



**- CATAWBA -**  
LANDS CONSERVANCY  
LAND | WATER | FARMS | NATURE



**CAROLINA**  
THREAD TRAIL®

# **FOSTERING A LEGACY OF CONSERVATION, CONNECTIVITY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

**Bret Baronak, Project Director**  
**Carolina Thread Trail**

Presentation for: East Coast Greenway SE  
Greenways and Trails Virtual Summit  
April 3, 2020



# TWO ORGANIZATIONS, ONE GOAL: SAVING LAND AND CONNECTING LIVES TO NATURE



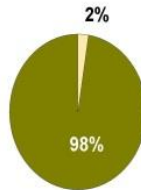
South Fork Trail | McAdenville, NC

# OUR DISAPPEARING GREEN SPACE



1976

Footprint: 0.08 acres per person



- Charlotte
- Developed
- Natural/ Rural
- Water
- Protected open space

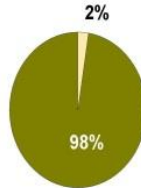
89,600 acres

# OUR DISAPPEARING GREEN SPACE



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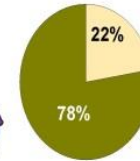


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89,600 acres

2006

Conversion Rate: 94 acres per day  
Footprint: 0.41 acres per person



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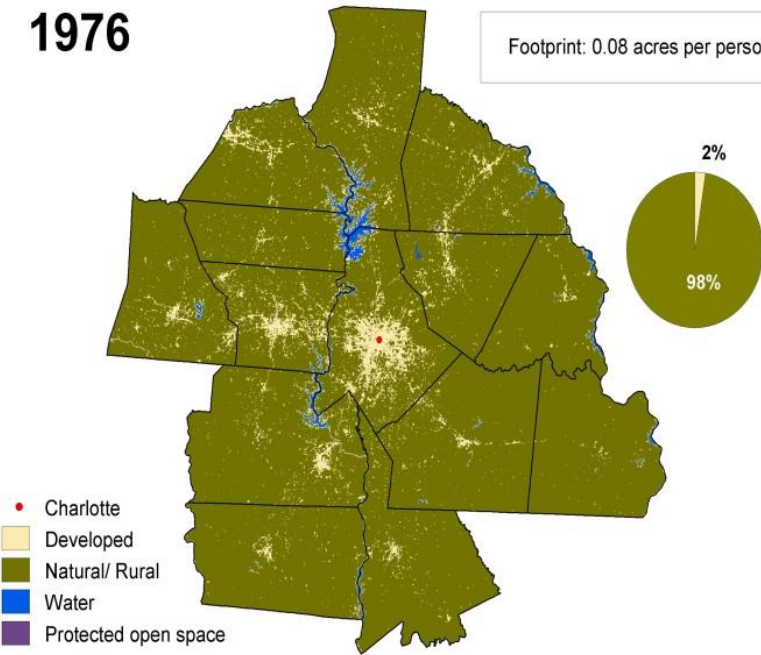
985,600 acres

# OUR DISAPPEARING GREEN SPACE



1976

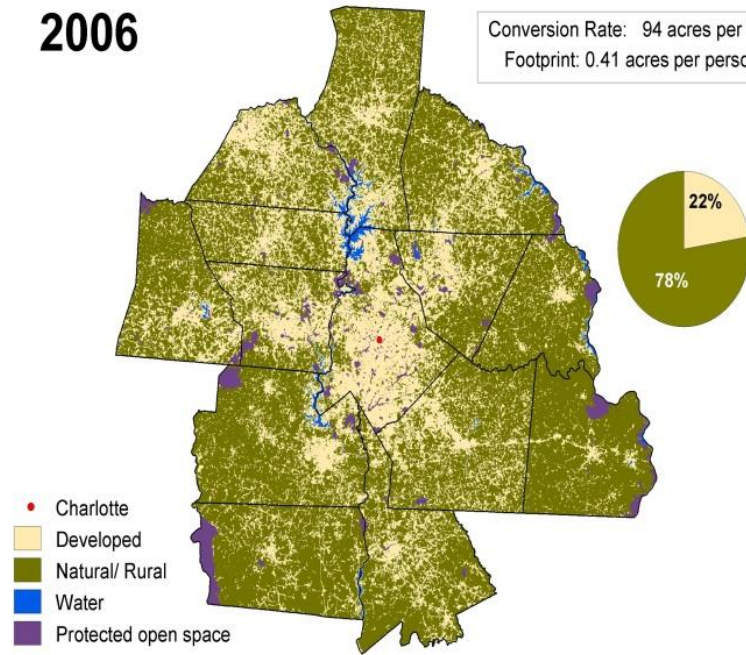
Footprint: 0.08 acres per person



89,600 acres

2006

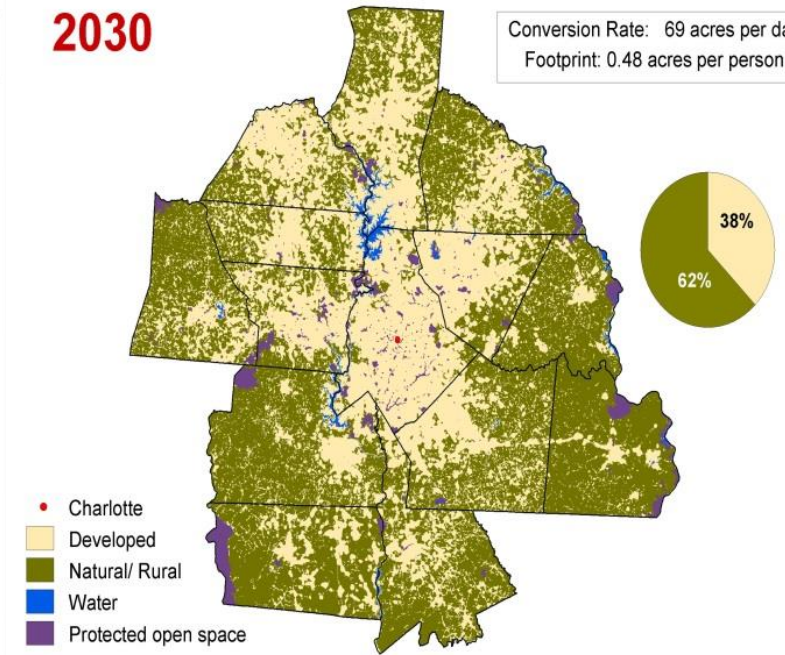
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985,600 acres

