

# Valdese Lakeside Park



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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A 300-acre tract of undeveloped land is for sale in Valdese - on the lake, with creeks, and lots and lots of trees. The property is breathtaking and an amazing opportunity for the town. We must seize the opportunity to provide green space for our community, and a path of economic development for Valdese.

In February, 2015, a group of citizens got together to see how they could help the town acquire the land to create a passive park. The group, Friends of the Valdese Rec, met with the mayor of Valdese, on the job just a few weeks following the previous mayor's death. The new mayor saw the benefit of the park for Valdese and did not hesitate in having the Friends meet with the town manager to strategize. In April, 2015, the mayor, town manager and Friends of the Valdese Rec met with Crescent Communities (land owner at that time) to discuss purchasing the land. After that meeting, it was decided help was needed to be successful in the land purchase. The Valdese Town Council voted to contract with Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina for assistance.

Suddenly, the process was moving forward. Foothills Conservancy was talking with Crescent Communities, Friends of Valdese Rec was gathering donations for the land appraisal, the excitement was growing. Then, surprising us all, Crescent sold 3000 acres of land across Burke County in bulk, including the 300-acre parcel.

Hope was not lost, and the new owners of the property (Caldwell Timber Partners) were willing to work with the town in purchasing the land, knowing we will need to get grants and it will take time.

In the beginning, getting the land was about conservation (saving the land) and having a local park so Valdese citizens would not have to drive to Morganton and Hickory for a nature outing (saving time, saving gas). However, along the way, we found this project is also about saving Valdese, the town.



Once full of textile and furniture factories, the Valdese area has been left a bit empty with the shift to overseas manufacturing. Having lost all that tax and water revenue, Valdese is looking for a new growth path.

By owning the land, the Valdese economy will grow in two ways – through tourism and population. Valdese - live and play. People want to live near green space and be a part of the outdoors. The park will encourage lot owners to build in 3 lakeside neighborhoods, thus bringing in more tax revenue. The park will draw enthusiasts who learn about activities via social media and web sites dedicated to mountain biking, disc golf, kayak access, hiking and the like. People will come to Valdese to play, spend their money in town and may decide to live in Valdese. McGalliard Falls, the primary tourist attraction in town that includes an historic grist mill, will serve as one of the park entrances.

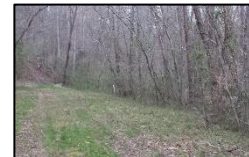


By owning the land, citizens will be able to get out in nature every day. Everyone can afford to walk for exercise. Folks will be proud of their community as they see Valdese focus on health and nature. Students will have a huge outdoor classroom in their backyard with the 3 schools in town (elementary, middle and high school) being between 0.2 miles to 1.2 miles from one of the entrances. Educational, recreational and social outings will become commonplace. Being right next door, the high school will have a special connection with the park. The cross-country team can expand their running route, kids can take on service projects for park, maybe even have lunch at the park.



By owning the land, we will do our part in the conservation efforts needed in the world today. We will care for this land and clean up the trash in the water (see all the trash in the picture to left). We will keep it as close to natural as possible. The deer, turkey, beaver, fox and other animals will still have a place to live. If we do not plan green space, it will not exist.

Thankfully, folks care about Valdese and these people are willing to work. We are still here almost 2 years later, working to get this land. We know once we have it, we will be working even harder to clear and maintain trails. The primary trail citizens want - 2 miles along the river and creek- is ready to walk since it is a sewer easement maintained by the town. We just need to build a bridge over the creek.



So, the park can be used for walking right away. However, the long-term goal is for the park to be a planned destination worth repeat visits, to be a part of Burke County's advertising as "Nature's Playground." The final park realization (foot trails, mountain bike trails, kayak launch, disc golf, picnic shelter, adventure playground, adult exercise stations) will take time. But, the first step is to own the land.

Valdese is changing and is on a forward course.

- We have a new mayor, a new town manager, and a billboard on the interstate.
- The Western NC Housing Partnership is working to buy land from the town to build at 46-unit affordable housing apartment complex.
- The DOT has done a pedestrian plan study for the town and connecting to Rutherford College
- Valdese has been designated by the State as a Main Street Community.
- The town will be getting 2 electric car charging stations.

We are making strides toward Valdese becoming THE place to live and play in the foothills. Acquiring this land will ensure we stay on the path to save our town.

## 2 BENEFITS OF THE PARK

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The park will provide a growth path for the town with increased tourism and population, will increase the well-being of our citizens and students, and will be a step in helping save the Earth.

### 2.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With a shift to overseas manufacturing, Valdese has been left a bit empty - empty of traffic, businesses, residents, workers, tourists. Valdese must change from a town of industry to a town to live and play. However, we do not want to be like all the other towns changing their identity and just build neighborhood after neighborhood. We are fortunate enough to have land on the water – land that has not been developed. We must save that land, which will save our town by becoming a better place to live and a better place to play.

Valdese Lakeside Park will help Valdese by making it a planned destination. Once people are here to play, they will get gas, a meal or snack, walk around town to the shops and visit the historical attractions. Visitors will see there is enough to come back for on another day... maybe even decide Valdese would be a nice place to live.

**Return on Investment:** As more towns and cities use land for open space (instead of development), it is becoming clear it is a cost savings and not an expense. The expenditures necessary to support a developed property (roads, water, schools) are not always covered by future property tax. Whereas, a passive park could bring in more revenue (increased home prices, more homes sold, spending in town) than it requires to be maintained.

