trail is unmaintained and often obstructed with down woody.	Noted- maintenance item. Interested volunteers please contact District Ranger Office.
4	Snooks Nose	211	Relocation	Relocate or decommission section of TR211 between junction with Slick Falls Branch Trail (non-system) to below series of switchbacks.	Agree- requires planning & funding
5	Snooks Nose	211	Decomm.	Snooks Nose Trail (segment near Curtis Creek Rec Area)- Trail is too steep, eroded, unsustainable to manage.	Agreed- maintenance and/or minor relocations, requires planning & funding
6	Newberry Creek	210	Decomm.	Between the Blue Ridge Parkway and the end of Newberry Creek Rd in the Curtis Creek area. (PW)	Will consider- requires use analysis
7	Mackey Mountain	216	Connector	Loops out of Curtis Creek campground including TR 213, TR216 and TR 212 could be doubled by utilizing existing non-system trail along Mackey Creek and creating a connector between the creek and Narrows Knob. (PW)	Will consider- will investigate connector between Mackey Mtn & Mackey Ck trails. Will require extensive planning & funding
8	Mackey Mountain		Connector	Need for loop trails and additional trail opportunities in Mackey Mountain/Curtis Creek area. Trails dropped from system in recent years that completed loops limit opportunities. (H.Irwin)	Will consider- will investigate connector between Mackey Mtn & Mackey Ck trails. Will require extensive planning & funding
9	Snooks Nose	211	Connector	Continuing TR211 over BRP to TR 182 could provide connector to the Appalachian RD.	Noted- opportunity exists using short section of BRP

Grandfather District – Mackey Mtn / Curtis Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
10	Sugar Cove	219	Decomm.	TR219 from junction with TR 216 to near junction with FR 1188.	Noted- Decommissioned as road, designated as trail, sustainable grade & condition.
11	Star Gap	209	Decomm.	From Star Gap to the private property boundary. May already be off the system. Is in Curtis Creek area. (PW)	Noted- not system trail

Woods Mountain / Armstrong Trail Complex

This complex is very remote and consists primarily of horse/hike and bike/hike trails. The complex connects the Woodlawn area on the east side, to the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) to the west. Many of the trails within this complex are on high- elevation, ridge-top locations. Horse & bike loop opportunities exist utilizing Forest Service roads.

Falls Branch Trail is an easy, ½-mile hike-only trail leading to a waterfall on Toms Creek. Woods Mountain Trail is a 6.5-mile horse/bike/hike trail bordered by the BRP at its western terminus.

Grandfather District – Woods Mountain. / Armstrong Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Woodlawn		Connector	Woodlawn off 221, near Marion- To make this ride a loop, you have to ride down an almost shoulder-less four lane highway. Please make a loop.	Noted- need more information
2	Harris Creek Horse	204	Connector	Possible connector between TR 204 and TR218. (TJ)	Will consider- Need more information. Requires planning & funding
3	Woods Mtn.	218	Connector	Woods Mnt (TR218) to Mnts to Sea Trail(TR227) to TR 223- Loop connector with trailhead. Developed on WRC property or on the Blue Ridge Parkway. (TK)	Noted- Loop opportunity exists using short section of state road
4	Armstrong Creek	223	Connector	Possible loop from TR223 to BRPW, TR 218 and build connector north to SR1443 and to FR469 for 2 horse loop options.	Noted- TR-223 not sustainable as horse trail. Loop opportunity will exist with Woods Mtn Connector Trail, TR218B.
5	FR 150		Comment	Unimproved 2-tracks east of second gate on FR 150 and trail out of Woodlawn Work Center- good opportunity for additional hike/bike loops here. (WK)	Noted- need more information

Linville Gorge / Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Complex (OVNHT)

The Linville Gorge / OVNHT complex includes all the trails in the Wilderness, the Mountains to Sea Trail (MST -parts of which are outside of wilderness), and a section of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. This complex offers many miles of very unique hike-only trail opportunities. Attractions in the area include Table Rock Mtn., Hawksbill Mtn., Linville Falls, and Wisemans View; a rock outcrop along the western edge of Linville Gorge which offers excellent views of the entire gorge.

The Linville Gorge Wilderness is the third largest wilderness area in North Carolina and one of only two wilderness gorges in the Southern United States. It comprises 11,786 acres around the Linville River. The river is approximately 1,400 feet below the ridge, thus hiking in and out of the Gorge is challenging and enjoyable for those who like serious hiking. Trails are signed at trailheads but are not signed or blazed once inside wilderness. Users should carry a topographical map and a compass. Some of the trails, such as Table Rock Trail and Shortoff Trail are primitive with very strenuous hiking.

Grandfather District – Linville Gorge / OVNHT Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Hawksbill	248	Relocation	Current trail entrenched. New trail needed. (BH1)	Agreed- Project underway; lower half of trail currently being relocated. Upper half in planning process.
2	MTS	440	Relocation	Relocate TR440 off entrenched areas from Table Rock Mtn south along gorge rim to Short-off Mtn. (TK1)	Agreed- Project underway
3	OVNHT	308G	Comment	Need to be explicit about connections between OVNHT from Pisgah NF to Lake James State Park. (BL)	Noted- FS met with OVNHT Park Superintendent
4	Brushy Ridge	232	Decomm.	Have to cross private land to get to the trail. Present land owner allows trail traffic, but I know of no legal agreement. The land owner has built his own trail system in this part of Linville Gorge, so he will probably keep up the trail if it is decommissioned! (PW)	Will consider- Only access is from private land
5	MTS	440	Connector	Trail bridge over lower Linville River TR 440 to state-owned land to TR 440. Note: Trail connector created from TR 440 to NC Hwy 126. (TK3)	Will consider foot bridge in conjunction with possible relocation of MST, connecting to TR231 and TR235. Requires extensive planning & funding

Grandfather District – Linville Gorge / OVNHT Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
6	MTS	440	Connector	Proposed link between TR 440 above Wolf Pit TH down ridge then following contour to TR 231.	Will consider-Requires extensive planning & funding
7	Little Table Rock	236	Decomm.	From intersection with Spence Ridge Trail and the main ridge between Table Rock and Little Table Rock (keep trail on ridge). Is in Linville Gorge. (PW)	Will consider-Relocation to be investigated. Trail currently provides connection from Table Rock to Spence Ridge. Requires extensive planning & funding
8	OVNHT	308G	Relocation	Relocate hiking trail to avoid entrenched areas of OVNHT at the mouth of Linville Mtn Ridge. Between SR 1238 at OVNHT trailhead north to FR 106.	Agreed- requires extensive planning & funding
9	Table Rock		Comment	Does the FS have any input (you all are landowners) about the closure of SR1261 (Table Rock Mnt Rd)? Private landowners are closing this access to NF. The aggressive landowners claim to have worked out a deal with FS.	Noted- This is not FS land, therefore FS has no jurisdiction. Access across private land. Contact District Ranger for additional information
10	Raspberry Ridge		Maint.	Raspberry Ridge off Gingercake Rd down to FS 496- This trail used to be wonderful , but was eroded by the hurricanes in '04. It has never recovered.	Noted- this is a non-system trail
11			Facilities	Pisgah off Hwy 105- More area/space for horse trailer parking to access trail.	Noted-no horse trailers in Kistler Hwy area (NC105), need more information
12	Back Irish Creek		Facilities	Off Fish Hatchery Rd (Pisgah)- Back Irish Creek- more parking for horse trailers.	Noted- area is State land
13	South Table Rock Rd		Comment	County Rd 1261, Burke County- This is a county road that allows access to FS land. Private land owners on this road are trying to intimidate people that use this road. They are trying to insinuate that the road is private and that using the road is trespassing.	Noted- This is not FS land, FS has no jurisdiction.
14	District		Comment	SAWS interested in tracking issues throughout Linville.	Noted
15	Linville Gorge		Comment	Trying to access the gorge from Hwy 126 is a little tricky, but I guess that also adds to the challenge.	Noted
16	OVNHT	308G	Comment	Extent of trail for this area was sketched on the map.	Noted

Wilson Creek / Steeles Creek Trail Complex The Wilson Creek area is draped across the Blue Ridge Escarpment between the Piedmont and the high peaks along the Parkway which forms the northern border of the complex. This area is bounded to the west by Linville Gorge Wilderness and extends northeast to the District boundary near Blowing Rock. This large complex includes trails around Wilson Creek itself as well as trails in Harper Creek and Lost Cove Wilderness Study Areas, Mortimer, and Globe areas. Wilson Creek was designated as a National Wild and Scenic River by Congress on August 18, 2000. The Globe / Thunderhole / China Creek area is popular with local residents from Blowing Rock and Boone Fork area has increasing interest from equestrian and bike users.

The trail network throughout this area is fairly extensive and although there are horse and bike trail in this complex, it contains many miles of hike only trail opportunities. Several areas within the complex are managed as backcountry and offer remoteness and solitude for the backpacker or hiker. Big Lost Cove Cliffs and Little Lost Cove Cliffs are unique geological features in the area.

Grandfather District – Wilson Creek / Steeles Creek Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Woodruff Ridge	256	Maint.	1 bad trench at Woodruff Branch north of Barn Ridge(PS)	Will consider- maintenance item. Need more information
2	Thorpes Creek	279	Maint.	Many trees down.	Agree-maintenance item
3	Wilson Ridge	269	Maint.	Trench on trail at junction with road to Jackson Knob.	Agree-maintenance item
4	Holly Springs	273	Maint.	Trench approx. 1 mile east of junction with FR 982 where trail dips SE. Holly Springs (PS)	Agree- Possible relocation & heavy maintenance requires planning & funding
5	Wilson Ridge	269	Maint.	Several downed trees in remote section of Wilson Ridge Trail across from the Wilson Creek Visitor Center and north. (PS)	Noted- maintenance item
6	FR 4081		Maint.	Wilson Ridge- loops with system roads for mountain bikes. Explore loops with FR 4081 and FR 4068. Entrenched sections- look for loops with TR 269.	Noted- entrenchment is a maintenance item. Some loops currently exist, will consider additional loops
7	North Harper Creek Falls	239	Maint.	Some blazing issues in this trail at the top of falls. (TJ)	Agree-maintenance item
8	Raider Camp	277	Maint.	I quit riding Raider Camp years ago because the erosion and horse damage makes it unenjoyable.	Noted- trail is located within Wilderness Study Area & is closed to bike use. Maintenance needs noted.

