

# State Trails in Valdese

Presented by Beth Heile



*Valdese Lakeside Park by Zakk Heile*



*Valdese Lakeside Park Drone Shot by Zakk Heile*



*Valdese Lakeside Park by Zakk Heile*

# Agenda

- State Trail and Regional Trail Overview
- Routes Specific to Valdese
- Marketing Valdese as a Trail Town
- Planning – Positioning - Getting it Right



# 12 NC State Trails



## State Trails in Burke County (*nonprofit*)

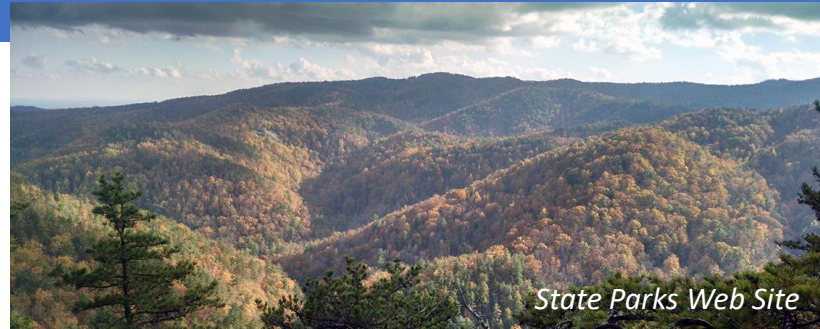
- Wilderness Gateway State Trail (*FCNC*)
- Fonta Flora State Trail (*F3ST – Beth, President*)
- Overmountain Victory State Trail (*Bryant Lindsey group*)
- Mountains to Sea State Trail (*FMST*)



# Wilderness Gateway State Trail



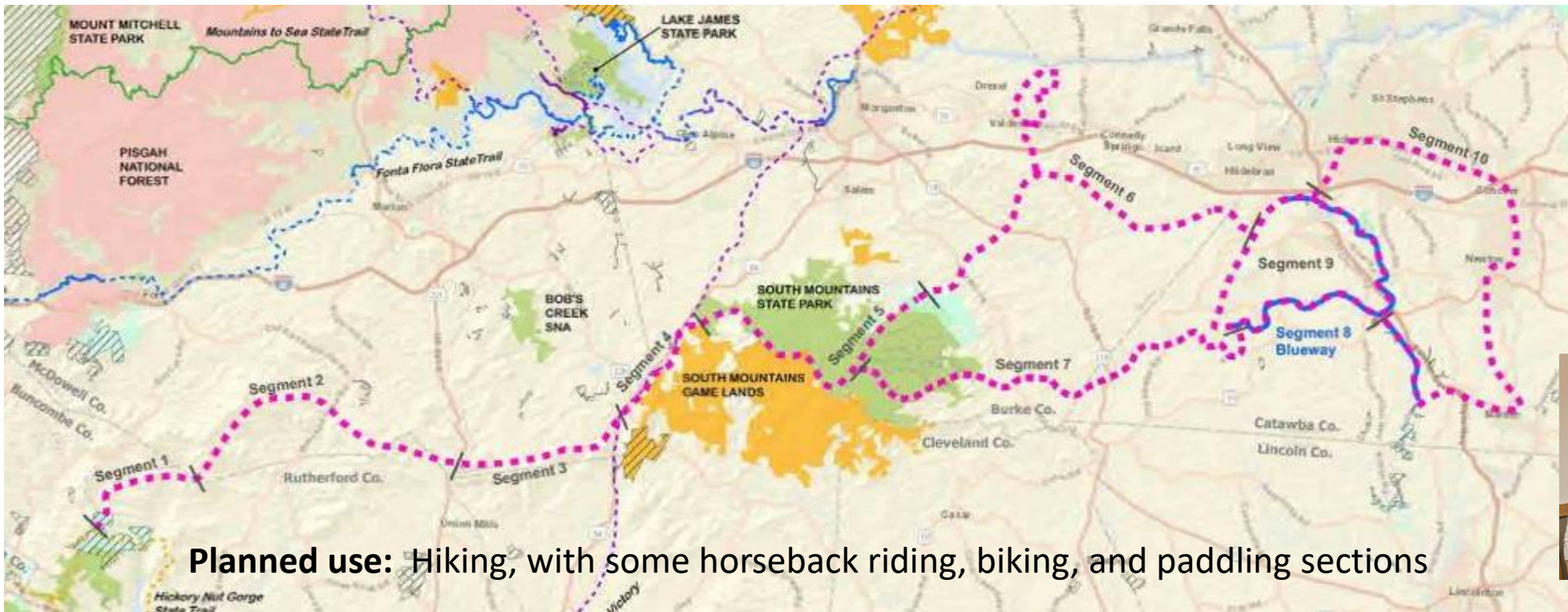
*Brings Funding*



*State Parks Web Site*



- 300 miles
- Bakers Mtn to South Mtns to Chimney Rock
- **Connection to Valdese**