Because this will be a passive park, there will not be excessive maintenance. Friends of the Valdese Rec will assist the town to organize work days for cleaning and maintaining the trails.

As the park is completed, it will generate funds with

- Picnic shelter rentals
- Events (disc golf tournaments, trail runs, high school cross country meets, mountain bike races)
- Local companies taking turns with food carts – paying rent or % of sales
- Equipment rentals (canoe, kayak, paddle board, bike)

People want to live in an area with greenspace and will pay for it. The purchase of the land with plans for a park will spur new home purchases and building on lots already purchased at Waterside on Lake Rhodhiss, Lake Vista of Lake Rhodhiss and The Settings of Lake Rhodhiss (the 3 new lakeside developments in Valdese). As homes are built and population increases, there will be more tax money brought into the town.

The park is in line with the *2013 Town of Valdese Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan* created with and for the town by Western Piedmont Council of Governments.

**Tourism:** The number of people participating in recreational activities is growing by leaps and bounds. The activities that create followers – disc golf, mountain biking, hiking, kayaking – would put Valdese on the radar when these adventurers do an Internet search on “disc golf course” or “mountain biking.” The

visitors would share where they have been by word of mouth, social media and web sites dedicated to each activity. Then, friends and other followers would want to visit. Publicity will be easy.

With the down economy, staycations and mini getaways are popular. This park in combination with the other attractions in Valdese will offer plenty to do in town for 1 or 2 days.

The Burke County Tourism Development Authority already advertises “Play in Burke County - Nature’s Playground.” With a 300-acre passive park, Valdese will add to the size of the playground and can be included in this campaign with both the town and the county benefiting.

In addition to visitors, the park may bring businesses to town that go along with the outdoor scene – recreation clothing/equipment, general store, restaurants, breweries, gift shops, pet merchandise.

To reach Valdese Lakeside Park, visitors coming from Interstate 40 must pass over Main Street. The park will have 2 entrances – one at McGalliard Falls Park and one at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (Lake Rhodhiss Dr). When planning the primary entrance of the park, the route visitors take should be considered for most economic impact – go through a little or a lot of downtown.

### **Current Activities in Valdese**

The town hosts many events

- Family Friday Nights - summer concert series, movie afterwards
- Cruise-in/car show at local merchant - warm weather Friday nights
- Bluegrass concerts once a month - 500 seat indoor auditorium
- Fireworks for July 4th
- Waldensian Festival - a Friday and Saturday in August, with footrace (5K, 10K, 1 mile fun run)
- Outdoor drama - July-August
- Annual Triathlon
- State Bocce Tournament

And has several attractions

- The Trail of Faith - 15 scaled buildings and monuments showing history of Waldensians
- Waldensian Winery
- Heritage Arts Center
- Art Galleries
- 800 square foot model railroad
- Village Park Mural
- Waldensian Museum

In addition, the Town of Valdese has been designated by the State of North Carolina as a Main Street Community. This program has approximately 25 volunteers working to improve the look of the town, promote the town and bring in new businesses.

Clearly, the town does put forth an effort to create an inviting and active community. A passive park will boost these efforts by adding another attraction to visit and another venue to host races, events and educational programs. Thus, filling the town with traffic, businesses, residents, workers, tourists.

## 2.2 WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS AND STUDENTS

### 2.2.1 Citizens

The area citizens are very active outside as you see many walking or running on Main Street, Laurel Street, the Football Field Track and Lake Rhodhiss Drive (also called the Wastewater Treatment Plant Road). Valdese hosts an annual footrace (10k, 5k and 1-mile fun run), annual triathlon and has sports teams through the Recreation Department.

While the town has paved roads and sidewalks, along with planned athletic activities, one thing that is missing for the people living in and visiting Valdese is a passive park with nature trails, lake access and an adventure playground. Many of our residents drive to the Catawba Meadows Greenway (Morganton) or parks in Hickory and Lenoir to get out in nature. It would be nice for them to be able to stay in Valdese and spend their money in Valdese.

The park would offer more, convenient ways for citizens to be healthy. Studies show being in a natural setting calms a person, can lower blood pressure and increases creativity. Studies also show that exercise (just walking a little each day) improves health. A retreat in town would create a better quality of life for those of all incomes – since it does not cost to walk or use exercise stations. Fitness programs could be held at the park. Walking groups could be formed.

Valdese and Rutherford College (neighboring town) are part of a Pedestrian Plan study with help from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to improve town sidewalks and connect the two towns. This could bring more Rutherford College citizens to the park. And, it may improve the path for Valdese folks to get to the park. Current sidewalks end on Church St/Falls Rd (on the way to McGalliard Falls) and on Lovelady Rd (on the way to Lake Rhodhiss Rd).

### 2.2.2 Students

There are three schools in the town limits (Valdese Elementary, Heritage Middle and Draughn High). Students in the middle and high schools are not only from Valdese, but the neighboring towns of Rutherford College and Drexel.

The McGalliard Falls side of the park is

- 1 mile from Heritage Middle School
- 1.2 miles from Valdese Elementary School
- 3 miles from Drexel Elementary

The Lake Rhodhiss Drive side of the park is

- at Draughn High School
- 2 miles from Rutherford College Elementary

Being so close, schools can plan educational, recreational and social outings at the park. If school clubs need service project hours, there will always be something to do at the park – clean trails, pick up trash, beautify an area.

Draughn High School's cross country course is not of standard length and the running team must repeat a loop several times on the school property to reach the distance. Once Valdese Lakeside Park is completed, they can easily extend their course from the high school to the park. In addition, the school will be able to host regional cross country meets – bringing in tourist dollars and a sense of pride for the school to have such a course.