Grandfather District – Wilson Creek / Steeles Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
9	Raider Camp	277	Maint.	Raider Camp Trail, Wilson Ck Drainage, Chestnut Mountain to Harper Creek Trail- This trail suffered huge erosion during the '04 hurricanes. The trail has never recovered.	Noted- maintenance item to Hike Only trails
10	Lost Cove	262	Maint.	Lost Cove Creek-Hunt/Fish Falls-Gragg Prong- MST from Gragg to Beacon Heights (NPS): Lack of maintenance and some serious erosion/lack of run-off affecting important tribs of Wilson Creek.	Noted- maintenance item to Hike Only trails
11	Greentown Trail	268	Safety	Greentown Trail (NC Hwy 181 to Upper Creek)- Some safety concern due to mnt biking use down steep slope and hiker/angler pedestrian use...and...erosion/lack of run-off mgt.	Noted- will review on the ground
12	Upper Creek Falls	268B	Safety	MST- section 181 to Green Town (Upper Creek) steep downhill grade use by bikers jumping "tank traps" which creates safety issues for hikers and maintenance crews. Again education (signage may help). (Central Blue Ridge Task Force MST)	Noted- will review on the ground
13	Little Lost Cove Cliffs	271A	Relocation	Western end is in bad shape; needs possible relo. (TJ)	Will consider- requires planning & funding. Need more information
14	Yellow Buck	265	Decomm.	This trail is in Wilson Creek. It could be used as a connector trail to make loops, but it is too steep and eroded to be keep in it's present form. If not decommissioned, it should be rerouted. (PW)	Will consider- requires planning & funding. Hike only trail, so will consider adding steps, in steep sections, and/or minor relocations
15	Schoolhouse Ridge	279	Connector	Potential loop TR 279, Schoolhouse Ridge, through Mortimer CG loop, continuing along trail and including section of FR4068. (PW)	Noted- Some loops currently exist, will consider additional loops. Requires planning & funding
16	Wilson Ridge	269	Relocation	Wilson Ridge is trenched. Relo needed. (PS)	Agree- requires extensive planning & funding
17	Woodruff Ridge	256	Connector	Connect TR 256 to TR 269 to Tr 279 tying Mortimer Campground to Gragg Prong, SR 1362	Noted- Some loops currently exist, will consider additional loops. Requires extensive planning & funding
18	Schoolhouse Ridge	279	Decomm.	Consider decommission of TR 279 due to entrenchment and relocate/improve near yet sufficiently away from Thorps Creek. (TK 5&6)	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding

Grandfather District – Wilson Creek / Steeles Creek Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
19	Lower Steele Creek	238	Maint.	The Lower Steele Creek trail beyond the first creek crossing is very hard to follow after the wildlife field. The trail I'm referring to is the one from God's Country down to Dick Loven's land. (W. Beam)	Noted- trail is identified for decommissioning due to underuse & lack of connections with other hiking trails
20	Wilson Ridge	269	Maint.	Connector between TR269 and TR279 is trenched (PS)	Noted- this is a non-system trail
21	Greentown	268	Comment	Greentown area(?)- question of TR440 and TR268 just east of junction with SR 181; perhaps question of designated use?? (PS)	Noted- TR268 designated for hike & bike
22	FR299	299	Connector	Improved connector with gate for MTB access?? Into Brown Mnt OHV area.	Noted- inconsistent with management objectives
23	Yancey Ridge		Connector	Proposed connector with switchbacks to FR981 connecting approximately 1/4 mile below culvert at Rockhouse Creek.	Noted-Yancey Ridge Trl was decommissioned years ago due to access across private land
24	Timber Ridge	261	Connector	Loop identified on NE side of ridge, SE side of Ridge and the 2 combined, for 3 loop options in that area utilizing all existing trails. (PW)	Noted- Hike only trail. Two loop opportunities currently exist.
25	Lost Cove	262	Connector	There's an old gated road connecting FR 464A with Lost Cove Creek. The first third is graveled. Potential connector. (PW)	Noted-Hike only trail. Loop opportunity exists using FR464 & FR58
26	Harper Creek	260	Connector	Potential for connector from N. Harper Creek Falls to Little Lost Cove Cliffs trail (TR 271A) to create a loop. (PW)	Noted- Loop opportunity exists using FR464 & FR58
27	Harper Creek	260	Connector	Existing loops: TR 265/TR270/TR266/TR260; TR260/TR277; TR255A/TR255/TR440/FR198 (PW)	Noted
28	Big Lost Cove Cliffs	271	Connector	A connector trail from Big Lost Cove Cliffs to Lost Cove Creek. You get the views and the water all in one trip and between FR464 and 464-A a shuttle is easy. (W. Beam)	Noted- Difficult due to extremely steep terrain, would be unsustainable.
29	Yancey Ridge		Relocation	Put back on system- reroute section to FR 981.	Noted-Yancey Ridge Trl was decommissioned years ago due to access across private land
30	Holly Springs	273	Connector	Loop potential with Holly Springs and FR 299.	Noted- Loop opportunity currently exists
31	Brown Mountain		Comment	Alternate season at BMOHV area for mountain bikes during the seasonal closure.	Noted- area closed seasonally to all uses for maintenance & to avoid impacts during winter weather conditions

Boone Fork / Globe Trail Complex

This complex contains Boone Fork Campground (CG). There are opportunities to expand the trail system around the campground and connect trails with an extensive Forest Service road network. Sand Mountain Trail is a 7-mile bike/hike trail that utilizes sections of Forest Service roads. Sand Mountain Trail is located in the western portion of the complex.

Grandfather District –Boone Fork / Globe Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	China Creek	250	Connector	Connector from NPS (at Moses Cone) across newly acquired China Creek Tract to China Creek Trail. (BP1)	Agree- project planning underway
2	China Creek	250	Connector	Agree with BP 1 & 2- Relocate trail off FR4071 to extend TR250 to Globe Rd. (TK4)	Noted- BP1- Agree, project planning underway. BP2- connection possible along short section of FR4071.
3	Benson Hollow		Connector	Recommended connector between FR 1167 and FR 6089.	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding.
4	Boone Fork area		Comment	BRHA is utilizing existing trails/old logging roads. This will be GPSed with WildSouth's guidance. 30-40 miles of trail including fire roads around Boone Fork and Spencer's Branch. Some are too steep to maintain. Utilizing non-system trails shown on the map between Boone Fork and FR 189.	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
5	Buckey Loop	217	Connector	Connector recommended between TR 217 and junction of non-system trail at Tommy Cove to non-system trail at Strutton Creek.	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
6	Boone Fork area		Comment	Lots of opportunity for increased system here. Stacked loop with minor (?) difficulties. (WK)	Will consider adding looped opportunities in this area. Requires extensive planning & funding
7	China Creek	250	Connector	Connector from China Creek Tr (system) to "Thunderhole Creek Tr" (non-system) [TR 250] out to FR4071 near Globe Rd. (BP2)	Noted- connection possible along short section of FR4071

Grandfather District –Boone Fork / Globe Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
8	Brown Branch		Connector	Recommended connector from Brown Branch approximately 1/2 mile east of junction with SR 1368 to non-system trail NW of Spencer Branch. Second connector recommended from private property toward mouth of Brown Branch to non-system trail NW of mouth of Spencer Branch.	Noted- cannot allow exclusive use to private property
9	China Creek	250	Comment	China Creek/Thunderhole is a very good trail- gets MTB use and should be available to MTB use- already being used as loop with Globe Rd. Impression is that this is a MTB trail from old maps. This trail is in very good shape with little to no fall line.	Noted- changes in trail use designations beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
10	Thunderhole Falls	253	Connector	Upper Thunderhole Loop Trail- there is a potential to link NPS lands, land trusts lands and NF lands into a multi-use loop trail with access to the BRP and the town of Blowing Rock. (B. Prater)	Noted

Pisgah District

Background - The Pisgah Ranger District is located southwest of Asheville, NC. The district is filled with scenic roads, backcountry and wilderness areas, geologic, geographic, and historic points of interest, and trails leading to all of these.

The district lies on either side of a ridge known as the Pisgah Ledge. The ridge's high point is Mount Pisgah at 5,721 ft. in elevation, and it is the mountain for which the entire area is named.

The Pisgah District has been successful in accomplishing trail work and related projects on non-motorized trails in recent years. Some of the completed projects include:

Bent Creek Complex

- Maintenance on Hardtimes Connector Trail (TR661, horse/bike/hike)
- Maintenance on Deer Lake Lodge Trail (TR664, horse/bike/hike)

Wash Creek Complex

- Maintenance on Fletcher Creek Trail (TR350, bike/hike/horse)

South Mills River Complex

- Maintenance on Squirrel Gap Trail (TR147, hike/bike, sections open to horse-use)

276 Corridor Complex

- Maintenance on Sycamore Cove, Thrift Cove, & Black Mtn Trails (TR143, TR603, TR127, bike/hike)
- Maintenance, construction of new boardwalk, steps, & viewing platform on Moore Cove Trail (TR318, hike-only)

Headwaters Corridor

- Construction of the Estatoe Trail, which connects to the City of Brevard trail system (TR149, bike/hike)
- Maintenance, construction of new boardwalk & steps on Looking Glass Rock Trail (TR114, hike-only)
- Maintenance, construction of new boardwalk, steps, & viewing platforms on Rainbow Falls Trail (TR499, hike-only)

Projects - Work continues as the Pisgah District focuses on high-priority trail projects. The following is a list of trail projects that are underway on the District, either in the planning process or on the ground.