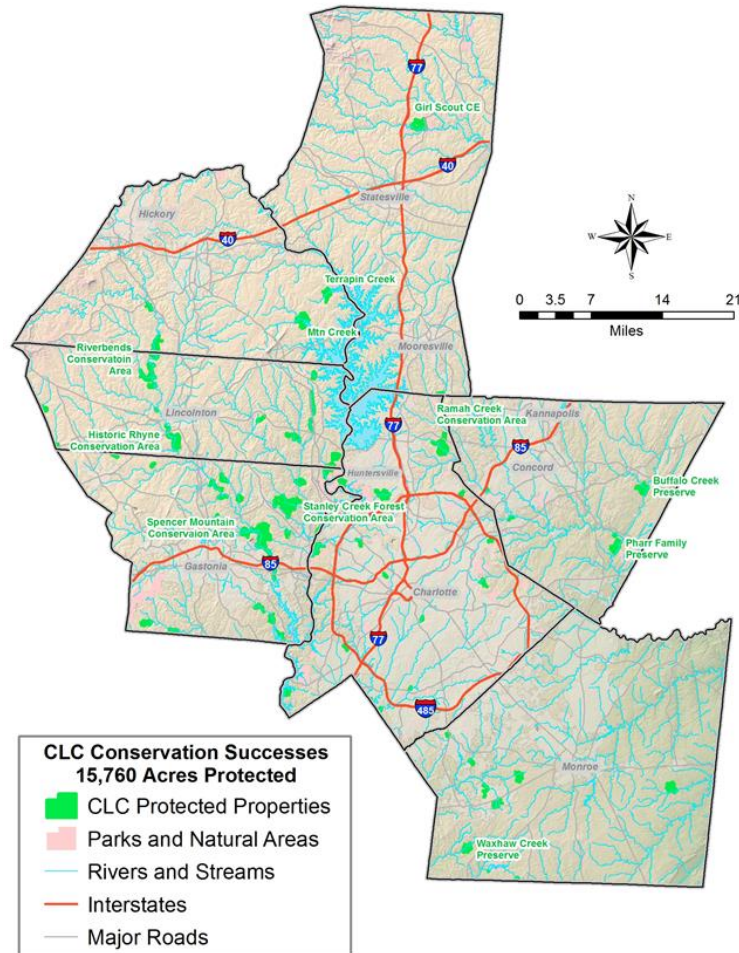
2030

Conversion Rate: 69 acres per day  
Footprint: 0.48 acres per person



1,702,400 acres

# CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY EST. 1991

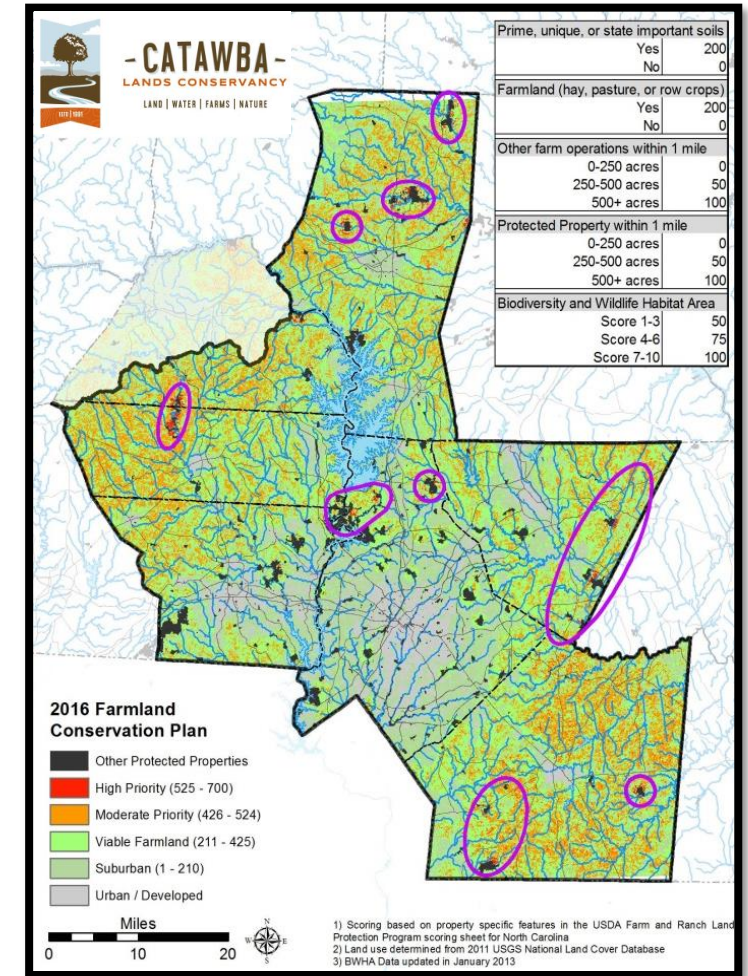
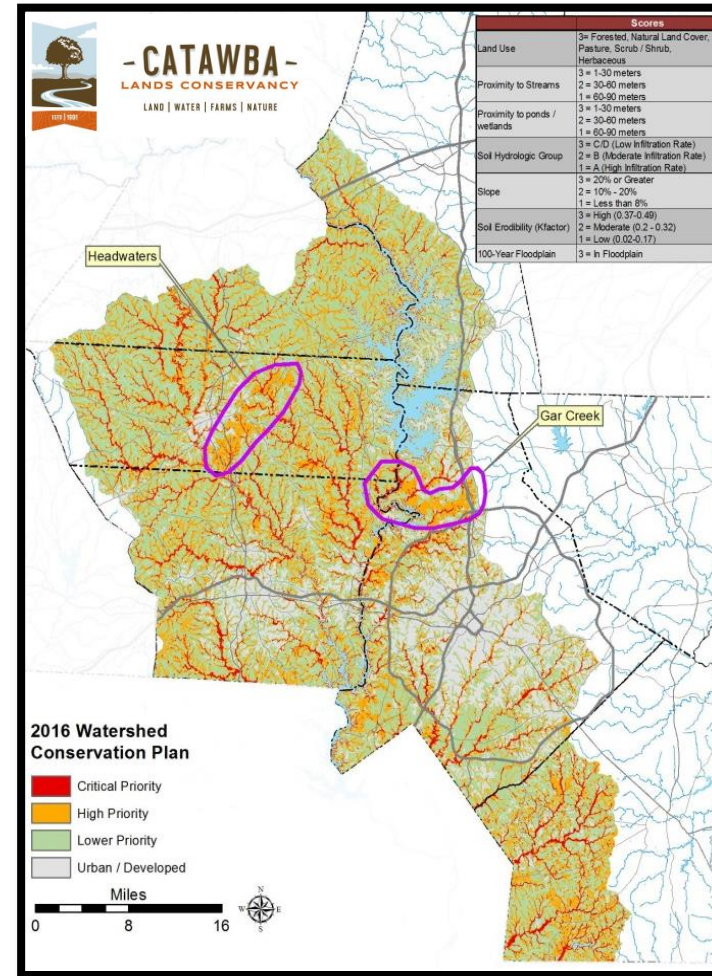
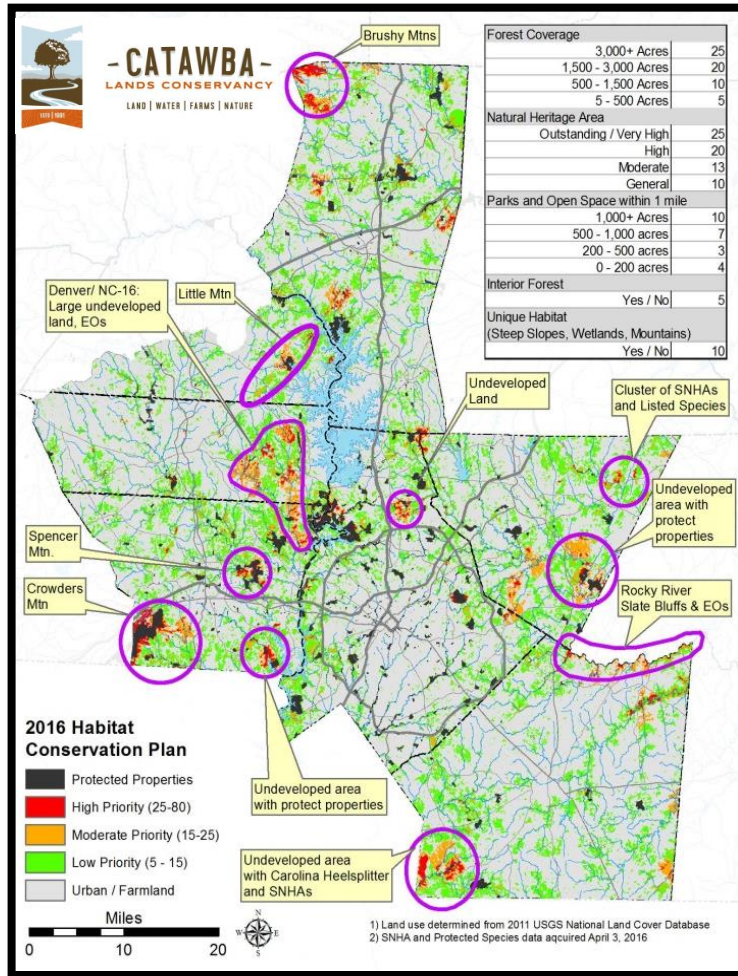