High schools in NC are forming Mountain Biking teams this year through the North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League (which is part of an experienced national league founded in 2009). Draughn High School will be part of a composite team made of up students from Draughn, Patton, Freedom and East Burke. This team will be in a 5-county conference. The league needs a mountain biking course that is fairly simple and there is not one in the 5-county area. We could build our course to their specifications and host events for the conference, and the state, to will bring in traveling families.

### 2.3 CONSERVATION

We must preserve and provide public access to the natural resources in our area. If we do not take steps to preserve this property now, we will not have the opportunity in the future. Conservation is the right thing to do.

Water quality will be protected with a passive park instead of building homes and/or industry.

An official inventory of all the wildlife living on the property has not been taken, but just walking along the property, you will see deer, wild turkey, beaver, fox and plenty of birds. A passive park will not have a big impact on their habitat like clearcutting or development would.

The property is also home to the “threatened” dwarf-flowered heartleaf. Preventing mass development on the land will protect the plant. Found in McGalliard Creek is the Carolina Foothills Crayfish. In the NC Natural Heritage Program, it is listed as significantly rare and vulnerable to extinction.

Conservation breeds conservation.

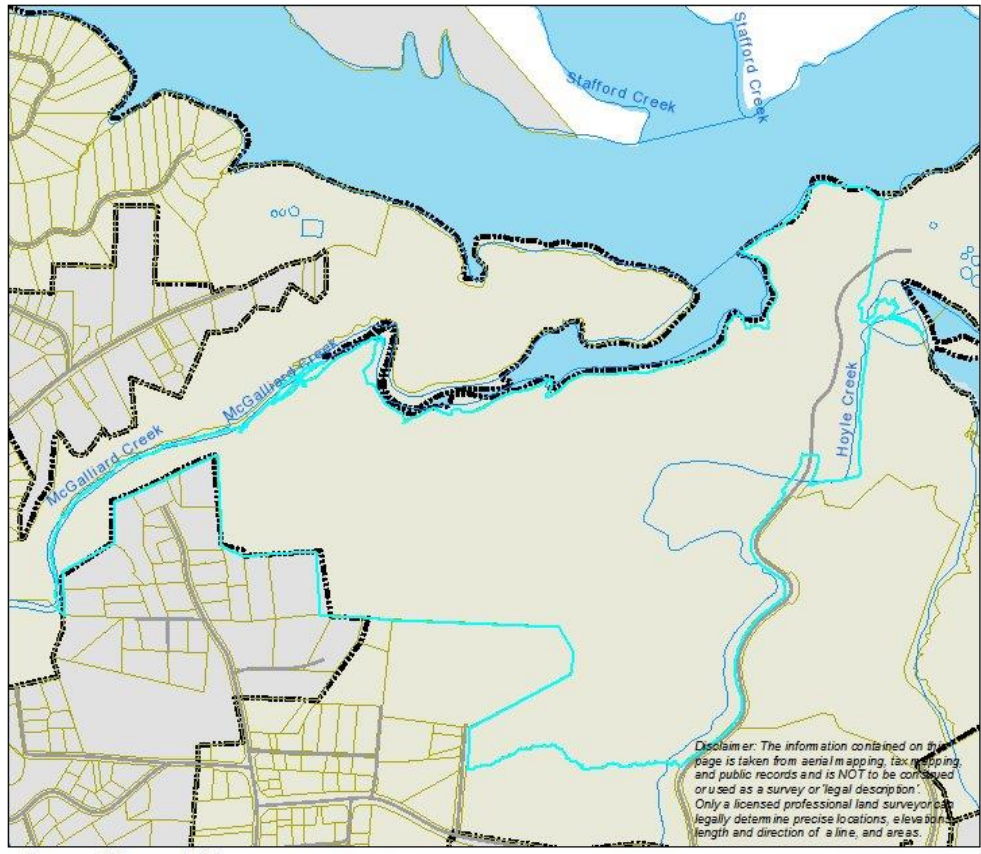
During this process, the town has decided to update the status of the McGalliard Falls property to be under a conservation easement.

Friends of the Valdese Rec members and others joined the McGalliard Creek Watershed Plan Advisory Committee in November, 2016. The committee will study why there is so much sediment in the creek and why the fish community is not stronger. With whys answered move to stream restoration. The creek flows through McGalliard Park, through the 300-acres and into the lake.



### 3 DETAILS OF THE PARCEL

The parcel has the following details in the Burke County GIS System.



0 700 1,400 Feet 1 inch = 1,072 feet 1:12,860 February 2, 2017

#### Lake Rhodhiss Property



<b>Owner:</b> CALDWELL TIMBER PARTNERS LLC	<b>Zoning Juris:</b> Valdese
1530 16TH ST	<b>Zoning:</b> R-12
SUITE 300	<b>Scenic Overlay:</b> No
DENVER, CO 80202	<b>Airport Overlay:</b> No
<b>Property Address:</b> 0 LAKE RHODHISS DR NE	<b>I-40 Overlay:</b> No
VALDESE 28690	<b>Lake Overlay:</b> No
PROPERTY_DESC	<b>Fire District:</b> VALDESE
PIN: 2744445905	<b>High School:</b> Draughn High
PIN EXT: 0000	<b>Middle School:</b> Heritage Middle
REID: 0059764	<b>Elem School:</b> Valdese Elem
<b>Acreage:</b> 296.66	<b>Township:</b> LOVELADY
<b>Property Value:</b> \$1,220,413	<b>Deed Book:</b> 002217
	<b>Deed Page:</b> 00307
	<b>Deed Date:</b> 12/28/2015 3:02:00 PM