Wash Creek/Old Fort /Catawba Falls Complex

- Evaluating relocation on Big Creek Trail (TR102) & the associated relocation / decommissioning of a section of Spencer Gap Trail (TR600)

- Evaluating relocation on sections of Trace Ridge Trail (TR354)
- Evaluating creating loop opportunities north of Yellow Gap Rd., to connect to some BRP trails.
- Evaluating creating loop opportunities on Laurel Mountain Trail (TR121) to mitigate bike-users' dilemma when approaching BRP, which is closed to bike use/

276 Corridor Complex

- Evaluating connector trail from the east end of Ranger Station (near parking lot) to tie into Sycamore Cove Trail (TR143) near Thrift Cove / Black Mtn. parking lot: to provide additional parking & move usage away from Hwy-276

Headwaters Corridor Complex

- Evaluating the relocation of the upper section of Looking Glass Rock Trail (TR114)
- Assessing comprehensive maintenance for John Rock / Picklesimer Fields Area
- Evaluating connector trail between FS Rd.-475C & FS Rd.-5002
- Evaluating maintenance and relocation options for Art Loeb Trail (TR146, from intersection with the west end of MST, down to the BRP.

-

Graveyard Fields Complex

- Project planning & assessment underway for maintenance on Graveyard Fields Loop (TR358)
- Project planning & assessment underway for maintenance on Graveyard Ridge Trail (TR356) & Ivistor Gap Trail (TR101)

Middle Prong / Shining Rock Wilderness Areas Complex

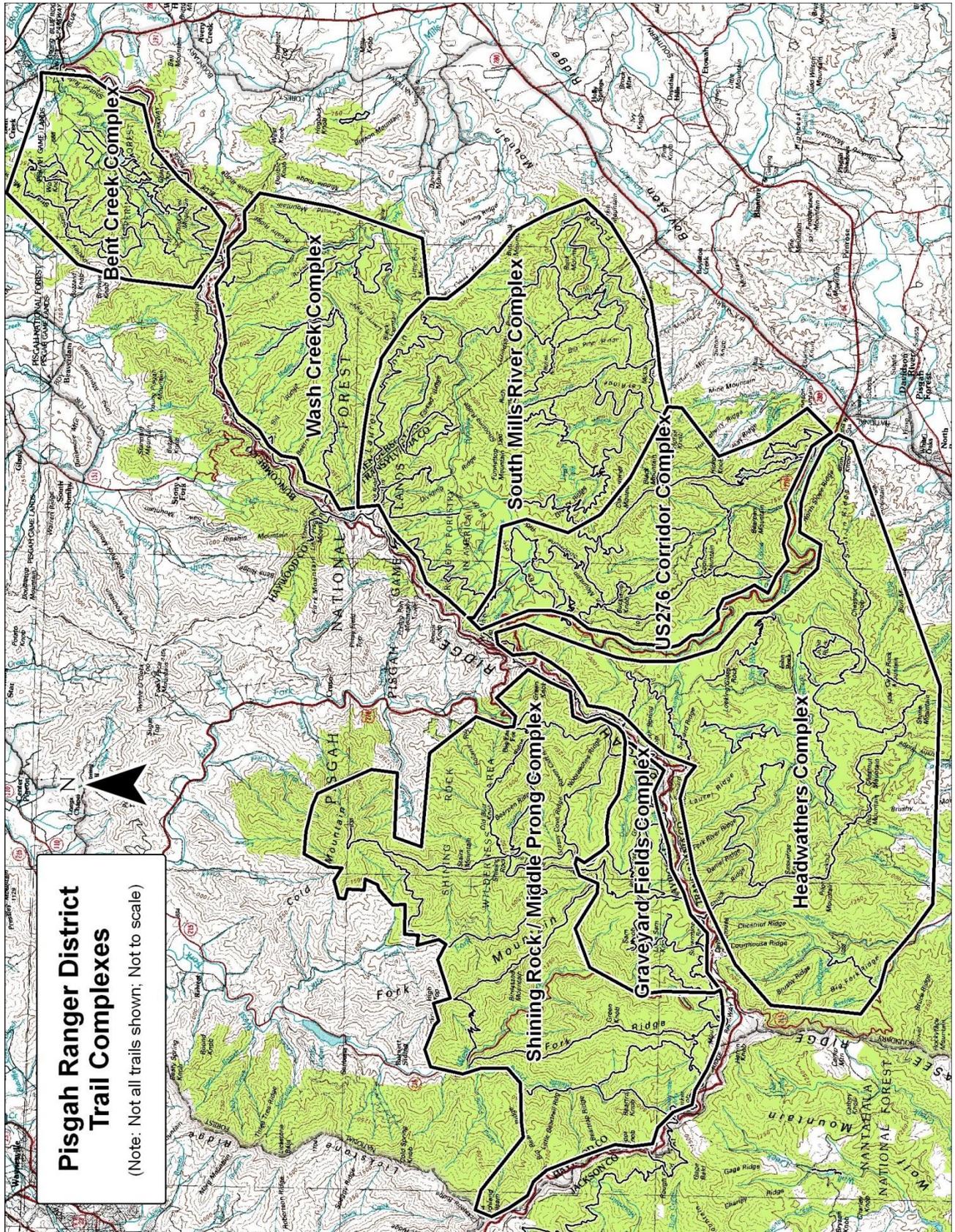
- Volunteer project underway – maintenance on Greasy Cove Trail (TR362)
- Project planning & assessment underway for the relocation of Art Loeb Trail (TR146) over Grassy Cove Top.
- Project planning & assessment underway for repair of a slide on Shining Creek Trail (TR363), including relocation around slide area.
- Project planning & assessment underway for maintenance on Haywood Gap Trail (TR142)

District-Wide

- Evaluating alternate routes to relocate sections of some bike & horse trails away from unsustainable ridge-top & creek-side locations to sustainable, side-hill locations.

The following Pisgah District vicinity map shows the locations of the various trail complexes that were identified through the collaborative process.

Pisgah District Trail Complex Vicinity Map



Pisgah District – Collaborator Comments

The following sections provide information on trail complexes that were identified within the Pisgah District. The trail complex sections contain a table of collaborator comments and District input relating to each comment. Following the trail complex-specific tables, there is a table of ‘District-Wide’ collaborator comments with District input that do not relate to any specific complex trails.

As District personnel begin to prioritize projects identified in collaborator recommendations, the primary focus will be on maintenance items which can be implemented with minimal funding or planning; especially if work can be accomplished with volunteers. These projects could typically be completed in a shorter time frame, as opposed to more complex or costly projects. Recommendations of a larger scope requiring comprehensive analysis, extensive planning, significant funding and possible grant applications may still be considered, but implementation schedules would be impossible to predict.

Please note that where Forest Service responses indicate agreement with or consideration of collaborator recommendations, this is not a guarantee of implementation. Many of these recommendations would require funding for planning, environmental reviews, and construction; as well as long-term commitments for volunteer maintenance. Without these elements in place, it is unlikely a recommended project could be implemented.

Bent Creek Trail Complex

Bent Creek is located within the Bent Creek Experimental Forest, in the northern tip of the Pisgah Ranger District. Bordered by the Blue Ridge Parkway to the south and a moderately high ridge to the north, this watershed is a federal Research and Demonstration forest. This means that the forest is subject to research closures, and it is imperative to stay on the trail and out of research areas. The complex also envelops the North Carolina Arboretum.

Lake Powhattan Campground; a mountain lake, and family recreation area, combined with its close proximity to the city of Asheville, make this area very popular complex. This complex includes multiple, highly developed trail heads. Some trails here connect with the Mountains to Sea/Shut-In Trail, two of Pisgah's most popular long-distance trails. This trail network is very popular with mountain bikers. Bike trails in the complex are heavily used. Certain trails are open to horse-back riding as well.

Pisgah District – Bent Creek Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	FR3439		Comment	Plan for future connection to Buncombe County Greenway trail system near FR3439	Noted- In consultation with Buncombe County Planners. Requires extensive planning & funding.
2	Bent Creek		Comment	Work with Buncombe Co Greenway Commission to connect the Bent Creek Community to Bent Creek Experimental Forest without using the Powhatan Road.	Noted- In consultation with Buncombe County Planners. Requires extensive planning & funding.

Wash Creek Trail Complex

Bounded by BRP to the north, this complex is a very popular horse-back & mountain bike riding area. The trails surround Wash Creek Horse Camp and North Mills River Campground. Hiking trails connect to the Mountains to Sea/Shut-In Trail, along Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP).

Many trails lie within this complex. Starting in the north from the road connecting Bent Creek and North Mills River Recreation Area, a short spur road leads southwest to the Trace Ridge Trailhead. Two trails - Bear Branch and Bad Fork - can be accessed from near this intersection. At the end of the spur is Trace Ridge trailhead parking area, which is popular with hikers, mountain bikers, and fishermen. From there, the Trace Ridge, Fletcher Creek, and North Mills River trails connect to the longer Big Creek and Middle Fork trails. And those lead up to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Pisgah District – Wash Creek Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Trace Ridge	354	Comment	N. Mills River- Trace Ridge trail's lower section. Washed out trail. Can it be re-routed in a more sustainable way?	Agree- project underway
2	S. Mills River	133	Connector	There is a connector trail that eliminates two river crossings. This trail should be added to the trail list.	Will consider - Requires planning & funding
3	MST	440	Connector	Need access to MST from Lake Powhatan Area for additional loop hikes. Unblock social trails. (RH1)	Noted- Routes closed due to unsustainable locations leading to resource damage.
4	S. Mills River	133	Facilities	Change horse trailer parking to trailer parking (BW2)	Noted

South Mills River Trail Complex

This complex is bordered by the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) to the Northwest and Highway 280 to the southeast. Access is from Turkey Pen, Yellow Gap Road, and Wolf Ford Road.

The South Mills River complex includes many miles of horse, bike, and hiking trails that cross the gorge and mountains through which it runs, such as the South Mills River, Mullinax, and Squirrel Gap trails. Several of these trails can be accessed from the the Turkeypen trailhead parking area. From here, there are connections with trails in the Davidson River area, making for excellent loops and backpacking trips. There are numerous loop opportunities with trails and Forest Service roads.

Several more popular trails are located in the Bradley Creek drainage, which is a large tributary of the Mills River. Located below the Blue Ridge Parkway (and connecting with trails on that property including the Mountains to Sea Trail) are the Pilot Rock, Pilot Cove-Slate Rock Loop, and Laurel Mountain trails, among others.