- ▶ SMILE – “Saving Mountain Island Lake for Everyone”
- ▶ 16,000+ acres conserved
- ▶ Some privately owned with conservation easement
- ▶ Some CLC owns
- ▶ Some with Thread Trail easements
- ▶ Focus Areas
  - ▶ Water Quality & Quantity
  - ▶ Wildlife Habitat
  - ▶ Farmland Preservation
  - ▶ Connection to Nature



# LAND PROTECTION PROCESS

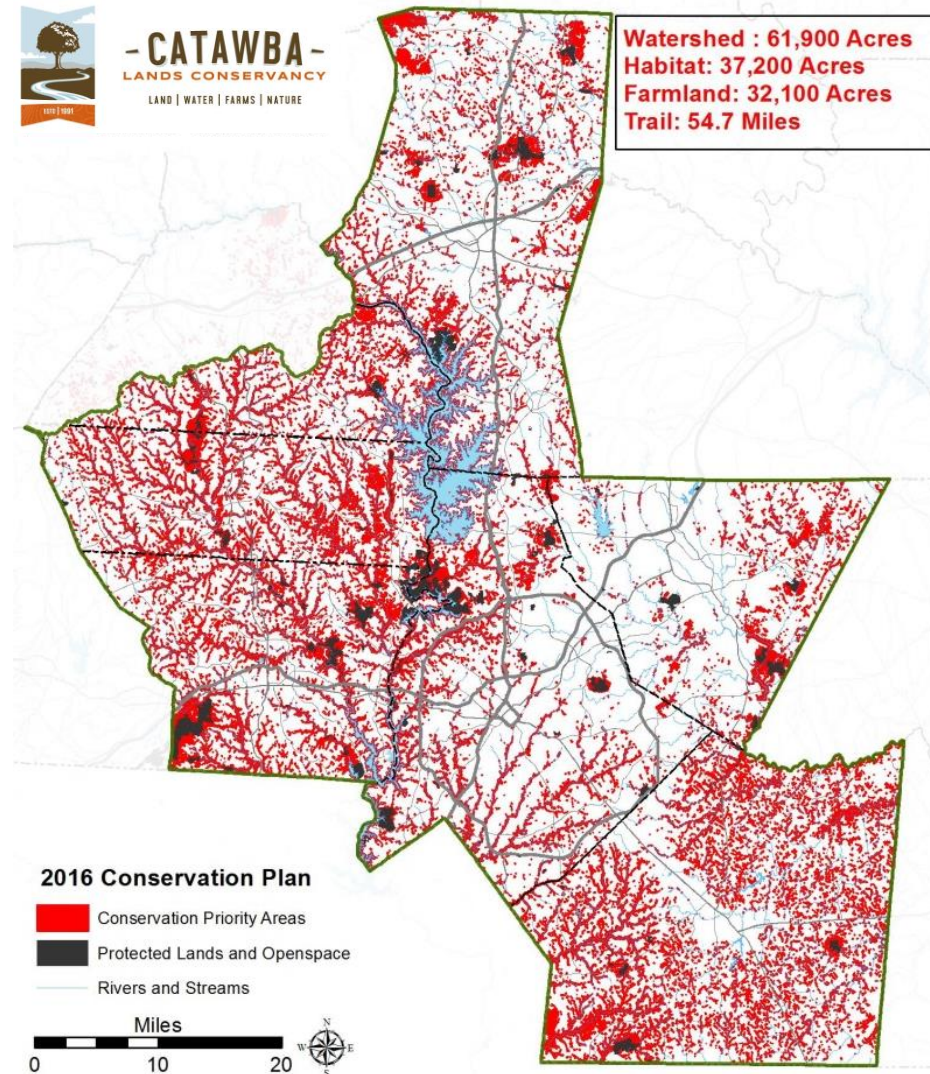
# STRATEGIC PLANNING



# LAND ACQUISITION

Conservation Easement

Fee Simple Acquisition



# LAND STEWARDSHIP



Monitor



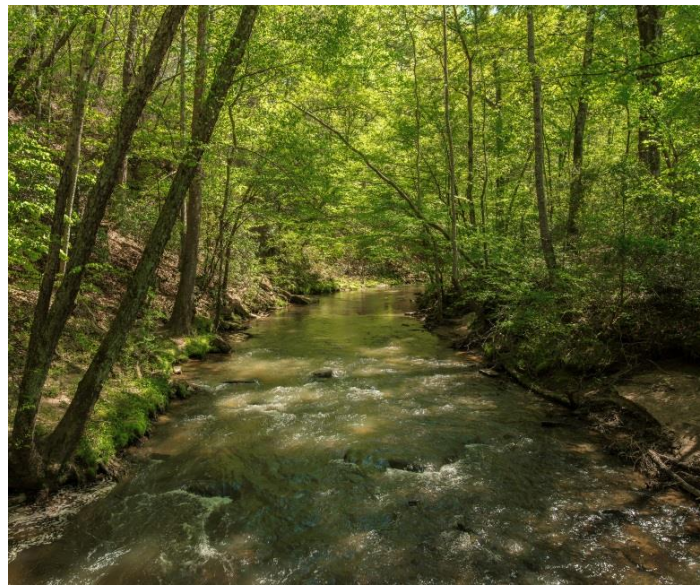
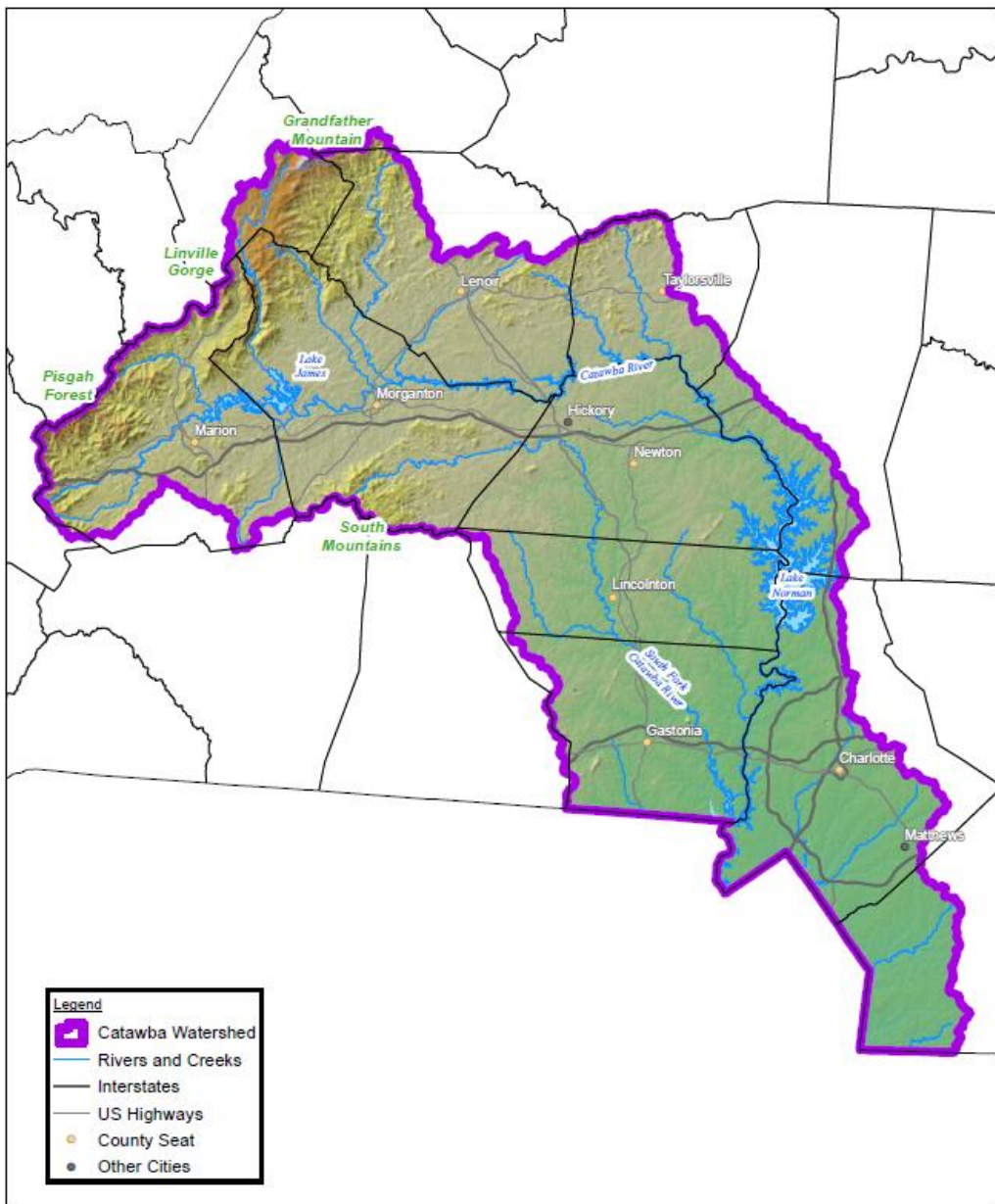
Maintain