**Voter Info**

**Precinct:** 24  
**Name:** Lovelady 4  
**NC House:** 86  
**NC Senate:** 46

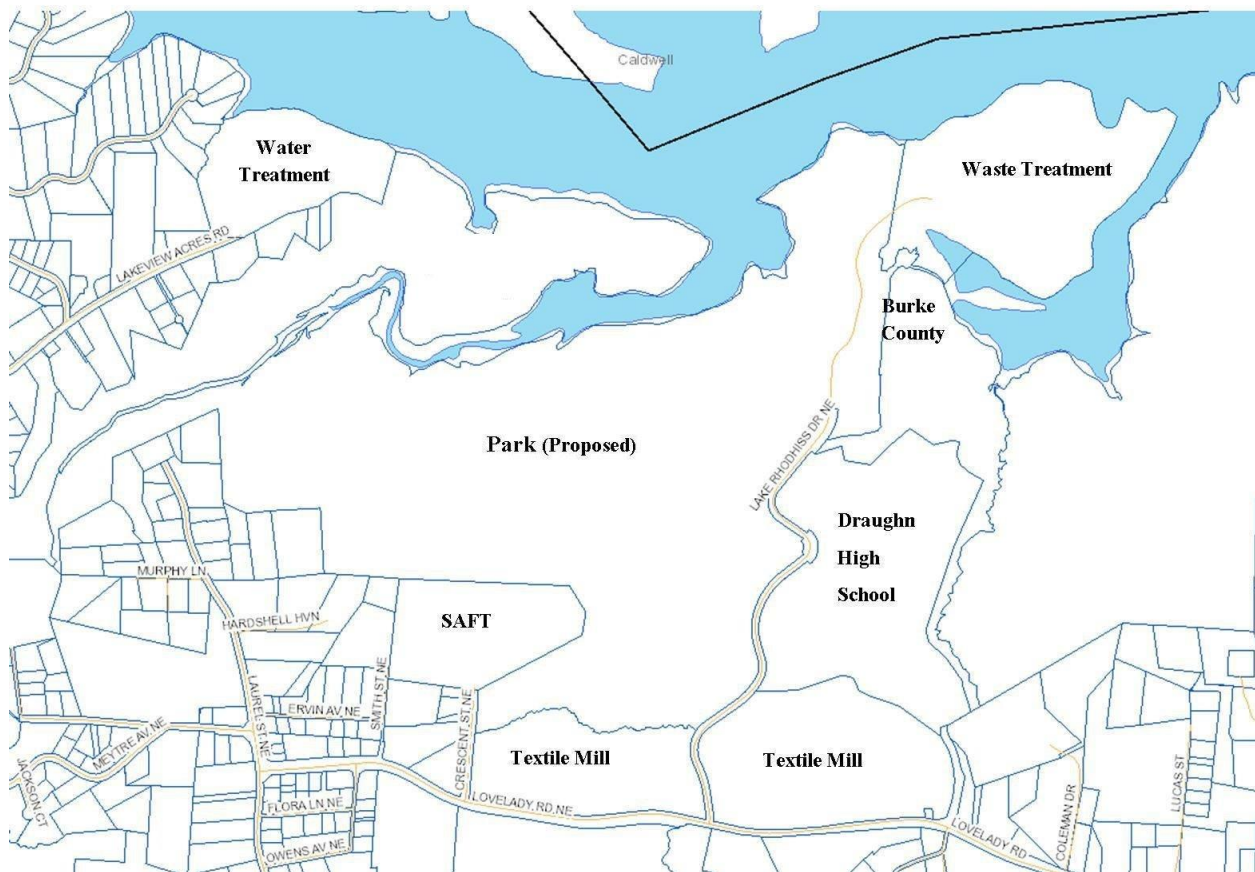
**Water Shed Info**  
**Stream Name:** Lake Rhodhiss  
**PCA Class:** CA  
**Class:** WS-IV

## Properties Surrounding the Parcel

- **SAFT** – Battery manufacturing plant
- **Valdese Weavers** – Textile manufacturing
- **Lake Rhodhiss Wastewater Treatment Facility** - services the eastern region of Burke County
- **Draughn High School** – 65 staff, approx. 800 students
- **Town Right of Way** to access Sewer Lines/manholes along river's edge and creek's edge
- **Residential lots** - approximately 10
- **Kleen Tech** – Textile cleaning for industrial clients, located across from entrance road to land