Pisgah District – South Mills River Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Thompson Creek	602	Comment	Unofficial Connector recommended for consideration. MST to Thompson Creek (CMC PP)	Will consider - Requires planning & funding
2	Laurel Mtn	121	Comment	Connector to Laurel Mtn- very steep (unofficial) (CMC PP)	Will consider- Connector from Slate Rock to Laurel Mtn & close out existing non-system trail: requires extensive planning & funding
3	Slate Rock	320	Connector	There is a connector trail between the Slate Rock trail (where it crosses Slate Rock Creek) and the Laurel Mountain trail. Condition is good. This makes a nice loop. (JG4)	Will consider- Connector from Slate Rock to Laurel Mtn & close out existing non-system trail: requires extensive planning & funding
4	Turkey Pen	322	Relocation	Creating loops is necessary. A trail paralleling Turkey Pen Ridge would re-route fall line trail, alleviate poaching on Wagon Rd Gap and create a loop varying in style and difficulty.	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
5	Yellow Gap	611	Connector	Manway[?] from Pisgah Inn to Thompson Creek to Yellow Gap- Excellent short leg finishing a nice loop trail.	Will consider-Requires extensive planning & funding
6	Pilot Rock	321	Facilities	Bigger parking lot (BW1)	Noted

Pisgah District – South Mills River Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
7	Turkey Pen	322	Comment	Access to TH at Turkey Pen: improvement needed for access to trls. With private road problems, are there considerations to seek alt. route to access Turkey Pen trails? Anything that can be done to improve private road sect. to make safer for driving for 2-way traffic? Has been long time problem that with increased usage will only get worse.	Noted- Due to private property restrictions & existing right-of-way across private land, USFS cannot widen road

276 Corridor Trail Complex

This complex contains the Looking Glass Creek drainage. One of the most heavily used areas in the National Forests in North Carolina. The complex includes the White Pines Group Camp, the Cradle of Forestry, the Pink Beds Picnic Area, and the Pisgah Ranger District Station.

Most of trails in this complex are mountain bike trails, with a few hike-only & horse trails included. This is an extremely popular area for mountain bike riders. The complex lies just east of Hwy-276.

Pisgah District – 276 Corridor Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Art Loeb	146	Comment	Art loeb Trailhead parking to Estatoe Trail is still signed as off-limits to bikes. This means riders can't go from Brevard to the campground as advertised. (JM1)	Completed
2	Joel Branch/ FR475C		Connector	Connect Joel Branch to FR475C /Bracken (CS1)	Agree - Identified location & requested funding
3	Art Loeb	146	Comment	I've encountered bikes on Art Loeb @ Butter Gap Shelter and @ Farlou Gap. How do we educate and/or sign sufficiently to keep bikes off "hiking only" trails?	Agree - This is an enforcement issue. Education efforts are ongoing.
4	Cove Creek	340	Maint.	Persistent water on Cove Creek Trail(CS4)	Agree - Project underway
5	Butter Gap Trail	123	Maint.	Entrenchment/ Tread erosion on Butter Gap Trail (CS2)	Agree - Maintenance
6	South Mills River	133	Maint.	Water on trail from gate to concrete bridge needs trail machine(DL1)	Agree - Maintenance item
7	Wagon Road Gap	134	Maint.	Wagon Road Gap. Needs several water crossings. (CMC PP)	Will consider - Requires assessment
8	Cat Gap Loop	120	Maint.	Entrenchment/erosion on bottom of Cat Gap Loop(CS6)	Agree- Maintenance item
9	Bennett Gap	138	Maint.	Water on Bennett (CS7)	Agree - Maintenance item
10	Avery Creek	327	Maint.	Avery Creek Drainage and tread needs(CS9)	Agree - Maintenance item
11	Lower Pilot Rock	321	Maint.	Serious entrenchment on lower Pilot Rock (CS10)	Agree - Maintenance item
12	Laurel Creek	348	Maint.	Entrenchment/ tread at Laurel Creek at Mudline/ Squirrel (CS12)	Agree - Maintenance item

Pisgah District – 276 Corridor Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
13	Vineyard Gap	324	Maint.	Bottom 1/4 mile seeply entrenched	Agreed- maintenance item
14	Butter Gap Trail	123	Facilities	Repair Shelter roof (CMC PP)	Agree- maintenance item
15	Laurel Creek	348	Maint.	Water on trail at top of Pounding Stone Mountain on Laurel Creek trail (DL2)	Agree- maintenance item
16	Vineyard Gap	324	Connector	Make unofficial trails official to complete Vineyard Gap Loop hike 5 miles.	Will consider- requires planning & funding
17	Moore Cove	318	Connector	"Loop" and "Figure 8" make wonderful hikes- wish they could be official options.	Will consider - Requires extensive planning & funding
18	Turkey Pen Gap Park Lot	322	Facilities	Turkey Pen Parking Lot- Parking lot can be widened- drainage problem- solution as you enter the parking lot; bank the parking lot so the low side is at the bank to the left side and the right side as you enter.(TAT3)	Agree- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
19	Black Mountain	127	Relocation	Black Mountain. #127 getting badly eroded especially on stretches that go straight downhill.	Agree- Requires extensive planning & funding
20	Buckwheat Knob	122	Maint.	Tread esosion on Buckwheat (CS8)	Agree - Relocation required; need for extensive planning & funding
21	Lower Mullinax	326	Relocation	Entrenchment on lower Mullinax (CS13)	Consider - Requires extensive planning & funding
22	Slate Rock	320	Facilities	Needs bridge across creek (CMC PP)	Will consider- Requires extensive planning & funding
23	Big Creek	102	Connector	Connector to Big Creek (Unofficial) (CMC PP)	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
24	Sycamore Cove	143	Facilities	Need more parking for Sycamore Cove Trail.	Agree- considering connector trail to Thrift Cove / Black Mountain trailhead. Requires extensive planning & funding

Pisgah District 276 Corridor Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
25	Yellow Gap	611	Facilities	Clear parking lot for horse trailers. (TAT1)	Will consider- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
26	Laurel Mountain	121	Facilities	Clear for parking lot to replace Turkey Pen Parking lot. (TAT2)	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
27	Vineyard Gap	324	Comment	Need to make unofficial trails official to avoid two river crossings	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
28	Moore Cove	318	Connector	There are existing trails going from Moore Cove Falls up to an old road, looping back down toward US276 near sliding rock and the old quarry, along 276 to the Moore Cove trail. This could be added to the system with minimal work. A nice 7 mile hike. (JG1)	Will consider - Requires extensive planning & funding
29	All Waterfalls		Comment	Make User Side trails to waterfalls official. Sensitive areas. Irresistible destinations!(JM3)	Noted - Not consistent with current management objectives
30	Bennett Gap	138	Comment	Re-evaluate seasonal trails for year-round use based on traffic, sustainability, etc, based on current usage patterns (specifically Bennett/Coontree).	Noted- Closures are for resource protection. Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project, but will review at a future date. (Trails on PRD)
31	Funnel Top Mtn FR/TR		Connector	From Funnel Top Mtn FR/TR to FR5019/FR5019 (TAT5)	Noted - Considered in past, not consistent with current management objectives
32	Wolf Ford FR		Facilities	Improve Parking off Wolf Ford FR 1/2 mile downacross from 5018 Funnel Top Fr/TR- Cut out center Brush and Gravel Parking area. Push in and gravel camping areas (TAT6)	Noted-Aware of parking issues along Wolf Ford Rd.

Headwaters Corridor Trail Complex

This complex lies just west of Hwy-276 and is bounded by the Blue Ridge Parkway to the northwest. It contains the Davidson River Campground, the Sycamore Flats Picnic Area, the Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, and the Cove Creek Group Camp. There are several miles of bike trails with loop opportunities in this area. One noted attraction is the 30-mile Art Loeb National Recreation Trail, which bisects the complex.

Pisgah District – Headwaters Corridor Complex

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Deep Gap		Facilities	Rehabilitate shelter at deep gap (SO5)	Agree - maintenance item
2	Daniel Ridge Loop	105	Maint.	Badly eroded. Right down to red clay-slick in wet areas.	Agree- maintenance item
3	Daniel Ridge Loop	105	Connector	Need to connect TR105 to FR225. (WK4)	Will consider- requires planning & funding
4	Caney Bottom Loop	361	Connector	Need to connect TR361 to FR5046 near Cove Creek campground.	Will consider- requires planning & funding
5	Estatoe	149	Comment	Parking for Estatoe trail- Lowes? (JM4)	Noted -Parking is available at Art Loeb Trailhead
6	Horse Pasture River		Comment	Add Trail to Stair Step Falls on Horse Pasture River (SP2)	Noted - Currently not consistent with management objectives
7	Old Courthouse Creek		Comment	Rehabilitate and re-commission the old courthouse Creek trail. It isn't in terrible shape right now. (SO6)	Noted - Not consistent with current management objectives
8	Courthouse Creek Trail		Comment	Courthouse Creek trail (TR15)- This trail has been decommissioned, but is in relatively good shape and easy to follow except the upper half mile.	Noted - Not consistent with current management objectives
9	North Face	132	Comment	Increase the Parking lot size (BW3)	Noted-Requires extensive planning & funding
10	Fate Osteen		Comment	Trail to Fate Osteen to reduce climbing pressure on the other larger climbing areas. (BW2)	Noted- Recognize interest in additional climbing access.
11	Art Loeb	146	Comment	Make summit trail official. Red Blaze	Noted- route was abandoned in the past due to unsustainable conditions

Pisgah District – Headwaters Corridor Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
12	Butter Gap	123	Maint.	I want to point out that the first mile to two miles of Butter Gap Trail, No. 123, are pretty badly eroded. It's basically a series of roots with a couple of stream crossings, and by the time I got there yesterday afternoon (in the rain), it was a river of sediment. This is complicated by a rock-face seep not too far down that creates a permanent mud bog, but it's throughout the upper section of the trail (from Butter Gap itself, where the trail intersects the Art Loeb.)	Noted- maintenance item
13	Long Branch	116	Maint.	Its connection with Long Branch Trail (116) and lower Cat Gap Loop (120), there are several spots where logs have been erected over similar mud bogs, in an attempt to create a foot passage -- most of them are rotted and on the edge of falling apart. They've also been avoided by users (particularly bikers), causing trail widening and other damage. Futhermore, there are drains along the entire length that are badly in need of clearing. Particularly in the lower part (Cat Gap), this is a pretty popular route, and there are some eroded root sections that need to be looked at there as well.	Noted- maintenance item
14	Cat Gap Loop	120	Maint.	For foot traffic, the erosion definitely needs to be addressed. Thankfully, the tread is holding up well in most places and the drains are a relatively small nuisance. (Though trying to skirt the mud bogs has created trail widening in a lot of places.) Obviously, it would be nice to replace the foot bridges where they need to be.	Noted- maintenance item