Restore

An aerial photograph of the Catawba River, showing it winding through a lush, green forest. The river is a light blue-grey color, contrasting with the vibrant green of the trees. In the upper left, a small cluster of houses is visible through the trees. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom right, with several bends and curves. The forest is dense and covers most of the landscape.

**CLEAN WATER**





# WILDLIFE HABITAT



# PLANTS, ANIMALS, AND INSECTS





# LOCAL FARMS

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION



A group of people, including adults and children, are hiking on a forest trail. The trees are covered in autumn foliage, with many leaves turned yellow and orange. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up the trail. A white rectangular box with a thin black border is superimposed over the middle of the image, containing the text "CONNECTION TO NATURE" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The people are dressed in outdoor gear, including hats, scarves, and jackets. One man in the foreground is wearing a red hoodie with a white letter 'A' on it. A woman next to him is wearing a bright pink jacket and a white scarf. In the background, a man is carrying a child on his shoulders. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.



# CONNECTION TO NATURE

Girl Scouts' Dale Earnhardt Environmental Leadership Campus at Oak Springs | Statesville, NC

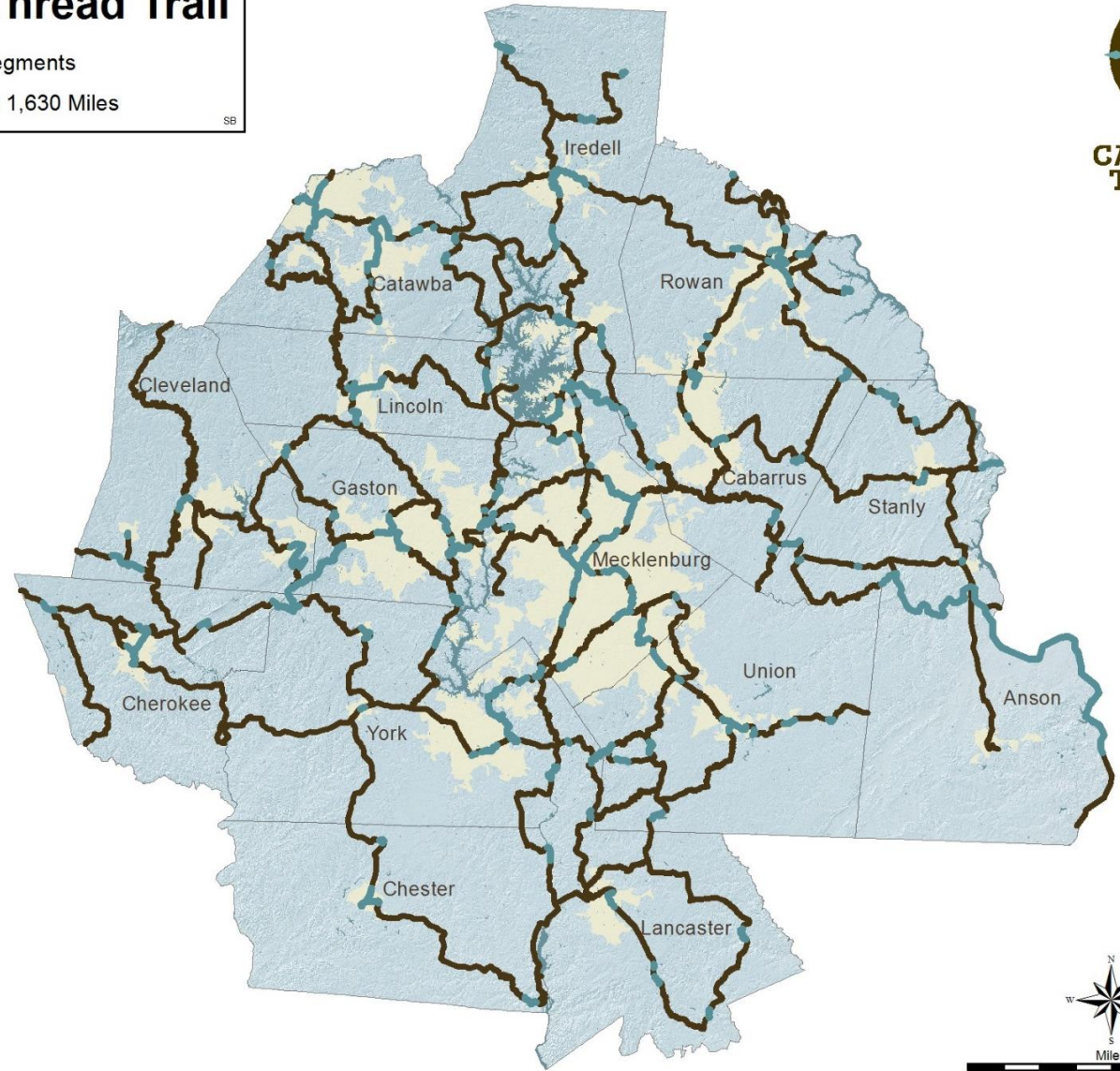
# THREAD TRAIL VISION

- 2 States
- 15 Counties
- 88 Municipalities
- 1,630 Planned Miles
- 300 Trails Open
  - Trails
  - Greenways
  - Blueways (paddling)
  - Sidewalk Connectors
  - Variety of Trail Surface Types

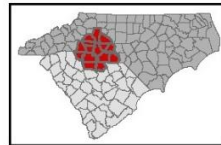
## Carolina Thread Trail

-  Completed Segments
-  Adopted Trail: 1,630 Miles

SB



CAROLINA  
THREAD  
TRAIL



0 15 30  
Miles

# TRAIL BENEFITS

NATURAL SELLING POINTS.