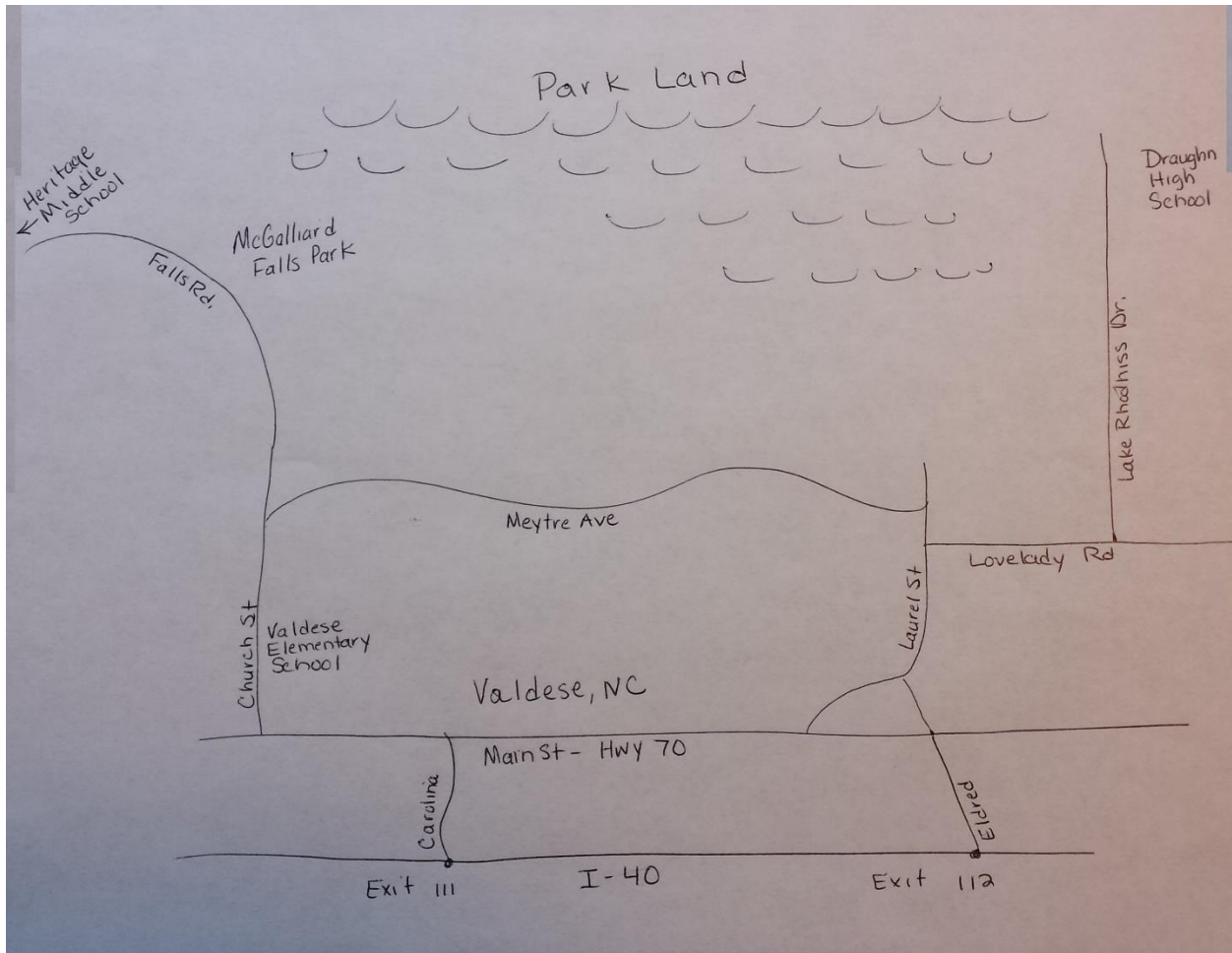
**Terrain:** The terrain is very hilly; thus, grading for a manufacturing company or sports fields would be expensive.

### Proposed Park Land and Adjacent Properties



The parcel does reach from McGalliard Falls Park to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. From citizen input gathered in the *2013 Town of Valdese Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan*, their top desire was a trail between these two locations.

## Distances to Park (all mileages approximate)



### Interstate 40 Exits

Exit 111 to Main St – 1.2 miles  
Exit 111 to McGalliard Falls – 3 miles

Exit 112 to Main St – 1 mile  
Exit 112 to Lake Rhodhiss Dr – 3.2 miles

### Schools

Valdese Elementary School to McGalliard Falls Park – 1.2 miles  
Heritage Middle School to McGalliard Falls Park – 1 mile  
Draughn High School to Lake Rhodhiss Dr Side – side by side  
Macolm Blvd/Lovelady Rd (Rutherford College) to Lake Rhodhiss Dr – 1.2 miles  
Rutherford College Elem School to Lake Rhodhiss Dr – 2 miles



## 4 PARK FEATURES

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### 4.1 TRAILS – (WALK, HIKE, RUN, FITNESS STATIONS, GEOCACHE)

A soft-surface, sustainable trail system in Valdese will be a treat for the citizens who are relegated to streets, sidewalks and hard-surface tracks – for their eyes and their joints. The main trail will be a 2-mile connector from McGalliard Falls Park to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. With additional trails, and being able to walk the mountain bike and disc golf trails, there will be over 10 miles of trails available to walk/hike/run. Keeping overall health in mind, exercise stations that blend in with the natural surroundings will supplement the trail.

The high school cross country team will be able to use the trails for training and could host regional meets. The town could host a trail race to complement its annual road footrace. It will be easy to add a fun geocache, or two, for regular searchers and as an educational tool. With such a beautiful view of the lake and the falls, the trails alone will bring in people from all areas. Hiking groups have become popular among retirees and this will give them a new destination.



**The Falls at McGalliard Falls Park**

## 4.2 MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILS



Mountain biking is a growing activity, but most parks do not have the acreage for a worthwhile trail system. It takes about 10-12 acres of land to develop one mile of mountain biking trail, so the size of this park will allow several miles of track. The single track system will focus on beginner/easy trails that even a child with a gearless bike can complete – with complex trails as loop extensions added over time.

The park would be listed on mountain bike course web sites that come up on Internet searches. There are trails in Lenoir, Newton, Lake James, South Mountain and Granite Falls. The Valdese addition will increase the number of bikers coming to the region and visiting each park. Until warranted, walkers/runners will be allowed on the mountain biking trails as is done at Lake James and Newton.