Pisgah District – Headwaters Corridor Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
15	Butter Gap	123	Maint.	For the two-wheeled crowd, Butter is a bit more difficult to assess. Cat Gap is a seasonal trail -- only open to us during the winter, when there are fewer hikers -- and the 475 > 471 > 471D > Butter > Long Branch > Cat loop is one of the more popular options from the Fish Hatchery. Butter Gap Trail itself is one of the more popular descents -- requiring just enough skill to be exciting but not so much that folks can't handle it. Therein lies the management challenge: There is clearly trail damage. But the damage isn't as extensive as, say, Black Mountain Trail, and so the exposed roots actually create a desired experience for mountain bike users. That said, I'm certain mountain bikers exploring different line options through the roots have caused more damage -- it's clearly visible -- and the cycle will continue. So as we go through the process of looking at what it means for a trail to be "sustainable," this is one of the things we're trying to balance -- the popularity of a loop or a trail, and its "technical" features, against the need to address damage. In many ways, we're our own worst enemy!	Noted- maintenance item

Graveyard Fields Trail Complex

Graveyard Fields is the name of a high, flat mountain valley where the Yellowstone Prong of the Pigeon River originates. Surrounded by mountains exceeding 6000 ft. in elevation, the base of the valley is itself over 5000 ft., which accounts for some of its unique characteristics. Graveyard Fields Loop Trail enters the area from crowded overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway and spur trails lead to two of the three major waterfalls on the Yellowstone Prong. The Graveyard Ridge trail ascends and then travels along Graveyard Ridge itself before ending at the intersection with Ivestor Gap Trail. These trails lead up into the Black Balsam area and on to the Shining Rock Wilderness (the Mountains to Sea Trail leads to the Shining Rock Wilderness in both directions, making for some excellent day and overnight hikes.

The trails in this area combine with those in Black Balsam, since they are both accessible from the same stretch of parkway, their trails connect, and Yellowstone Prong actually drains the slopes of Black Balsam Mountain itself.

This complex is bounded by the Blue Ridge Parkway to the south and Shining Rock / Middle Prong Wilderness areas to the north and west. There are some horse & bike riding opportunities on some of the trails in the area. The Mountains to Sea Trail (MST) & Art Loeb Trail pass through this complex.

Pisgah District – Graveyard Fields Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Flat Larrel Creek/ Sam Knob Junction	346	Relocation	Severe washout in the Flat Larrel Creek/ Sam Knob Junction area (SO2)	Agree - Project planning in progress
2	Graveyard Ridge	356	Maint.	Some entrenchment areas near Graveyard Ridge. (CMC PP)	Agree- maintenance item. Portions of Graveyard Ridge are currently being assessed for maintenance.
3	Ivestor Gap	101	Maint.	Shining Rock Wilderness Area- The old road trail (not Art Loeb Trail) from the parking lot to Shining Rock Mountain is very eroded and difficult to hike because of all the large rocks & boulders.	Agree-Project planning underway
4	Art Loeb	146	Relocation	Trail between Black Balsam and Tennent is badly eroded. Probably needs reroute. (JM2) Strong agreement by CMC.	Agree- requires extensive planning & funding
5	Black Balsam Park Lot		Facilities	Black Balsam trail head needs horse trailer parking area. (DS4)	Will consider - Requires extensive planning & funding

Middle Prong & Shining Rock Wilderness Areas Trail Complex

This complex contains two wilderness areas that offer several miles of back-country hiking trails and some horse-back riding opportunities, such as on Ivestor Gap Trail and Little East Fork Trail in the Shining Rock Wilderness.

The Shining Rock Wilderness, covering 18,483 acres, is the largest and one of the most heavily visited wilderness areas in North Carolina. This wilderness area is made up of a series of high-elevation ridges on the north slopes of Pisgah ridge. The terrain is extremely steep and rugged, with elevations ranging from 3,200 ft. on the West Fork Pigeon River to 6,030 ft. on Cold Mountain. Shining Rock Ledge, which forms the area's backbone, is over 5,000 ft. high, with 5 peaks at 6,000 ft. Streams and drainages abound to form the east and west forks of Pigeon River, a major tributary of the Tennessee River.

The Middle Prong Wilderness, covering 7,460 acres, lies to the west of Shining Rock. This wilderness area spans steep, rugged high-elevation ridges ranging from 3,200 ft. to over 6,400 ft. near Richland Balsam. Trails in Middle Prong Wilderness offer even more seclusion than trails within the Shining Rock Wilderness.

Pisgah District – Middle Prong & Shining Rock Wilderness Areas Complex

	<i>Trail Name or Location</i>	<i>Trail No. (TR)</i>	<i>Comment Type</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>District Input</i>
1	Ivestor Gap	101	Comment	Info Signboard @Ivestor Gap needs replacing! We find many people in wilderness that "didn't know" about fire ban or group size limit (Tom & Joan)	Agree - Completed. Wilderness information at Black Balsam trailhead has been updated
2	Wilderness Trailheads	357	Comment	Improve, more focused signage at 2 trailheads. People don't read small print (Big East Fork) (this is true at most Wilderness entrances) (BS1)	Noted - An effort is underway to improve trailhead information throughout the Forest
3	Art Loeb	146	Relocation	Reroute needed on the lower section of TR146	Agree - Project underway
4	Fork Mountain	109	Maint.	Fix Sections of bad side hill in switchbacks (BH1)	Agree - maintenance item
5	Shining Creek	363	Comment	Shining Rock Trails suffer from human impacts (lack of LNT). Training & certifications need to be streamlined.	Agree- Leave No Trace (LNT) training offered annually. Some trail issues are being addressed, project planning underway.

Pisgah District- Middle Prong & Shining Rock Wilderness Areas Complex (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
6	Haywood Gap	142	Maint.	Old corduroy bridge slants to outside; very tricky when wet; needs to be removed or reconstructed (BS2)	Agree - Maintenance item
7	Green Mountain	113	Relocation	North end of TR113 needs to be rerouted off of steep slope and to new access point on 215(BP3)	Noted - Requires planning & funding. Trail is currently stable & consistent with Trail Class 1.
8	Green Mountain	113	Relocation	Green Mnt Trail- Middle Prong Wilderness- This trail's 1st 1/2 mile from Sunburst toward the Blue Ridge Parkway. This section of trail is not sustainable and meets none of the USF trail designs. Needs a MAJOR reroute.	Noted - Requires planning & funding. Trail is currently stable & consistent with Trail Class 1.
9	Fork Mountain TH, Trl	109	Facilities	Add Bridge	Noted - Requires extensive planning & funding
10	MST	440	Comment	Brush out unofficial trail from MST to the summit of Mtn Hardy and make it an official trail. (SO1)	Will consider- requires extensive planning & funding
11	Shining Rock Gap		Comment	Shining Rock Gap is a mess. Everyone is aware of this, but something has to be done. I know it is a wilderness area, but a single sign post would fix a lot of the problem with social trails. (SO3)	Noted- Wilderness users should have map.
12	Greasy Cove, Big East Fork, Bridges Camp Gap trls	362	Facilities	Consider bridge as different water crossing at the junction of TR362, TR357, and TR607. (CMC PP)	Noted - Not consistent with Wilderness management
13	Little East Fork	107	Facilities	TR107 Needs horse trailer parking	Noted - Limited public land in this area, private land constraints
14	Fork Mountain/ Buckeye Gap	109	Connector	Create a connector between Fork Ridge Trail and Buckeye Creek Trail to create a day loop (SO1)	Noted -Currently not consistent with management objectives

Pisgah District -District-Wide Comments

Pisgah District – District Wide Comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Cove Creek, Avery Creek, Big Creek	340	Facilities	Better bridges-> Cove Creek, Avery Creek, Big Creek, etc...Every trail -> rideable bridges	Agreed-maintenance item. Project underway on Cove Creek Trl
2			Maint.	Shortcutting of trails, i.e. bikes riding around obstacles. Hikers cutting switchbacks.; All users making mud puddles bigger. ; Survey tools & flaws [?].	Noted- maintenance item
3			Comment	Establish a data base in each district for reporting trail problems. Allow the database to be accessed by the various trail maintainers (CMC)	Will consider
4			Facilities	Would like to see more accurate trail use data. More camping facilities and more horse trailer parking that is safe.	Noted- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
5			Facilities	Lack of parking limits equestrians in Pisgah Forest	Noted- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
6			Facilities	Access by equestrians is limited in Pisgah Forest by having very little parking for horse trailers.	Noted- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
7			Facilities	There are tons of old logging roads and trails in Pisgah that could be made into loop trails which would create a better trail experience in the forest. With a horse trailer there is always a concern with parking- it would be nice to have more places to park. Loop trails for Panthertown Valley for horses.	Noted- Recognize interest in additional horse trailer parking; requires extensive planning & funding
8			Comment	Over use in Shining Rock Wilderness. Need for more remote, overnight hiking destinations. Hiking only trails. Interconnection to create longer, 50+ mile, hiking and backpacking opportunities.	Noted-Meets District's long term objective for hiking opportunities
9			Comment	I'd like to see more shorter (<5mi) loop trails, possibly using Connector between existing, longer trails or loops.	Noted-Identified as objective of Trail Strategy

Pisgah District – District Wide Comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
10	Moore Cove	318	Connector	Augment the good new recently completed contract work on Moore Cove trail. The work was only to the waterfall from the trailhead. In the past Carolina Mt. Club has done maintenance on the loop. Trail needs to be re-routed away from old quarry wall on US 276. otherwise, it's a great loop! and should be kept open- Access for loop is currently deliberately obstructed.	Will consider - Requires extensive planning & funding
11			Comment	Denote Significant view sites on the published trail maps (CMC)	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
12			Comment	Routinely clear key view sites to ensure view - BRP may oversee this iat BRP overlooks. Similar actions should be taken at selected sites along in the PRD> (CMC)	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
13			Access	I think the so called "seasonal" trails should be re-considered. Closing several trails to one user group seems unfair. Perhaps some should be closed to one group while other trails are closed to other groups. Or alternating days, weeks or years (Tsali).	Noted- Closures are for resource protection. Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project, but will review at a future date.
14			Access	Less closed seasonal trails (more bike access)-> Bennett, Cat Gap, North Slope.	Noted- Closures are for resource protection. Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project, but will review at a future date.
15			Comment	There are not enough multi-use trails in the Pisgah N.F. The existing trails suffer from over use. There is plenty of land area for more trails.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project. District cannot add significant new trail mileage; not financially sustainable.