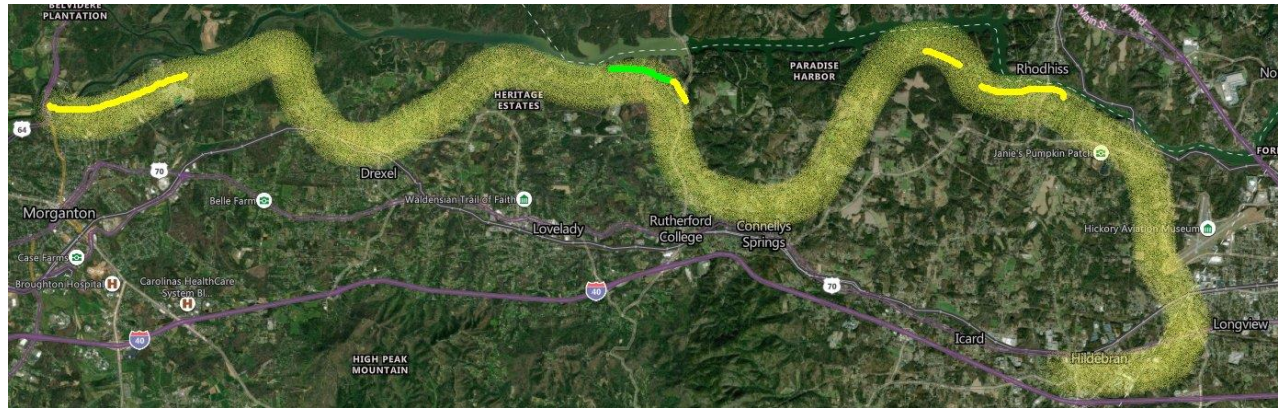
**Planned use:** Hiking, with some horseback riding, biking, and paddling sections



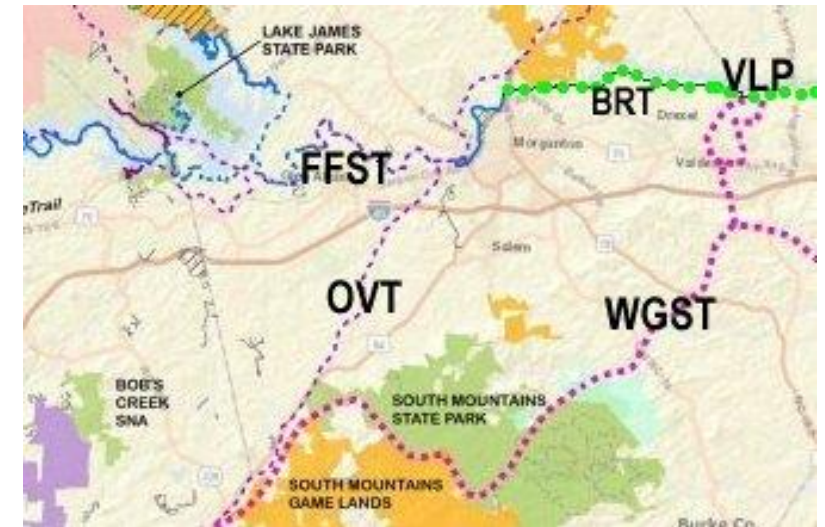




# The River Trail of Burke County



- **20-mile Regional Trail**
- Morganton to Hickory
- Loop Opportunities
- **Connection through Valdese**



- Follows the south side of the Catawba River, dipping down to the small towns of eastern Burke County.
- The hiking and biking trail will be a mix of natural surface, crushed cinder and paved.
- Picks up at end of Morganton Greenway (FFST) connects to Hickory Trail at the Airport.