High schools in NC are forming Mountain Biking teams this year through the North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League (which is part of an experienced national league founded in 2009). Draughn High School will be part of a composite team made of up students from Draughn, Patton, Freedom and East Burke. This team will be in a 5-county conference. The league needs a mountain biking course that is fairly simple and there is not one in the 5-county area. We could build our course to their specifications and host events for the conference, and the state, to will bring in traveling families.

Pump tracks are another popular amenity for mountain bikers. It is loop course of banked turns and rollers that you ride without pedaling. A rider uses their own body and bike to “pump” through the course – like you would a swing. (Pictures: top- Zacks Fork, Lenoir, side - Jacob Fork Park, Newton)



## 4.3 DISC GOLF



Disc golf is gaining a large following of players and a tournament system. A course is inexpensive to build and inexpensive for players. A starting player just needs a frisbee. Groups travel to different courses, and the Lake Rhodhiss course would be included on web sites listing courses. There are courses in the area - Sawmills Veterans, Glenn Hilton, Catawba Meadows, Hildebran, Bethel – but again this adds to the “traveling the circuit” idea benefiting the region. An 18 hole wooded course would add about 1.2 miles of additional walking trail. The course would be designed to a level of quality and features to host Professional Disc Golf Association Tournaments. (Picture: Catawba Meadows)



#### 4.4 KAYAK AND CANOE LAUNCH



Not many towns have lake access and the park will certainly take advantage of the water.

Kayaks are not just for recreation use, plenty of fishermen use kayaks.



Just as there are hiking trail maps, there are river trail maps. Having an access area will list the park on the publicized Upper Catawba River Trail Map. This “trail” starts at Black Bear Access at Lake James and ends at Lookout Shoals Lake. Valdese Lakeside park will be between Huffman Bridge and Castle Bridge, which are 6.4 miles apart – so a nice stop. (Pictures: Lake Norman, Glen Hilton Park)



#### 4.5 PICNIC SHELTERS, GAZEBO, DOCK



Efforts will be used to make the picnic area fit with Waldensian architecture and rock work. To ensure this is a beautiful spot and worthy of rental fees, it may be several years before this area will be completed. The goal is to have several picnic locations. One large, upscale location that would be ideal for wedding receptions or corporate retreats (rental). One medium sized for birthday parties and family reunions (rental). Both will have grills, concrete flooring and roofs. Along the shore, there will be several single table sites (free). There

will also be a dock – for a better view and for fishing. As well as, a gazebo to host weddings. To continue to offer a variety of fitness options,



horseshoes and cornhole areas will be included

around the shelters. Very long term, hopefully restrooms and an adventure playground could be added. (Picture: Catawba Meadows picnic shelter, Blowing Rock gazebo, Geitner-Rotary dock)



## 4.6 LEARNING

The goal is for the park to be a learning venue. Whether, you are there by yourself for the day, part of a scout group or with a school class.

Fact placards about nature, ecology and conservation along with interactive educational stations will be placed in the park. Native animals, habitats, plants and the like will be featured. A specific example is the “threatened” dwarf-flowered heartleaf plant native to North and South Carolina. Placards will be placed in the park regarding protection of the plant. Another is the Carolina Foothills Crayfish found in McGalliard Creek - significantly rare and vulnerable to extinction



A local Eagle Scout constructed a picnic shelter beside Hoyle Creek (along Lake Rhodhiss Dr). The space can be used as a teaching site for stream ecology. Until the stream is repaired, students can also learn about bank erosion and discuss restoration techniques, as there are some erosion problems at this location.



This picture taken on the property is of a tree chewed on by a beaver. This could be part of a scavenger hunt at the park – learning while having fun and getting exercise.

The Earth and Environmental Science and Biology classes at Draughn High School can take park in several outside classroom experiences. Students can collect micro-invertebrates to use during their water quality studies as well as collecting water samples to test for water pollutants caused by human impact on ecosystems. The fresh water biomes along the park land will serve as open classrooms and labs for students to study plants, animals, and their natural habitats. Students will learn the importance of human impact and their personal roles in conservation of sustainable resources. The park will provide easy access for the public and students to observe a pair of bald eagles that have nest in the cove near the high school. Both classes focus on the importance of biodiversity and the park will offer to the science department a way to provide students with field studies which will better prepare them for future college studies.

## 4.7 PARKING AREA, ADA ACCESS

More parking will need to be added closer to the lake on the Lake Rhodhiss Road side that will include ADA access to the picnic area.

## 4.8 GENERALIZED LAYOUT OF PARK

On the following page, the hand mark drawing first created in 2015 shows where trails and the picnic shelter could be located. This includes

- Walking Specific (red) – 2-mile trail connecting McGalliard Falls to WWTP (with fitness stations) and 0.5-mile nature trail around picnic area
- Mountain Bike Trail (purple) - about 4 miles of beginner trails with more difficult out loops (can also walk)
- 18 Basket Disc Golf Course (blue dots) - about 1.2 mile (can also walk)
- Kayak Launch (green – near picnic area)
- Picnic Area (red area) with large shelter, medium shelter, playground, horseshoes, cornhole, gazebo, dock, individual picnic tables. This also includes a dock for fishing and a gazebo for weddings.
- Undisturbed wildlife area

To ensure the park will be able to serve as an event host, the goal is for features to meet requirements for various sanctioned events. For example,