Appendices

Appendix 1- Additional collaborator comments from meetings

Cheoah District – Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Cheoah Trail	407	Volunteers	Robbinsville Highschool will adopt (GREAT)	Noted
2	Cheoah		Access	Please call about public access to NFS land that is leased and now gated. Could several days/yr this land be opened to public? (J. Miller)	Noted
3	Cheoah		Comment	Need more ethnic diversity in this collaborative effort.	Noted
4	Cheoah		Wilderness	NFS standard hiking trail width primitive -> rural; Scenery-ridgeline; Wilderness like Joyce Kilmer; Opportunity for solitude.	Noted
5	Cheoah		Maint.	Let users determine trail selection by usage volume and maintenance ability- foster competition for trails and their maintenance.	Noted
6	Cheoah		Comment	Primitive camping. Whether biking, hiking or horseback, primitive camping is often the goal.	Noted
7	Cheoah		Comment	Foreign countries have horse trails completely separated from hiking trails to avoid conflict.	Noted
8	Cheoah		Comment	Preserve aesthetic value of the forest- water quality, old growth timber, natural forest of diversity.	Noted
9	Cheoah		Comment	FS should work with local counties encouraging tourism. WNC NFS lands is our major resource.	Noted
10	Cheoah		Comment	Are there any grants or programs that can employ local youth to help with trail maintenance like the YCC in the 70s and 80s?	Noted- Yes, FS utilizes YCC program
11	Tsali		Comment	Tsali- hunters are scary when you come up on them fast, especially on a MtBike. Can we alternate days/times for hunting?	Noted- Hunting is not allowed on Sundays, trail users could plan rides for these times.

Nantahala District –Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Deep Creek		Comment	Deep Creek Trails- multiple access. More access to bikers and hikers with dogs.	Noted- Need more information.
2	Nantahala		Multi-Use	Sharing hike trails with horse trails and allowing dogs where horses are allowed.	Noted-need more information
3	Nantahala		Comment	Look at all existing roads and trails to determine suitability for each use. Need wagon and buggy rds.	Noted
4	AT		Connector	Nantahala forest and private owned land- would be good to have connector trails in Macon County to the AT- especially for 6-8 mile hikers.	Noted: would need specifics for locations. Many AT access points are currently available
5	Nantahala		Access	CMC - From Blue Ridge Pkway (Old Bald Overlook - on map as Lone Bald Overlook) to MTS- Access needed to MTS to facilitate trail use & maintenance	Noted- Access exists from Lone Bald along BRP, to MST
6	Nantahala		Comment	"Gorge"ous trail to "disney-esque".	Noted
7	Panther town		Comment	South Loop uses: hiking/biking (FR4674A south to Hogback Mountain JK3	Noted- Need more information.
8	Standing Indian - Albert Mountain	36A	Comment	TR36A not a horse trail	Noted- Mapping error to be corrected
9	Wine Springs- Wayah Bald		Facilities	I like reservation only horse camps, i.e. Wine Springs.	Noted-Would Require designated sites in Hurricane for the mixed reservations. In process for reservation fee for Wine Springs.

Tusquitee District –Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Valley River		Facilities	Need help in developing an ADA accessible trail along Valley River from Marble to Andrews (6 miles). Funding needed.	Noted- Proposal is for private land
2	Chambers Rd to the mouth of Beaverdam Creek		Safety	The trail in the Ogreta Community from the end of the FS road that starts at Chambers Rd to the mouth of Beaverdam Creek is full of downed timber and the bridge is washed out bad. This makes it very difficult for trout fishermen to access Beaverdam creek. The trail ends at the mouth of the creek. The only way to navigate the stream is to walk in the streambed. During a thunderstorm the water rises rapidly. It becomes very dangerous. Thick rhodos are on each bank.	Noted- New trail proposal is not consistent with trail management objectives.
3	Tatham Gap		Facilities	Mile markers, maps, trail condition, direction sign; Put a trail system with information plaques. Tatum Gap in particular	Noted-There are no system trails on the Cherokee County side off of Tatham Gap Road.
4	Tusquitee		Comment	Who is head of trails in Cherokee County?	Noted- contact Cherokee Co. Parks/Rec
5	Tusquitee		Comment	There is some disagreement with designations of horse trails on the map provided for this review and earlier maps provided to MHH by Tusquitee Ranger District. (JQ/TS)	Noted- Mapping error, will review data. District is available to meet with Mountain High Hikers (MHH) on specific trails where there may be a question of designated use.
6	Rim	72	Connector	Need trail from Andrews to Rim Trail on Fires Creek. Either Bear Creek off Junaluska Rd, Phillips Creek or McClean Creek.	Noted-The only option would be up Bear Branch - the other two locations are blocked by private property. Trail constructed up Bear Branch would be very costly and difficult to build due to extremely steep terrain - it would take many miles of new trail to stay on grade and reach the RIM trail. In addition trailhead facilities would need to be constructed on Junaluska Road. Maintenance costs, long term, would be very expensive.
7	Benton Mackaye & Rim trails		Comment	Benton Mackaye Trl and Rim Trl are in very remote areas. How is the FS going to keep invasive plants in control when horses are using these trails?	Noted- There has been no discussion of restricting feed types. Will discuss issues with FS Botanist

Appalachian District – Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	FS 2173/74		Safety	General lawlessness, trash, speeding on FS74, building fires, camping in no camping areas near Dillingham Cem (KT3)	Noted- law enforcement patrols area
2	App RD		Multi-use	In terms of your data on use it would be helpful to take into consideration miles open to each activity. This may give insight into how much use there is on the various designations of trail and may give insight into whether or not you have enough miles of trails open to various uses.	Agree-Data is used in this way
3	App RD		Procedure	We need TMOs that can be effectively applied to existing trails. Current TMOs do not seem to be working.	Agree- work in progress
4	App RD		Designation	We need to reclassify trails that are in the FS inventory as roads as trails. Example: all trails in Bent Creek are classified as Roads.	Noted- Not consistent with management objectives
5	App RD		Designation	User-created trails to waterfalls are probably inevitable, and promoting those to full, official status should be a priority (in addition to making them sustainable and safe.) Otherwise...closures :(-Upper Catawba Falls! -Moore Cove #2 (waterfall) -Flat Creek Falls :)	Noted
6	App RD		Comment	IMBA definition of sustainability: Community use of natural resources in a way that does not jeopardize the ability of future generations to live and prosper.	Noted
7	App RD		Comment	IMBA definition of sustainable trails: Low maintenance trails that have minimal impact on natural systems	Noted
8	App RD		Additions	The multiuse trail system in the NFsNC needs to be expanded to prevent overuse of existing trails.	Noted
9	App RD		Volunteers	Forest Service needs to consult with trail maintenance clubs to keep up-to-date with trail issues that require expertise by FS contractors.	Noted
10	App RD		Conflict	Hikers want separate trails for hikers, bikers and horses in high use areas to ensure user safety, allow for enjoyment of the serenity of nature and avoid erosion and other sources of ecological degradation amplified by some trail users.	Noted-NFsNC offers a variety of trail experiences with single- and multi-use trails

Appalachian District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
11	App RD		Comment	Urge the FS to provide buffers between trails and forest management projects to protect the scenic and recreational values of trails.	Noted-Scenery management standards protect trail views
12	App RD		Designation	Oppose the decommissioning of hiking trails and oppose converting hiking trails, including trails with dual trail/road designations, to roads.	Noted-Most gated FS roads are open to horse/bike/hike use
13	App RD		Comment	Not motorized use, Automotive enthusiasts (BRP users).	Noted-Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
14	App RD		Wilderness	More Wilderness	Noted-Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
15	App RD		Wilderness	*Larger Wilderness Areas*	Noted-Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
16	App RD		Connectivity	Working with surrounding states.	Noted
17	App RD		Connectivity	Trail connecting without the need to be on paved roads for long periods of time.	Noted
18	App RD		Connectivity	Working with private land owners.	Noted
19	App RD		Conflict	We need more non-motorized trails (and bike free). Safety concerns and environmental impact- I hike, run and ride horses- wheels + horses don't mix.	Noted-NFsNC offers a variety of trail experiences with single- and multi-use trails
20	App RD		Comment	We need long distance bike trail opportunities. Much like backpacking many cyclists like to cover long distances over many days. Examples: Colorado Trail & Arizona Trail.	Will consider where existing bike trails can be connected to provide long distance opportunities
21	App RD		Conflict	Limiting use of LWOs [linear wildlife openings] to certain user groups to improve hunting should be looked at closely as this policy can be counter productive to other goals.	Noted-Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
22	App RD		Comment	Trails should be constructed with materials endemic to the area to preserve the ecology and not trucked in from outlying areas, i.e. gravel, concrete.	Noted
23	App RD		Additions	Provide for multi-day experiences not only to backpacking, but to all user groups, i.e. mnt bikers.	Will consider where existing bike trails can be connected to provide long distance opportunities
24	App RD		Additions	We need more equestrian trails.	Noted
25	App RD			Preserving [?] the challenge of the trail length, tread, elevation.	Noted