\$29.5M State Trails in 2021 Budget  
\$50.5M for all Trails ask in 2023

# Trail Funding

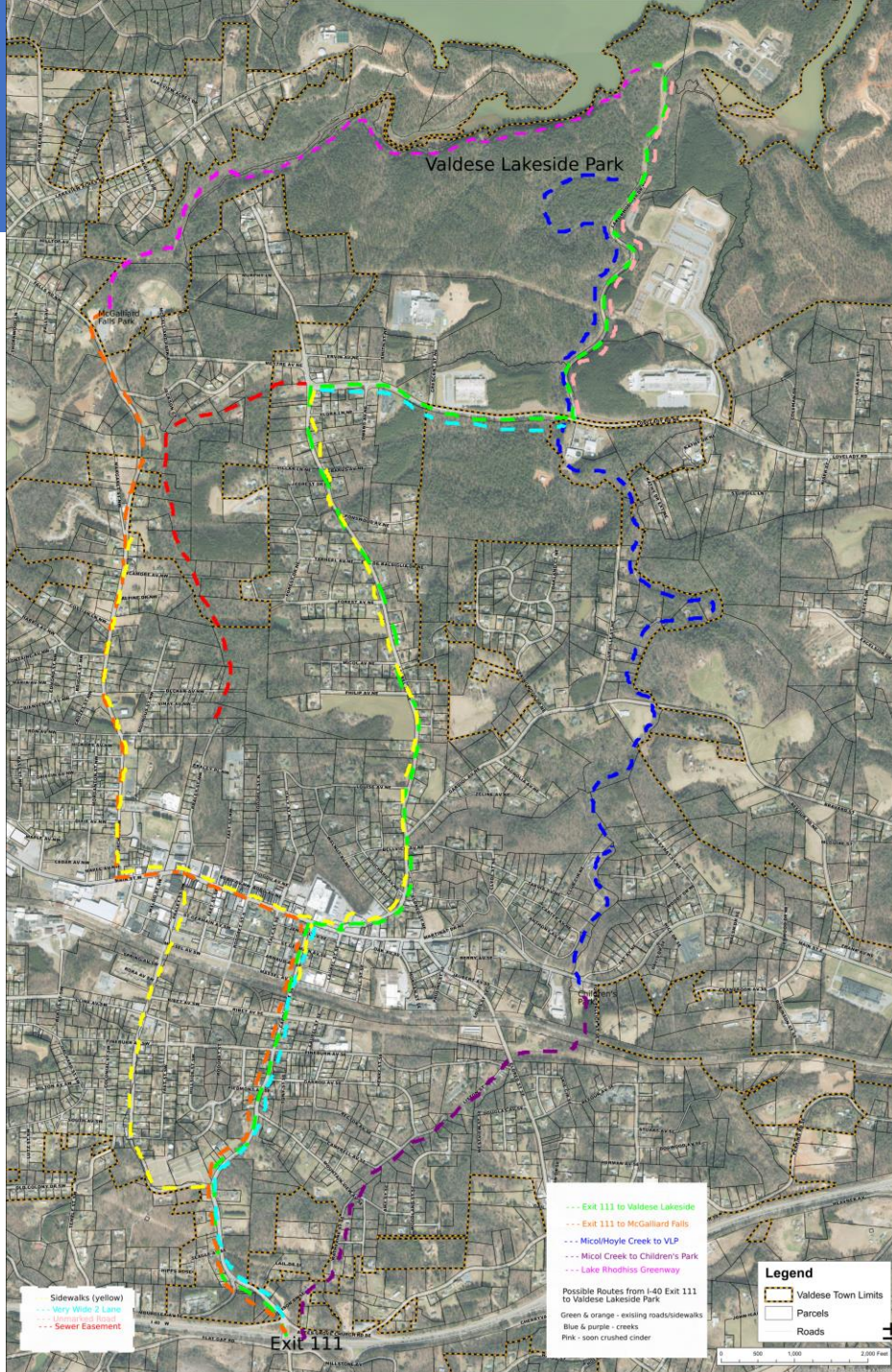


*Beth is a founding member and serves on Exec Comm*

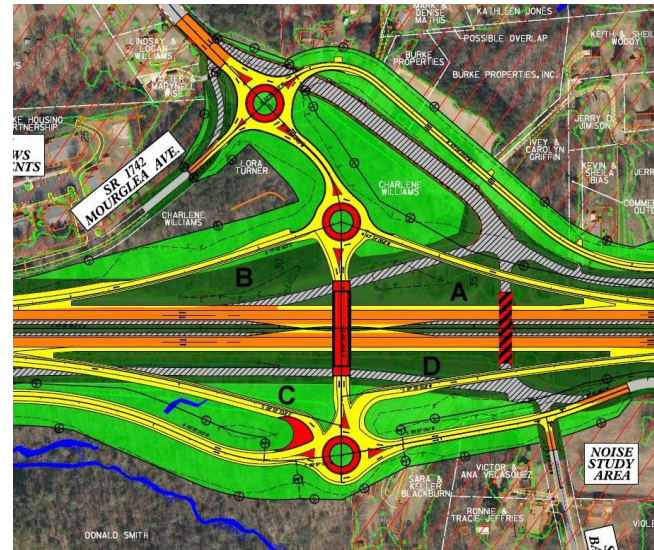




# Trail Town - Valdese



- **WGST** route is **Main Street Valdese**
- **WGST - Visitor Center** for Western NC Outdoor Rec - **Exit 111** (potential)
- **BRT - 60-80 homes** - Old Settings East Parcel with nursery (potential)
- **BRT – 240 homes** – East of DHS (potential)
- **Outfitter Needed** – rent bikes and kayaks
- **6 airbnb rentals** now in Valdese – could grow, hotel?



*Goldsboro Downtown by Smith Raynor*

## Trail Visitation in Valdese

- 800 over a weekend in April at VLP
- 100/day over 2 weeks in September to bridge



# Trail Town

Falls Access  
Falls volleyball  
Family Picnic  
Restrooms DiscGolf

Ball field Access  
2 Baseball  
Restrooms  
Access to Falls

Laurel Access  
Parking / Restrooms

Lake Access  
Trails  
Overlook  
Fishing Pier  
Kayak Launch  
Dog Park  
Restrooms  
Stage / Open Green  
Family Picnic  
mtn Bike

Gateway Access  
Restrooms  
WGST  
Bridge-Overlook  
Corporate Picnic  
Pickleball - Multi Use Court  
1/2 mile trail southside  
Play ground  
?? Soccer ?? wheel  
pump track

BRT (FFST)



Children's Park  
Baseball (1)  
Old Playground  
Restrooms  
Picnic Shelter  
maybe  
Soccer no Baseball

VLP 300  
McPT 20  
Falls 30  
Lovely 6  
11

307  
acres

## Trails and Amenities within

**Have** (but at right place?)

Hiking  
Kayak/Canoe Launch  