- Mountain Bike course be approved for North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League High School races
- Disc Golf course be built for national tournament guidelines
- Suited for an XTERRA event - off-road triathlon - swimming, mountain biking, and trail running

**Note:** *The following is a general idea of the park layout with input from citizens – no experts, no fancy equipment or measuring tools. The plan will need be adapted to comply with any rules imposed by grants received. This park should be a planned destination that people want to return to time and again – and expert planning will be needed. This is just a starting layout to show what could be.*

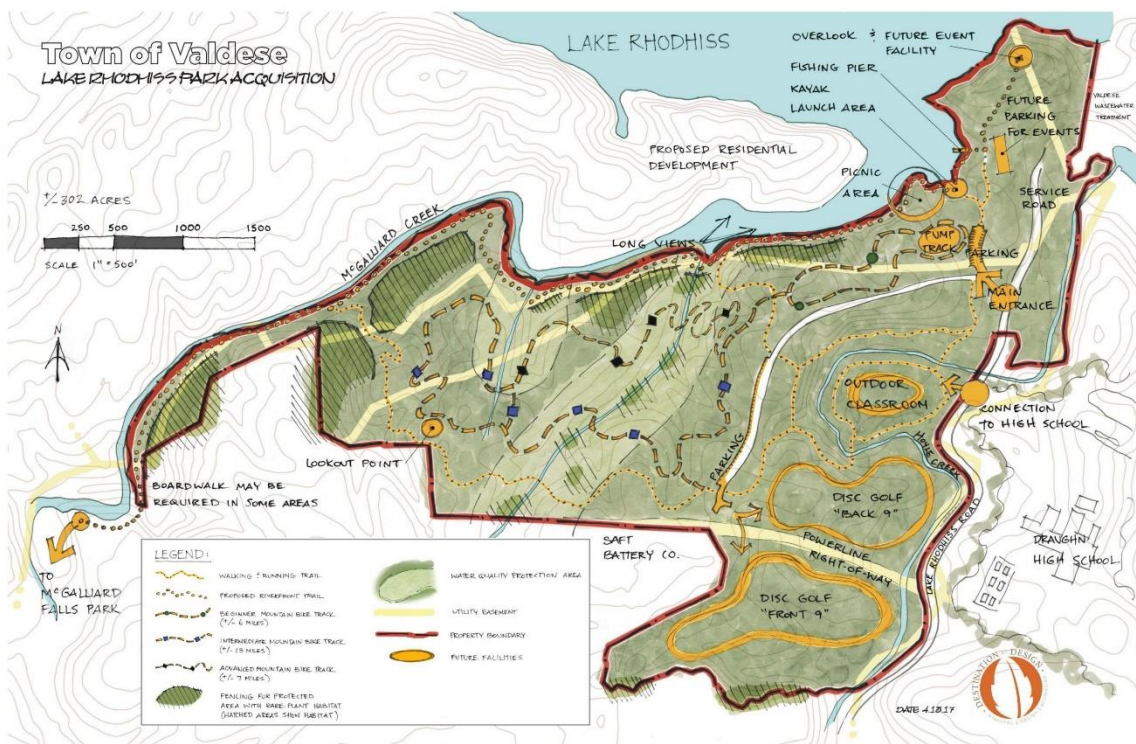




## 4.9 CONCEPTUAL PLAN CREATED FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

The diagram below was created by the planning firm Destination by Design. A formal plan was needed to submit with the grant applications the town submitted to show how possible features could be placed on the property. Designers at the firm visited the property on two different occasions and gathered tons of information about Valdese, the property and features desired to put together the layout.

This is not the final plan. Once the grants have been awarded and the town is ready to purchase the land, there will be public input sessions to verify what the community wants. Town Council approval will also be required before moving forward on development.



This **conceptual plan** was created for submission with the town's grant applications. It is just one idea of how proposed features could fit together on the property. Once the land is acquired, there will be public input and town council approval of a final plan. **This does not represent the final design.**

## 5 FUNDING FOR LAND

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The land will be purchased via grants and private donations (\$1.4M)

22%	<p><b>NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dollar-for-dollar matching grants</li> <li>○ Can be used to purchase land for a new park</li> </ul>
50%	<p><b>NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Straight grant and can be used for matching</li> <li>○ Can be used for 300-foot area from water line, area must not be developed</li> </ul>
28%	<p><b>Private donors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Rostan Family Foundation</b> - \$300,000</li> <li>○ <b>Kellex Seating</b> - \$100,000</li> </ul>

- Friends of the Valdese Rec, Inc., an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation, will work with the Town of Valdese to organize fundraising efforts in the community.
- Foothills Conservancy of NC applied for the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant on behalf of the town (February 6th, 2017). Grant recipients will be announced on September 13.
- The Town of Valdese applied for the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant (May 1, 2017). Grant recipients are announced in August.

**Other Notes:**

The Town of Valdese has been awarded a PARTF grant for the Downtown Splash Park that will be completed in the Summer of 2017. So, the Parks and Rec Department has the experience in completing this grant.

Granite Falls was awarded a grant from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund for a lakeside passive park, so the precedent is there.