HEALTH SAVINGS

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



JOB CREATION

Trail construction over 15 years results in 2,700 new jobs during that period

ALTERNATIVE  
TRANSPORTATION



INCREASED PROPERTY VALUE

4% increase in vicinity of trail, resulting in increased property tax revenue of \$17 million



INCREASED  
TAX REVENUE

TRAIL USER AND TOURIST SPENDING

\$42 to \$84 million of increased spending, resulting in \$3 to \$6 million in incremental state and local tax revenue



# NEARLY 150,00 ACRES OF LAND WILL BE PROTECTED WHEN THE THREAD TRAIL IS COMPLETE

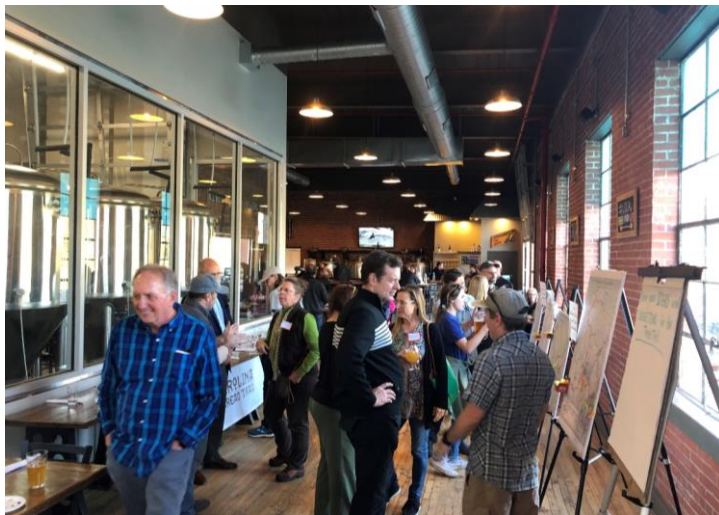


## Current Trail + CLC Conservation Projects:

- Forney Creek
- Seven Oaks Preserve
- Rocky Pop
- Massapoag
- Eastover Ridge
- Cat Long Preserve
- Holly Track

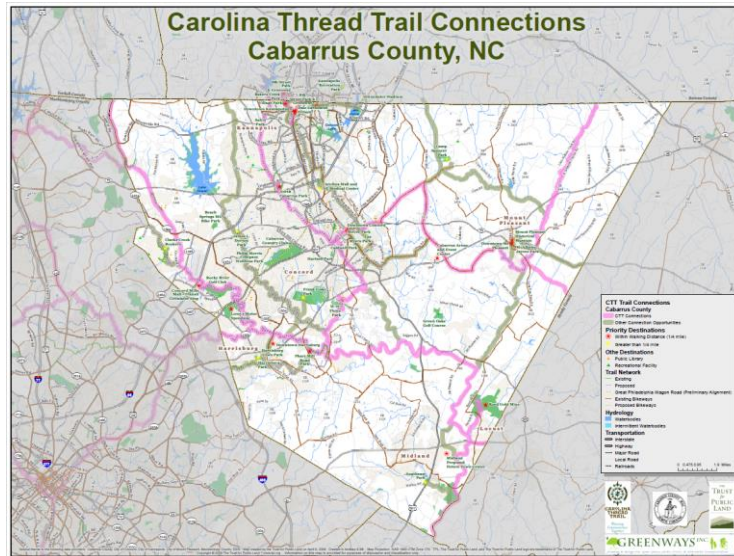
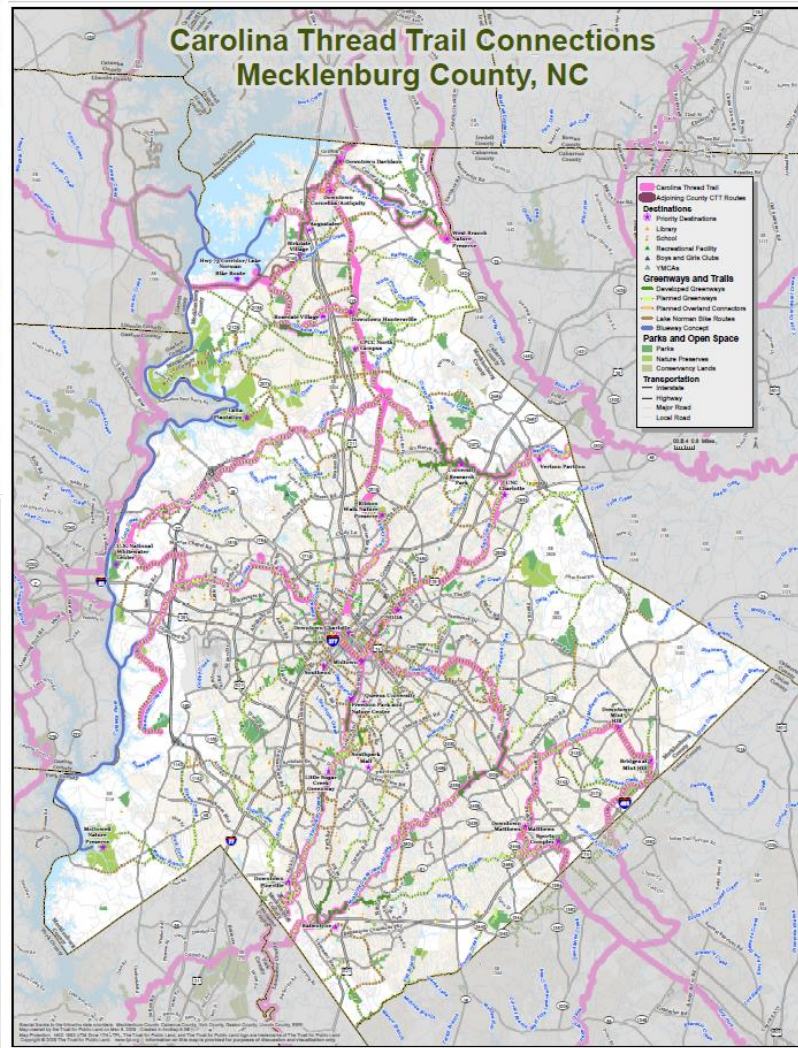
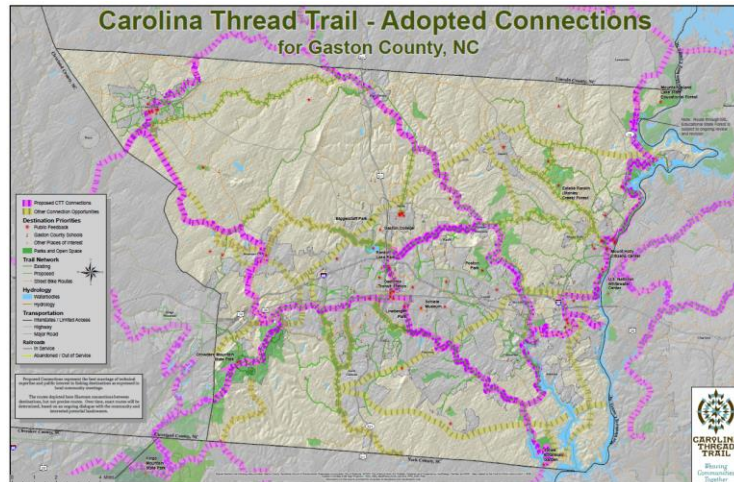