Picnic  
Baseball, soccer  
Dog Park  
Playground – old  
Volleyball – sand  
Lake views, waterfall, forest

## Need

Mountain Biking  
Pavilion  
Corporate Picnic  
Pickleball (have some)  
Pump Track/Bike Skills  
Disc Golf



# Need a Plan

- Searching for \$25K for Valdese Parks/Trails Plan – Beth and Rep Blackwell asked Hometown Strong, which led to CORE application
- Creating Outdoor Recreation Economies (CORE) program - NC Department of Commerce – David applied for Town of Valdese *(will need a stakeholder's group, if awarded)*
- Building Outdoor Communities (ARC) – Burke County Outdoor Task Force – Beth serves with Ed Phillips, Shane Prisby and Alison Adams *(meets monthly for 12 months)*





Valdese Lakeside Park - Pavilion Needed for

# COMMUNITY GATHERING

CLASSES ~ MEALS ~ AWARDS ~ EXERCISE ~ MEET UPS



Site



Style Pavilion

With 300 acres, there is plenty to explore - but no place to gather whether for organized programming or just spontaneous convening

The Valdese Lakeside Park property has been available for public use as a forest since 2018. In 2021 amenities were added - parking, restroom, overlook, greenway, dog park, hiking trails and a fishing pier on the way.

Seeing how the 250 people per day use the park, the obvious need is a gathering spot. There are some scattered benches and picnic tables, but not a place for a presenter, an entertainer, a wedding or a teacher to "take the stage."

Quotes are coming in at \$90,000. FVR has \$30,000 and are requesting \$30,000 from the Cannon Foundation.