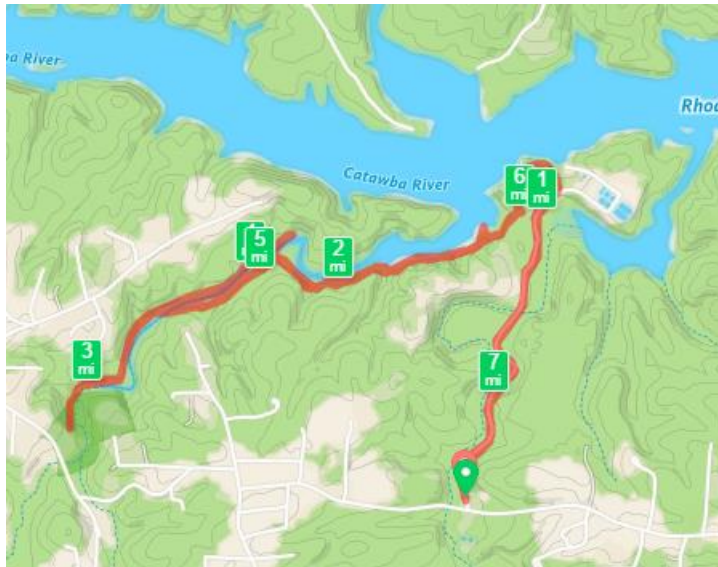
## 6 BUILDING THE PARK

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Following is how the park will be built in phases.

### 6.1 IMMEDIATELY

As soon as the land is acquired, the approximate 2-mile greenway trail from McGalliard Falls Park to the Wastewater Treatment Plant will be completed within one month. Most of the path is currently Town of Valdese Right of Way for sewer maintenance and is already walkable. There needs to be a bridge installed to cross the creek. Signage is needed at each end.



Here is an example of 7.3-mile route that is already possible. Parking at existing paved area at the corner of Lovelady Road and Lake Rhodhiss Road, run/walk 1 mile paved road, turn left onto trail at Wastewater Treatment Plant, follow along river, walk septic pipe to cross creek, arrive at McGalliard Falls picnic area. Turn around and head back to parking area.



**Trail starting at Wastewater Treatment**



**Trail arriving at McGalliard Falls Picnic area**



**McGalliard Falls Creek**



**Example of Bridge – SMSP**

The largest immediate expense will be to build a bridge across the creek.



Perhaps signs can be paid for by businesses in the community as done at this trail in Blowing Rock.

Paved parking is already available at the intersection of Lovelady Road and Lake Rhodhiss Road (left) and at McGalliard Falls Park (right). However, more parking will need to be added closer to the picnic area.





## 6.2 1-2 YEARS

These will not be final items, but something easy and inexpensive to do, that will last a few years until nicer items can be installed.

There are existing trails left by trucks from selective cutting and trails from the hunt club lease that can be used for mountain biking with minimal work. Clear the debris and put up signs.



A canoe launch will be created that is all natural – perhaps using sand and rock found in the area (Picture on left: Riverbend Park, Catawba Co). Or go one step above and use some wood. (Picture on right: Catawba Meadows)

Put 3-4 wooden picnic tables in the woods – no flooring, no shelter. Get these donated from local civic groups (Picture: Lake James State Park).



For Disc Golf, we may be able to find enough sponsors to help lower the expense of the course. This is an example of the Glen Hilton course in Hickory, where there is a sponsor (or two) for each hole.

There are also local clubs interested in helping with the design.

## 6.3 3-8 YEARS

Do everything on the wish list! More trails, picnic pavilion area, gazebo....

## 7 COST ESTIMATE TO BUILD

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Pledges are currently being accepted for park amenities.

With a pledge of \$50,000 from Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge, we are at \$96,000 pledged for amenities.

Once the grants are awarded in the fall, a firm will be hired to create a Master Park Plan. Hopefully, features can start being added once the land is owned by the Town – no later than January 31, 2018.

Pledges will be payable December 1, 2017. However, there is the option to pay over several years if need be.

In addition to donations from the community, grants (government and business) will be applied for to complete amenities. Community volunteers and area volunteer trail builder associations will be used.

### 7.1 IMMEDIATELY

Complete primary 2-mile greenway trail from McGalliard Falls Park to Wastewater Treatment Plant (Lake Rhodhiss Rd entrance). Add exercise stations and benches, as able. Upgrading the parking area at the Lake Rhodhiss entrance would make the area more welcoming.

### 7.2 1-2 YEARS

Complete mountain bike trails, kayak/canoe launch and disc golf. These are the features that will bring “followers.”

It is possible that the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission would pay for and build a fishing deck at this phase.

### 7.3 3-8 YEARS

Add everything ever dreamed!

## 8 COST ESTIMATE TO MAINTAIN

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Because this will be a passive park, there will not be excessive maintenance. Friends of the Valdese Rec, Inc. will assist the town to organize work days for cleaning and maintaining the trails.

As three large neighborhoods fill up (Waterside on Lake Rhodhiss, Lake Vista of Lake Rhodhiss and The Settings of Lake Rhodhiss), there will be more tax money brought into the town. Which will allow more money to be spent on the completion of the park and more money to maintain the new features.

As the park is completed, it will be able to generate funds with

- Picnic shelter rentals
- Events (disc golf tournament, trail runs, bike races)
- Local companies taking turns with food carts – paying rent or % of sales
- Canoe/kayak/paddle board/bike rental

The park will bring people to Valdese, they will spend money in Valdese and thus more money will be available for the park.

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The purpose of Friends of the Valdese Rec, Inc, an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation, is to support the Valdese Parks and Recreation Department with volunteer hours and fundraising for the betterment of the Department, while at the same time benefiting the town, the citizens and the environment.

FriendsoftheValdeseRec.org  
facebook.com/FriendsoftheValdeseRec

Beth Heile  
05/25/17