# THREAD TRAIL'S ROLE - CATALYTIC



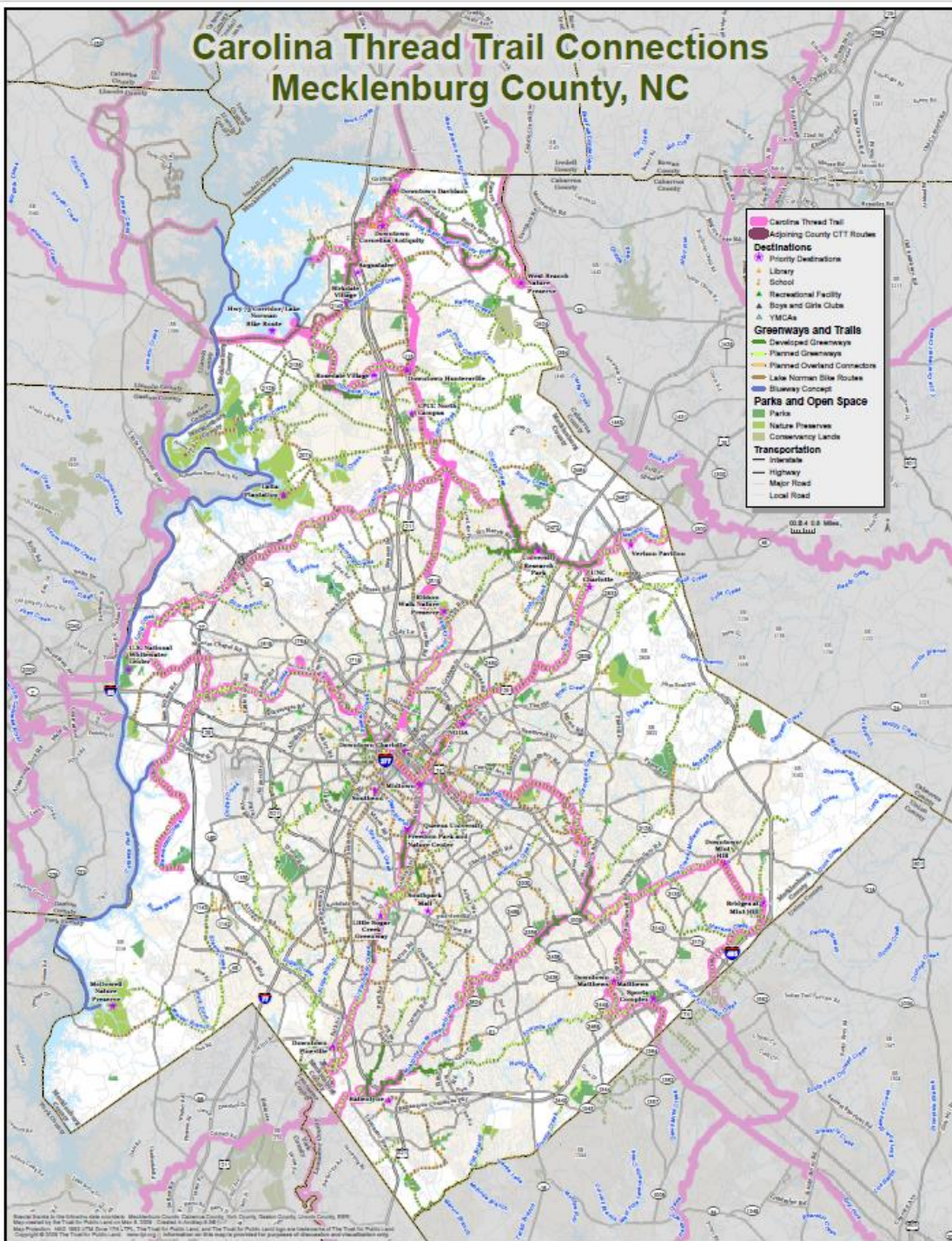
- ▶ Promote a regional vision of **connectivity**
- ▶ Facilitate **implementation** of master plans
- ▶ Facilitate **collaboration** among communities
- ▶ Provide technical **education** and **support** to partners
- ▶ Provide **grants** to acquire land, plan, and construct trails  
(Carolina Thread Trail Implementation Grant Program)
- ▶ Seek local, regional, state, and national **funds**
- ▶ Coordinate with CLC to create trail opportunities

# COUNTY MASTER PLANS



- ▶ 15 counties
- ▶ Adopted into land development plans
- ▶ Local and community driven

## Carolina Thread Trail Connections Mecklenburg County, NC



# MECKLENBURG COUNTY



- Approximately 60 Trail Miles Complete
- 11 Blueway Launches
- 170.2 Planned Miles in CTT Master Plan

# NORTH-SOUTH SPINE — EXAMPLE OF PRIORITY CORRIDOR



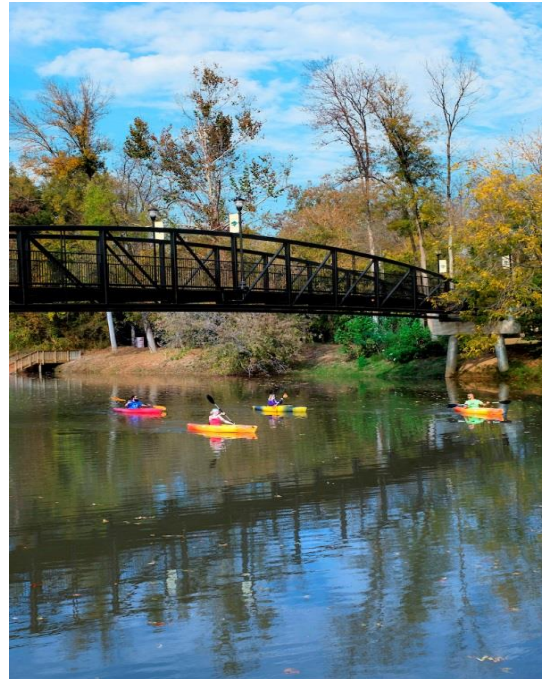
- ▶ 140 miles
- ▶ Multi-county
- ▶ Cross-state
- ▶ Statesville, NC → Great Falls, SC
- ▶ 5 Other “Priority Corridors” Within Region in Addition to North-South Spine
- ▶ Increase Continuous Mileage in Priority Corridors – Strategic Planning Moving Forward.

# BLUEWAYS

## Connecting Communities through Paddling

- Catawba River
- South Fork River

- Rocky River
- Pee Dee River



# CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

## 2019 PROJECT SUMMARY COMPLETED TRAIL PROJECTS — THANKS FOR THE PARTNERSHIP!



Project	County	Town	Miles	Surface Type	Opened	Notes/CTT Funding
Founders Trail	York	Rock Hill/ Fort Mill, SC	2.3	Natural	March 2019	\$150,000 + Technical Assistance
Masons Bend Trail	York	Fort Mill, SC	1.25	Natural	March 2019	Technical Assistance
Lake Whelchel - Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail	Cherokee	Gaffney, SC	7.5	Natural	June 29, 2019	\$150,000
Little Sugar Creek Greenway –Huntingtowne Farms to I-485	Mecklenburg	Charlotte, NC	2.2	Paved	Late June 2019	Supporting Partner
Long Creek Trail Extension (USNWC)	Mecklenburg	Charlotte, NC	2.0	Natural	Phase I: Open Phase II: Late 2019	CLC Conservation Easement Purchase/Technical Assistance
Hector H. Henry Greenway	Cabarrus	Concord, NC	2.4	Natural	August 2019	\$90,000
Antiquity Greenway	Mecklenburg	Cornelius, NC	0.6	Paved	August 2019	Supporting Partner
River Link Greenway	Gaston	Cramerton, NC	0.6	Paved	September 2019	\$69,000/CLC Conservation Area
Uptown Cycle Track	Mecklenburg	Charlotte, NC	1.5	Paved	May 2019	CTT Funding in 2021 Phase II
Mount Holly Riverfront Greenway	Gaston	Mount Holly, NC	1.25	Paved	December 2019	Supporting Partner

**Total: 21.6 Miles**

**CTT Grant Funding \$450K+**

# CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

## 2020/21 PROJECT PIPELINE



Project	County	Length	Lead	Status	CTT Notes
Hector Henry Greenway – Riverwalk Section	Cabarrus	1.3 Miles	Concord	Under Construction	North/South Spine Priority Corridor CTT Grant - \$120K
Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway	Cabarrus	2.3 Miles	Kannapolis	Under Construction	Irish Buffalo Priority Corridor
Cross-Charlotte Trail (XCLT) – Brandywine to Tyvola	Mecklenburg	1.5 Miles	City of Charlotte	Under Construction	North/South Spine Priority Corridor
Charlotte Uptown Cycle Track Phase II	Mecklenburg	1 Mile	City of Charlotte	2021	Committed CTT Funding \$100K
Little Sugar Creek Greenway – I-485 to Polk Historic Site	Mecklenburg	2.2 Miles	Mecklenburg County Park and Rec	Under Construction – Opening Soon	North/South Spine Priority Corridor
Stewart Creek Greenway Extension	Mecklenburg	1 Mile	Mecklenburg County Park and Rec	2021	CTT Supportive Partner Role
Long Creek Greenway	Mecklenburg	1.5 Miles	Mecklenburg County Park and Rec	2021	CTT Supportive Partner Role
McAlpine Creek Greenway Extension to Providence Road	Mecklenburg	1 Mile	Mecklenburg County Park and Rec	2020 -- Opening Soon	CTT Supportive Partner Role
Statesville Greenway	Iredell	.25 (creates 5 continuous miles)	City of Statesville	Construction – Late 2020	CTT Grant - \$150K

# CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

## 2020/21 PROJECT PIPELINE CONTINUED....



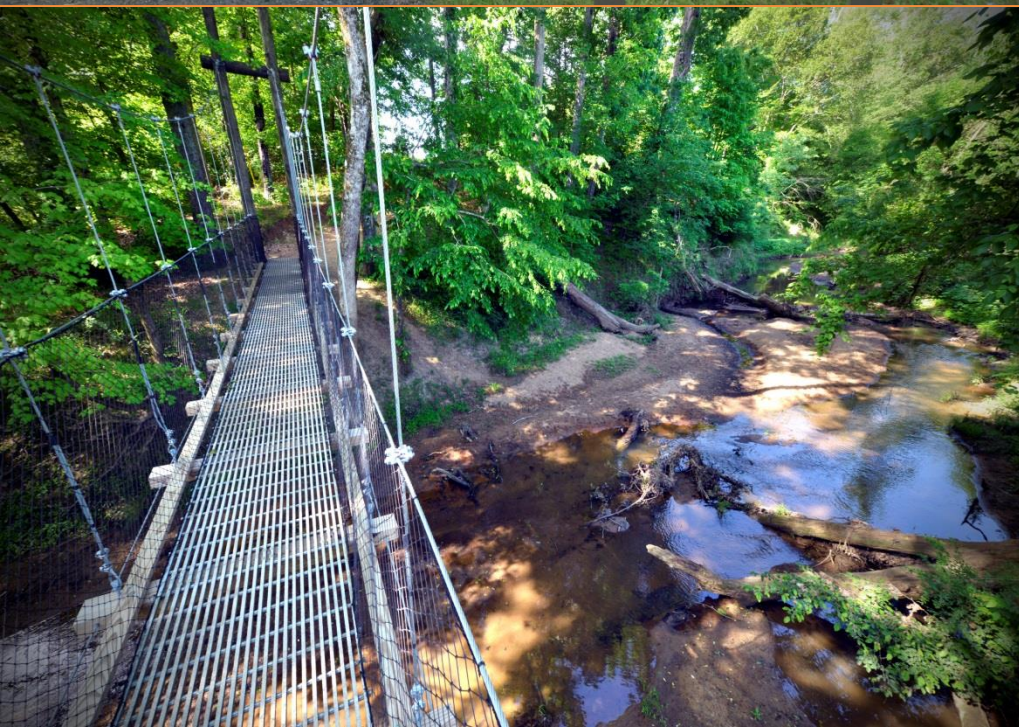
**Total: Approximately  
23.5 Miles**

**Total CTT Funding  
Awarded - \$945K**

Salisbury Greenway	Rowan	1.5 Miles	City of Salisbury	Construction – 2021	CTT Grant - \$200K
Great Falls Rail-Trail	Chester	3.7 Miles	Town of Great Falls/Chester County	2021	North/South Spine Priority Corridor CTT Serving In Lead Consulting Role CTT Grant – \$25K
12-Mile Creek Greenway - Extension	Union	.75 miles	Town of Waxhaw	Under Construction	CTT Supportive Partner Role
Dye Creek Greenway	Iredell	2 Miles	Town of Mooresville	Construction – Summer 2020	CTT Supportive Partner Role – North South Priority Corridor
Lindsay Pettus Greenway Phase 1	Lancaster	2 Miles	Lindsay Pettus Greenway, Inc.	Under Construction	CTT Grant - \$105K
South Fork Trail Extension	Gaston	1 Miles	Town of Lowell Gaston County	2021	Technical and Planning Support Role. Working with HOA South Fork Priority Corridor
South Fork Trail Corridor	Gaston	.75 Miles	Towns of Cramerton and McAdenville	2022	South Fork Priority Corridor CTT Grant \$106K
Avon-Catawba Greenway	Gaston	.5 Miles	City of Gastonia	Late 2020/Early 2021	CTT Grant \$140K Special Allocation from Wells Fargo

A large orange banner with a geometric pattern of overlapping triangles and diamonds. The banner is overlaid on a background image of a river with two kayakers. The text "TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the banner.

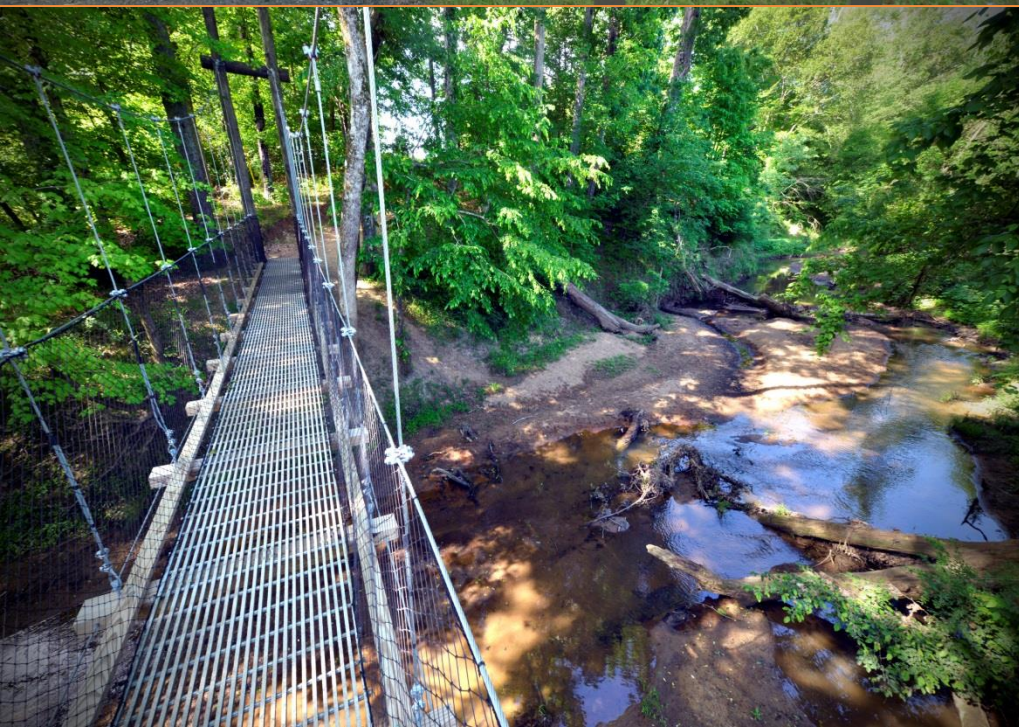
# TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS



# CATALYTIC FUNDING

- Acquisition
- Corridor Planning
- Engineering and Design
- Construction (our favorite!!)