## Who would use it?

- Silver Sneakers ☒
- Adjacent High School ☒
- Hiking Groups ☒
- Civic Organizations ☒
- Community Members ☒

## Valdese Stats

Pop: 4420  
Children below  
Poverty Line: 19%

[friendsofthevaldeserec.org](http://friendsofthevaldeserec.org)

# Valdese Park Updates

- Story Book Trail — (\$5K paid, waiting on shipment)
- Pavilion - \$90K (have \$30K)
- 6 miles mountain bike trails - \$150K (have \$50K)
- Pump Track - \$25K
- Steps at Grist Mill — no quote yet
- Acquiring 5 acres north of Children's Park

*Flyer created for donation ask*



# Valdese – Making of a Trail Town



## **We Have**

State Trail and Regional Trail

Proven Track Record – VLP, Bridge

Location – Our town, our house has

**Front Porch – River**

**Back Deck – Mountains**

Friendly Town with History

Restaurants and Brewery

## **We Need**

A Plan, a strategy

More businesses, an outfitter

Support of Council, Town Staff, Local Businesses, Residents

Trail Branding on Main Street for WGST, Year of the Trail focus

Branding at local parks/trailheads for Town of Valdese

## **We will Gain**

Quality of Life for residents

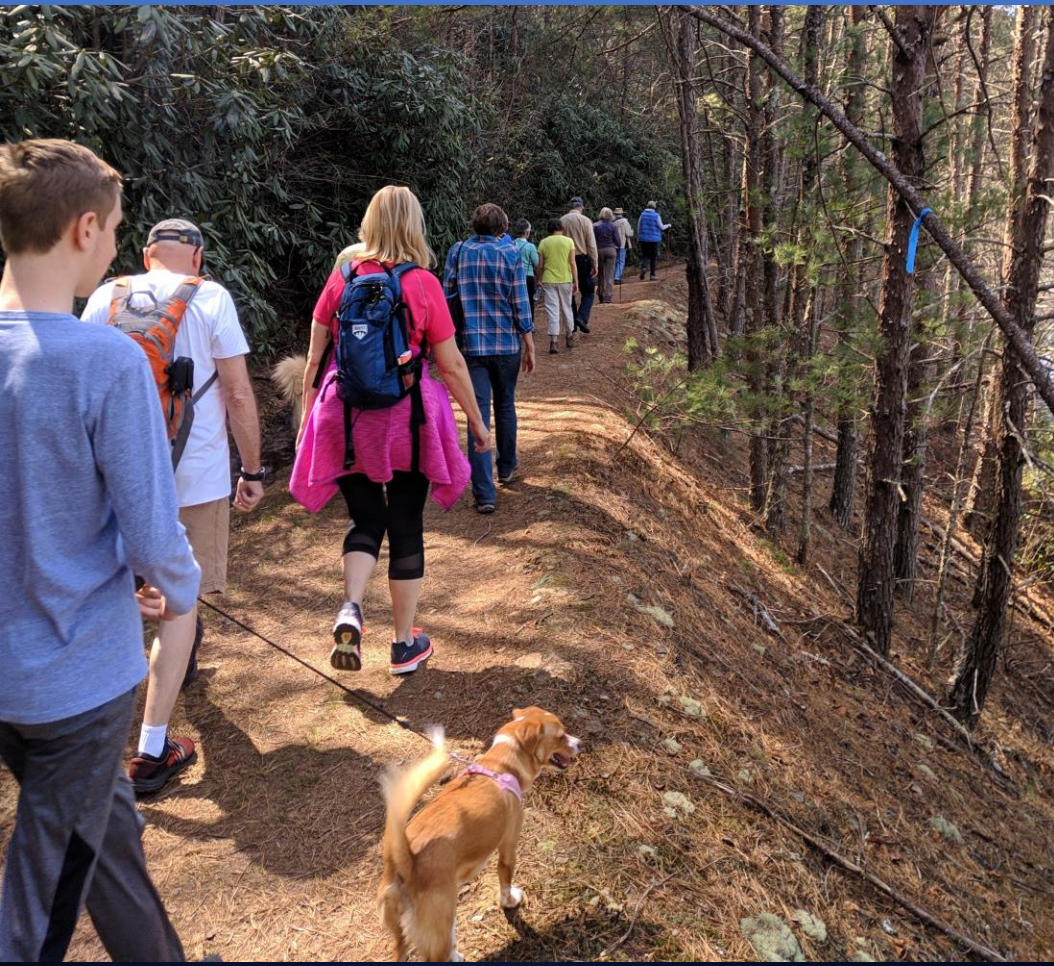
More Housing, More Businesses

Positive Economic Impact for all businesses

Jobs



# What can you do to make Valdese a Trail Town?



## **Spread the word –**

*Say - Have you heard of Elkin? Damascus?*

Valdese is going to be a Trail Town!

## **Look for Opportunities -**

Trail Easements, Trail Parcels, Businesses, Housing

## **Participate in Studies/Surveys -**

CORE, BOC, Park Plan





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