Appalachian District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
26	App RD		Signage / Education	On/at shared trails- educational kiosks explaining multi user etiquette.	Agree
27	App RD		Education	Education with youth camps/programs. Work with NC Youth Camps Association.	Noted
28	App RD		Education	Information sharing is critical! People have to know what trails are open, what to expect, and where not to go. People invent their own names because of lack of signs, maps, etc. which causes some confusion (especially visitors). I love the inventory and GIS efforts.	Agree
29	App RD		Loops	More loops, 1/2 day loops, day loops, multi-day loops, week-long loops, month-long loops? Why not!!	Noted
30	App RD		Volunteers	FS needs to ask hiking/user clubs for maintenance crews to form regular crews to repair trails.	Noted
31	App RD		Volunteers	Big Ivy Amblers- Coleman boundary trail users that travel by foot, hoof and paw. An organization of volunteers to educate to promote safety and sustainability of trails in Big Ivy for non-mechanized trail users.	Noted
32	App RD		Volunteers	PLEASE make it easier to volunteer for trail work!	Noted- Contact Ranger District Office to volunteer
33	App RD		Volunteers	We could really use a full time volunteer trail coordinator with the USFS. There are more people who want to volunteer than can currently be managed.	Noted
34	Roaring Fork Falls	195	Comment	Roaring Creek View shed, Roaring Creek Campground (OVNHT)	Noted
35	App RD		Comment	look at Shelton Laurel Area, what are they doing well how do we mimic this in other areas/ other districts	Noted
36	AT		Connector	Connect highest mountain in the East, Mt. Mitchell, to the AT as originally envisioned by Benton Mackaye!!	Noted- Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
37	Woody Ridge	177	Comment	Too many non-motorized trails are becoming motorized. i.e. Woody Ridge & Cobert Ridge in the Blacks	Noted- these trails are hike only

Grandfather District – Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Boone Fork area		Comment	Political climate- funding for trails in the future? Look for funding sources outside of federal government appropriated dollars. Ex- Carolina Thread Trail.	Noted
2	Linville Gorge		Comment	SAWS interested in tackling issues throughout Linville.	Noted
3	Linville Gorge		Comment	Trying to access the gorge from Hwy 126 is a little tricky, but I guess that also adds to the challenge.	Noted
4	OVNHT	308G	Comment	Extent of trail for this area was sketched on the map.	Noted
5	Kitsuma	205	Comment	Kitsuma Trail- Great Job!	Noted
6	GRD		Comment	McDowell Trails Association is interested in promoting all of the non-motorized trails in McDowell County. We would like to have FS Trail brochures to pass out at our booth at various festivals. Also maps to show existing and proposed trails.	Noted- contact District Ranger
7	GRD		Comment	Highly recommend that procedures for getting trail designations changed is discussed. Many people want to know the process- even if it means talking to congressmen. What would we be asking for? I realize that this is addressed in the sideboards, but this should at least be discussed briefly.	Change in trail designations is beyond the scope of the Trail Strategy project.
8	GRD		Procedures	Communicate to us how to propose reroutes. How can we fix things? What are the steps? How do we initiate the discussion? How do we get things funded? Can USFS apply for grants?	USFS Region 8 is currently developing a project proposal process that uses sustainability (environmental, economic, & social) as a threshold for consideration of new projects. When this process becomes finalized, it will be communicated to Collaborators
9	GRD		Procedures	Is there any way trail work can be incorporated with prescribed burn firebreak construction/maintenance?	Firebreaks typically have different objectives

Grandfather District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
10	GRD		Morganton	How do we propose new trail? Not just reroutes, but a potential connector? Is there a trail priority list? Or can there be a proposed list of small and large ideas?	See District Input, above, line 8.
11	GRD		Access	Could some clarification be given to trails not in Fs inventory? Are trails that pass through private land now off-limits?	Trails passing through private land require an easement which can be very costly
12	GRD		Comment	We need to involve fish and aquatic specialists to provide input on erosion and siltation issues.	These specialists are currently involved & their input is considered on these issues
13	GRD		Closure	Some trails will need to be closed. Lessen the mileage and improve the experience. Close trails in poor condition, dead ends, etc.	Noted
14	GRD		Multi-Use	Increased mileage for mountain bikers and equestrians by utilizing existing hiking miles of trails. Consider this in designing and constructing new reroutes, loops, etc. Fulfill the need of more by designating existing for more users.	Change in trail designations is beyond the scope of the Trail Strategy project.
15	GRD		Comment	The trails strategy affects lots of users of trails beyond just hikers, bikers and horseback riders. Hunters, anglers, bird-watchers, nature photographers and other use trails and are impacted by use and over-use. These folks need to be included in the meetings.	Agreed- Meetings are open to all
16	MST		Comment	Mountain to Sea Trail Mission Statement- Bring together communities and volunteers to build a simple footpath connecting NC's natural treasures for the enjoyment and education of people.	Noted
17	GRD		Signage	I can't remember which trails, but some are designated hiker-only, but due to lack of adequate signage, bikers use trails and we (hikers) are un-prepared to watch out for them.	Noted
18	GRD		Volunteers	Closer and better coordination between NF & volunteers. In the past this has been a problem. It has improved, but still needs to be addressed. We don't want to alienate volunteers. (Coming from 32 years of experience as a volunteer)	Agreed

Grandfather District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
19	GRD		Training	More training needed. Advertise saw classes and trail training. Hire Tim Johnson (he may be free), Woody, or other FS trail specialists for user group training.	Agreed
20	GRD		Facilities	I'm a hiker, but I'm sympathetic to the trail needs of horsemen and bikers- large parking areas are needed for horse-trailers.	Noted

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
1	Estatoe	149	Comment	Art Loeb trailhead parking at the Davidson River Campground entrance, the trail leading downriver, across the bridge, and then down the other side of the river to the new Estatoe trail is signed as 1) Art Loeb trail, 2) "To Estatoe Trail", and 3) off-limits to bikes. I was *assuming* that this was opened to bikes now, since the Estatoe trail would otherwise dead-end at the bridge where Art Loeb turns right to go up the ridge. That would make this strictly a signage issue.	Agree- completed. Sign has been changed. Section is open to bikes.
2	Estatoe	149	Comment	I would like to see both the Estatoe Trail and the Art Loeb open to both bikes and hikers. Even with a broken foot and crutches, I've been able to share the trail with bikers--- it's a wide trail. I'm not a biker, but as someone who wants to see safe routes for those who are, I would really like to keep bikers away from the 276/64/280 corner whenever we can. If both trails were "legal" for bikers, those coming from Brevard could avoid that corner all together to get to Clawhammer, etc.	Agree- Estatoe Trail & this section of Art Loeb are open to bikes.
3	FR471D		Maint.	Entrenchment/ Tread erosion on FR471D (CS3)	Noted - This is a road, not a trail.
4	Old Rock Chimney/ Kykendall		Comment	We cleared the garbage (mainly beer and whiskey bottles) from old rock chimney and Kykendall last week- will keep an eye on it & do it again if necessary	Noted
5	Davidson River CG		Connector	Connect Davidson River Campground all the way to Fish Hatchery on easy family friendly trail. (JM2)	Noted - This has been studied. Not feasible.
6	Squirrel Gap	147	Maint.	Squirrel Gap - center section of trail - Improve use and safety- widen the past horse trail and railroad grade back to four foot so it can once again be a multi-use trail for all to enjoy. Widen+ Brush out trail. (TAT4)	Noted - Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
7	Case Camp Ridge, Seniard Ridge	119	Comment	Mountain Bikes would benefit from either TR119 or TR609 being open to bikes to allow easy access to Black Balsam (CF3)	Noted - Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
8	FR5046		Maint.	Serious entrenchment on FR5046(CS5)	Noted-This is a road, not a trail
9	PRD		Maint.	Switch backs getting eroded need to find sustainable alternative	Noted

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
10	S. Mills River	133	Connector	S. Mills @ Gaging Station to Wolf Ford to Squirrel Gap to Horse Cove Ext. to Yellow Gap Rd back to RD	Noted
11	Turkey Pen Gap	81	Connector	Turkey Pen- Bradley to Vingard to Bradley to Laurel Creek to Mullinax back to trailhead	Noted
12	N. Mills River	353	Connector	N. Mills- Upper trace to spencer Branch to Fletcher Creek to Rodol and back in.	Noted
13	Buck Springs	104	Maint.	Roots affecting tread	Noted
14	Art Loeb	146	Facilities	Parking lot on 276 is too small	Noted-there is additional parking located across highway
15	Avery Creek	327	Comment	The roads around Avery Creek and Cathy's Creek have some pretty shady characters camping & using those areas. Our attention to these areas on a regular basis (patrolling) should be a priority.	Noted
16	Estatoe	149	Comment	Tourists are looking for easy trails, near towns, that go somewhere neat. Estatoe trail is great for this.(JM2)	Noted
17	Greens Lick	139	Connector	Connector trail from Little Hickory/Greens Lick to Lower Side Hill. (CN)	Noted
18	Sam Branch	617	Comment	The area off trail near headwaters of Sam Branch is littered with disused camping gear and trash. (SO4)	Noted
19	MST	440	Maint.	Tread to Skinny Dip Falls very bad. (CMC PP)	Noted- this section is on BRP land
20	Case Camp Ridge	119	Comment	TR119 trail in very good shape. (JG3)	Noted
21	Seniard Ridge	609	Comment	TR609 trail in very good shape.(JG3)	Noted
22	Horse Pasture River		Facilities	Add restrooms facilities for Horse Pasture River users, At Gorges State Park (SP1)	Noted - This is State Park land
23	Turkey Pen	322	Comment	Turkey Pen- Access road recently graveled. Thanks.	Noted
24	Chestnut Cove	662	Comment	Chestnut Cove should be open to mountain bikes. (WK1)	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
25	Bad Fork	323	Comment	Bad Fork would make a good mountain bike trail. (CF4)	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
26	Foster Creek	610	Comment	Foster Creek area would make an excellent area for more beginner mountain bike trails. (CF5)	Noted- Biking is an allowed use in Foster Creek area