**Since it began – approx. \$6,000,000 awarded, which has helped to leverage other public and private funding for trails and land protection**



# CATALYTIC FUNDING

## Evaluation Factors:

- Location on priority corridor
  - Adds miles to existing segment
  - Collaboration and partnerships
  - Serves all members of the community
  - Project readiness
  - Public and private support
  - Trail maintenance
  - Project excellence
- Focus on trail construction in priority corridors
  - Regional competitive process with weighted scoring
  - Two application cycles per year





# TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS



# FOUNDERS TRAIL

York County

Rock Hill & Fort Mill, SC





# KINGS MOUNTAIN GATEWAY TRAIL

Cleveland County

Kings Mountain, NC





# OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL: LAKE WHELCHER SEGMENT

Cherokee County  
Gaffney, SC

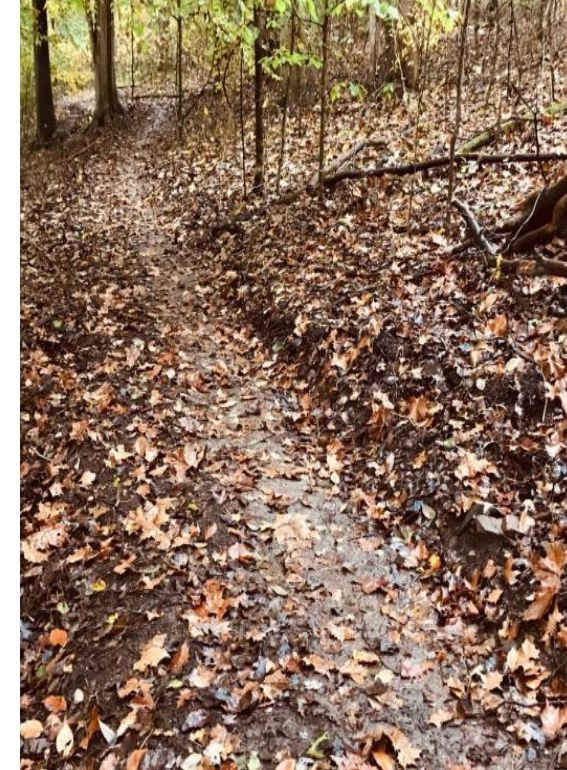


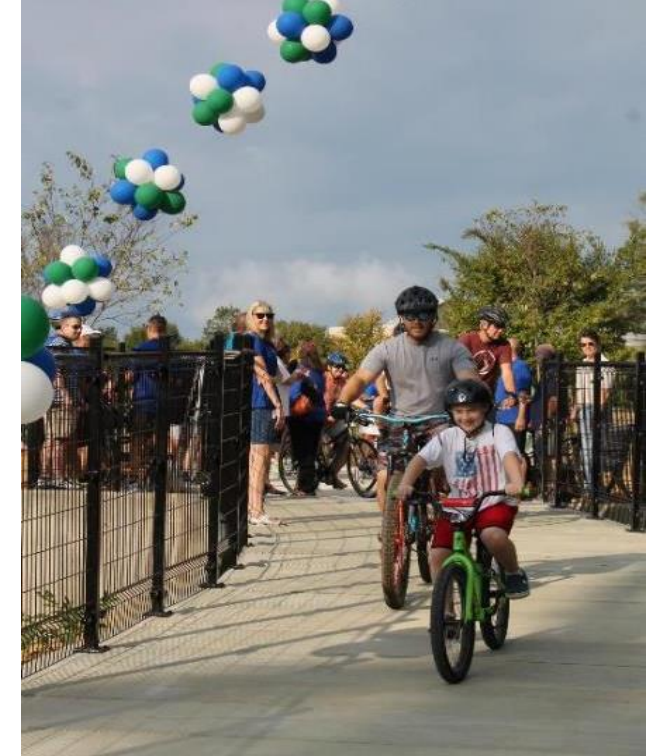


**NORTH-SOUTH SPINE:  
LITTLE SUGAR CREEK GREENWAY  
HUNTINGTOWNE FARMS TO I-485**

Mecklenburg County  
Charlotte, NC







# ANTIQUITY GREENWAY

Mecklenburg County

Cornelius, NC





# RIVER LINK GREENWAY

Gaston County  
Cramerton, NC





# UPTOWN CYCLE TRACK

Mecklenburg County

Charlotte, NC





# MOUNT HOLLY RIVERFRONT GREENWAY

Gaston County  
Mount Holly, NC



# THREAD TRAILS IN MECKLENBURG COUNTY



Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Tyvola Rd to Huntingtowne Farms



West Branch Rocky River Greenway



Uptown Cycle Track



Toby Creek Greenway



Irwin/Stewart Creek Greenways

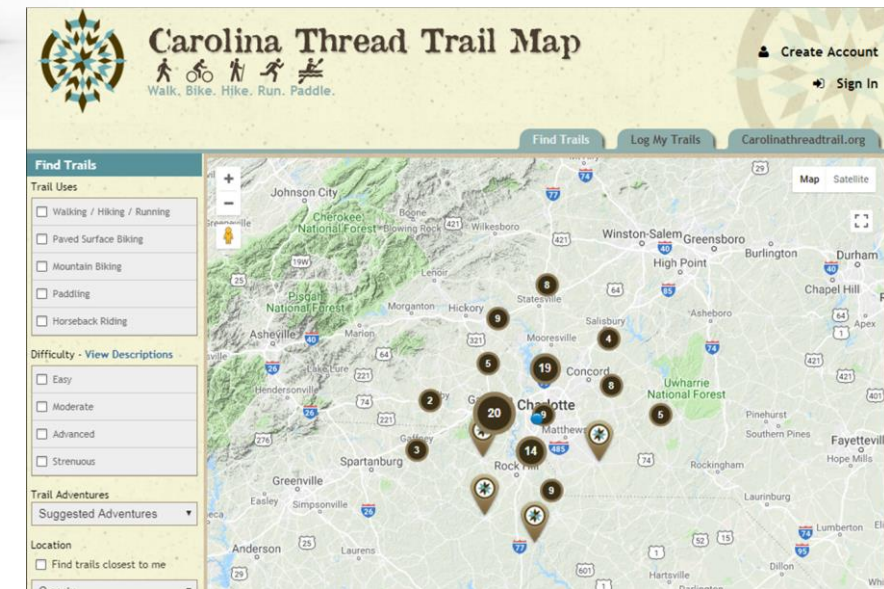


**GET INVOLVED**

# ONLINE MAP

- ▶ How do I find Thread Trails?
- ▶ Mobile friendly with real-time GPS
- ▶ Filter based on location, activity and difficulty

[WWW.CAROLINATHREADTRAILMAP.ORG](http://WWW.CAROLINATHREADTRAILMAP.ORG)



# OUTDOOR PROGRAMMING



Examples....showcasing trails throughout the CTT Region

- Bike-n-Brew with Blue Blaze Brewing
- Sunset Bike Ride
- City Bike Tour
- Sunset Bike Ride
- Nature Hike
- Fitness Walk
- South Fork River Paddle

# VOLUNTEER



## ► 500 Annual Volunteers

- Trail building
- Invasive species eradication
- Public/corporate workdays
- Outreach events



# TRAIL MASTERS

- ▶ 4-Day Certification Course
- ▶ Sustainable Natural Surface Trails
- ▶ 40 hrs of service annually for 3 years
- ▶ 98 Volunteer Leaders



# THREAD TRAIL AMBASSADORS

- ▶ 1-Day Training Session
- ▶ Advocate for Carolina Thread Trail
- ▶ Volunteer at Thread Trail outreach events
- ▶ Assist with outdoor programs



# NATIONAL TRAILS DAY



June 1, 2019 | June 6, 2020 – (rescheduled for Fall 2020??)





# CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL PALE ALE



- Blue Blaze Brewing, Charlotte, NC
- 10% of profits donated to the Thread Trail



# CURRENT SIGNAGE — NOTE: NEW SIGNAGE UNDER DEVELOPMENT IN 2020



STRAP SIGN



DOUBLE POST  
SIGN



LOLLIPOP  
SIGN



ASSURANCE  
MARKER



STENCIL



MEDALLION

# CONNECT WITH US



[www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org)  
[www.carolinathreadtrail.org](http://www.carolinathreadtrail.org)



CatawbaLands  
CarolinaThreadTrail

#catawbalands  
#carolinathreadtrail



@CatawbaLands  
@ThreadTrail

# THANK YOU!



CAROLINA  
THREAD  
TRAIL

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