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
27	Fire Scatd Ridge		Comment	Recommission the old Fire Scatd Ridge Trail (SO4)	Noted - Not consistent with management objectives
28	Old Bennett Gap		Decomm.	Decommission the old Bennett Gap Trail (SO5)	Noted - This is a non-system trail
29	Cold Mountain	141	Comment	Create a trail in the north drainage of Cold Mountain as an alternate trail to the summit is needed for variety. Art Loeb from Camp Daniel Boone is not a fun or scenic trail (SO6)	Noted
30	Haywood Gap	142	Comment	TR142 should be open to horses (DS1)	Noted - Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
31	Green Mountain	113	Comment	TR113 should be open to horses (DS2)	Noted - Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
32	Buckeye Gap	126	Comment	TR126 should be open to horses (DS3)	Noted - Beyond Trail Strategy project scope
33	MST	440	Connector	Create a connector from MST to Blue Ridge Parkway on the south face of Mtn Hardy. (SO2)	Noted - Not USFS land, on BRP land
34	PRD		Comment	Two Wilderness areas in the Pisgah, Middle Prong and Shining Rock. Question: Why is there only one horse trail in both Wilderness areas? At one time this area was used as free range and roads- now one designated horse trail.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
35	Slate Rock	320	Comment	Existing social connector between Pilot/Slate (CS11)	Noted
36	Slate Rock	320	Comment	Trail 320 Pilot Cove/ Slate Rock Creek should be seperated into two separate trails. Combine the left side of TR320 with TR320A and name it Pilot Cove & rename the right side of TR320 Slate Rock Creek. I encounter lots of confused users on this trail. (CF2)	Noted
37	Squirrel Gap	147	Comment	Keep Squirrel Gap a level one trail!	Noted-Use designation changes are beyond the scope of the Trail Strategy project. Squirrel Gap Trail is currently not a Trail Class 1
38	Turkey Pen	322	Comment	Turkey Pen- Access road recently graveled. Thanks.	Noted

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
39	FR146		Decomm.	RD146 needs to be permanently closed. OHV are affecting solitude & wilderness character (BP2)	Noted- USFS does not have a Road 146. Need more information.
40	Ivestor Gap	101	Comment	Clean up the mess on Ivestor Ridge left from hunters. (SO3)	Noted
41	PRD		Comment	Water erosion can be better managed. (Black Mnt, Turkey Pen, Vineyard); Users ignoring signage: Horses on wrong trails to make loops. (Squirrel Gap) Bikes on hiking trails to make loops...; Love being able to have dogs off-leash!	Noted
42	PRD		Comment	The reason I live here is because of the trails. I'm a member of Back Country Horsemen of America, Pisgah Chapter, volunteer with Henderson County mounted patrol, Pisgah Trail Blazers, NATRC, long distance riders. I'm always in/on the trails all of Turkey Pen, N. Mills River, Pisgah Forest. I work very hard to help maintain trails available for all non-motorized entities. Lower Trace Ridge is horrible (N. Mills River). Turkey Pen road slightly better; need better parking at top. Going tomorrow to clean up a 'homeless area' in Wash Creek area- nasty- I am always cleaning up camp sites- why aren't these monitored by rangers?(T. Tyree)	Noted
43	PRD		Comment	I feel trail work should be prioritized as follows: 1. Rapid aggressive erosion needs to be addressed, including relocation. 2. Resource impact (i.e. water quality or habitat damage) must be addressed, including possible relocation. 3. User experience should be below the above two. 4. Minor archaeological sites should not impact work. Failed homesteads and old logging camps are everywhere.	Noted
44	PRD		Access	The gated FS roads that were closed to horses and then designated as wildlife habitat were ideal for horseback riding during winter and wet weather and horseback riders had an alternative to riding regular trail with less impact to the resource.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
45	PRD		Comment	Make sure trails are designed for all users not just one group (bikes).	Noted
46	PRD		Comment	We need more multi-use trails to lessen the impact of what we have now.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
47	PRD		Comment	NC is the 4th largest horse ownership in the nation & 80% report they trail ride. So FS users are prob. Higher than 1%.	Noted
48	PRD		Comment	Federal money should be used for much more urgent needs (i.e. schools, Medicaid/Medicare, social security, defense) before recreation. Make the volunteer process easy and don't spent \$ until more urgent needs are fully funded. Strongly suggest not dividing groups by user. Promotes "us vs. them" not collaboration.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
49	PRD		Maint.	Mountain bikes tear up trails. Muddy places in trails get churned up by bikes going right through the middle.	Noted
50	PRD		Comment	Good to promote understanding between groups, but trail sustainability, safety and blending in with the environment should be most important.	Noted
51	PRD		Facilities	Would like to see more accurate trail use data. More camping facilities and more horse trailer parking that is safe.	Noted
52	PRD		Comment	No horse crap on trails. Require horse diapers.	Noted- Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project
53	PRD		Comment	Diversify and publicize the availability of trails to minimize overuse of popular trails.	Noted
54	PRD		Comment	Concerned about what seems to be a pattern of old roads that have become defacto trails being turned back into roads on the system.	Noted-Many gated FS roads are used for trail opportunities
55	PRD		Comment	Sustainability definition needs to include a phrase on support (what's needed to support sustainability).	Noted
56	PRD		Comment	All trails serve a purpose. Some are more primitive. Some are more natural. Some are easier, not technical.	Noted- District recognized this

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
57	PRD		Comment	The ones here care. The missing ones are those, the general public.	Noted
58	PRD		Comment	Accepting risk and assuming responsibility is key. Wild is good.	Noted
59	PRD		Comment	Trails that are here and will be around. There will be change. Changing nature is okay.	Noted
60	PRD		Comment	Signage; technical trailside features; options; epic single-track.	Noted
61	PRD		Comment	A signed, one way, bike only downhill specific trail with sustainable, safe-well thought out and executed jumps, berms and features would do the area some good. The southeast is years behind in trail design. It works in the west, it can work here. We have the man power and the drive.	Noted
62	PRD		Comment	Get local TDAs [Tourism & Development] and Chambers of Commerce groups behind usage as an incentive to increase tourism & economic development.	Noted
63	PRD		Comment	NC Horse Council has done an economic impact study on horse use.	Noted
64	PRD		Comment	Equine tourists- I have been contacted by someone outside this area coming here with their horses. There is a small- but increasing # of "horse motels" in the area. Promoting national forest equine trails & opportunities could be helped by making maps & info more easily available online. The Etowah Riding Club has links to equine trails- but often the links have been taken down so information is not as readily available to outsiders looking this way to ride in National Forests here.	Noted- FS website is being updated with recreation information.
65	PRD		Comment	Education of user groups from out of state not familiar with multi-use trails (bikes) signs at trailheads.	Noted- FS website is being updated with recreation information.
66	PRD		Comment	Internet- how easy is it for cyclists, equine and hikers to find info on trails online?	Noted- FS website is being updated with recreation information.

Pisgah District – Additional collaborator comments (cont.)

	Trail Name or Location	Trail No. (TR)	Comment Type	Recommendation	District Input
67	PRD		Comment	Data source: IMBA	Noted
68	PRD		Comment	Homeschooling Associations are a volunteer resource.	Noted
69	PRD		Comment	As much as possible would like horse, bike, & hike trails to be kept separate to ensure safety.	Noted-Beyond scope of Trail Strategy project. May consider at a future date.
70	PRD		Volunteer	It seems much more difficult for cyclists to help with trail maintenance than it is for hike/horse groups. Only 9 or so volunteers for all of 2011?	Noted
71	PRD		Volunteer	I have found volunteer trail work around here to be far less accessible compared to other parts of the country. All trail designs need to be maintained. Utilize more volunteer help.	Noted
72	PRD		Volunteer	Non-shared trail coordinator needed. Make it easier to volunteer.	Noted
73	AT		Comment	AT northbound section climbing toward Lovers Leap. AT southbound between Devil Fork Gap & Big Butt, sections of the Shining Creek Trail. Section of Sam Knob Trail nearest to Black Balsam parking area.	Noted- Need more information
74	PRD		Comment	After traveling the country several times over I have found Pisgah to hold something special. It has this wild feel to it and I have found no other place that draws me back to ride like it. The bike trails here are world class and the community loves to maintain trails.	Noted
75	PRD		Comment	I go to "Long distance riders" NATRC events all over- Uwharrie is closest. Why not here in our forest= bring in \$.	Noted-Events permitted to private organizations; FS does not host.

Appendix 2- Funding Sources

Potential Grants and Funding Opportunities

AARP
Alcoa
American Hiking Society
Americans with Disabilities
Bikes Belong
Cabella's
Carbon Sequestration Funds
Chambers of Commerce
Clean Water grants
Concessionaires
RTP - Recreational Trail Program Grants
Corporate partnerships
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Echoing Green Fellowships
Ecotourism Industry
Golden LEAF Foundation, NC
Harrah's Casino
Health Grants
Health Insurance companies
Hunting/Fishing Organizations
International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)
LL Bean
Lowe's Foundation
Macon County Parks and Recreation
National Forest Foundation
National Recreation Area Designation
National Environmental Education Foundation
National Park Service- Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program
NC Department of Energy
NC Horse Council
NC Parks and Rec Trust Fund
NC State Grants – (tied to water improvements)
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
Nantahala Outdoor Center
Outdoor Industry Association
Outdoor Industry- e.g., TREK Specialized
REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.)
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Sierra Nevada Brewery
Specialized Bicycles
Trout Unlimited
TVA grants
TVA, State and USFS settlement funds
Water Quality Grants

Appendix 3- Volunteer Sources

Potential Volunteer Opportunities

Individuals who want to become involved as a Nantahala or Pisgah National Forest trail volunteer may wish to join one or more of the following organizations.

4-H

Alternative Spring Break College Programs

American Hiking Society

American Whitewater Association

Anglers

Blue Ridge Natural Heritage Area-

Boy and Girl Scouts

Carolina Climbers Coalition

Carolina Climbing Association

Carolina Mountain Club

Chambers of Commerce

Churches

Colleges, Universities, High schools

Coop Weed Management Partners

Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association

GA & TN National Forests

Great Outdoors Initiative

Health & Wellness Communities-

Hunters

Job Corps

Land Trust for the Little Tennessee

Land trusts

Leave No Trace, Inc.

Macon County Horsemen's Association

McDowell Trails Association

National Park Service

National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance

National Wild Turkey Federation

NC Bear Hunters Association

NC Horse Council

NC Parks & Recreation

No Child Left Inside

Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition

Summer Camps

Trail runners

Trails To Every Classroom (ATC)

Trout Unlimited

Urban Forest Services