

CULTURAL CONTEXT

Circulation/Accessing the Park

Figure 4 illustrates circulation patterns in and around the park. The current park entrance on its east side is located approximately 20.5 miles to the south of Interstate 40, Exit 105. This mileage is an estimate based on travel along the primary route to the park via NC Highway 18 and several secondary roads leading to South Mountain Park Avenue.

The west side of the park, near the Clear Creek Reservoir, can be accessed from Interstate 40 from the north via US Highway 64. The entrance to the parking area for the Clear Creek section is approximately 6.7 miles from Interstate 40, Exit 103. Currently access to the Clear Creek parking area from Highway 64 takes a circuitous route along Jenkins Road, Clark Loop, and Branstrom Orchard Street.











Gravel drive access to Clear Creek section off of Branstrom Orchard Street

Scenic and Historic Road Systems

Two North Carolina scenic and historic road systems pass near the park boundaries. Highway 226 to the southwest of the park is designated a North Carolina Scenic Byway between Metcalf in Rutherford County and Marion in McDowell County.

Highway 64, to the northeast of the park, is part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, a commemorative motor route that covers approximately 220 miles from Abingdon, Virginia to Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina.

Map Legend

-  National Highway / Interstate
-  State Highway
-  State / County Roads providing access to park or with direct adjacency to park
-  South Mountains State Park
-  South Mountains Game Lands
-  County Boundary
-  Other Roads
-  Interstate Exchanges

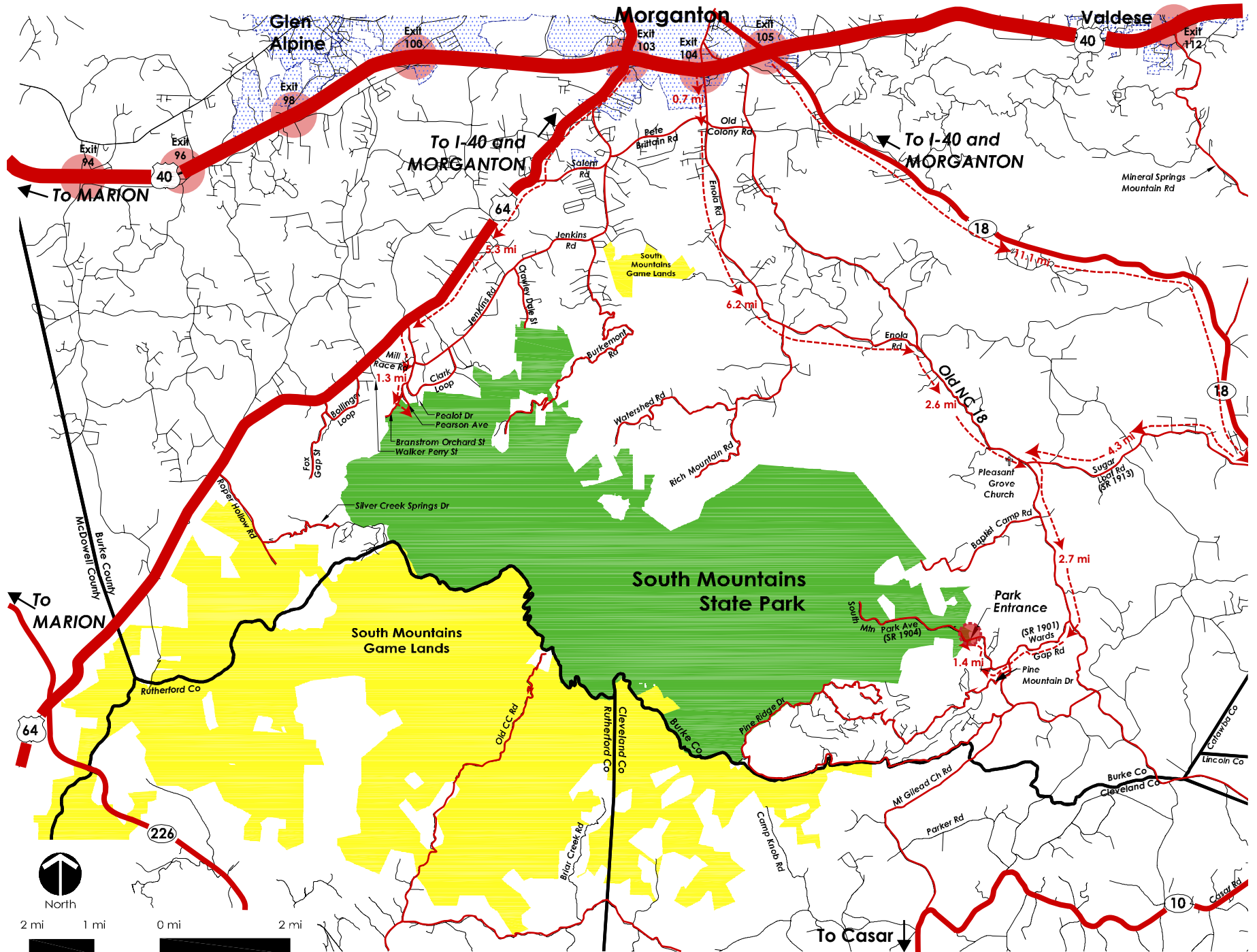


Figure 4: Circulation

Scale : 1" = 2 miles

Regional Planning

The *Greater Hickory Recreation/Tourism Plan* is a regional plan for the Greater Hickory Metro Area that includes Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba counties. This plan’s stated purpose is “to achieve the goal to develop a strategy, built upon community consensus, for repositioning the region’s economy by leveraging the natural, cultural, and recreational resources for sustainable economic growth and prosperity.” (*Western Piedmont Council of Governments and Unifour Recreation and Open Space Task Force, 2006*) South Mountains State Park is listed in this document as one of a number of “Public Recreation Key Lands and Facilities” in the area.

Regional Land Use

Properties within Burke County south of the Interstate 40 corridor, including South Mountains State Park, are predominantly zoned R-MU (Rural Mixed Use). According to the Burke County Zoning Ordinance (*Burke County Planning and Development, 2006*): “The rural mixed-use district allows a broad range of residential and commercial land uses with few restrictions.” Figure 5 illustrates the zoning of the park and its nearby surroundings in Burke County as well as its proximity to the adjacent South Mountains Game Lands.



Residential use along Jenkins Road near entry to the Clear Creek section of the park



View of the South Mountains from Jenkins Road

Aerial photography (2005) and visual surveillance of the area in the vicinity of the park confirm primarily single-family residential and agricultural land uses, with limited commercial/industrial land use. Much of the land to the immediate south of the park in both Cleveland and Rutherford counties is owned and maintained by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission as the South Mountains Game Lands (19,781 acres).

Land within Cleveland County in proximity to the park is zoned ‘Residential’. According to the Cleveland County Code of Ordinances regarding R-Residential zoning: “The purpose of this district is to accommodate low-density single-family detached dwellings, modular homes, manufactured homes at a maximum density of two (2) dwelling units per acre. Multi-family housing is also permitted in this district, but may be exempt from the density requirements depending on location.”

Rutherford County in proximity to the park was not zoned at the time of creation of this document.

Map Legend

Burke County Zoning	
	South Mountains State Park
	South Mountains Game Lands
	R-1 Residential Low Density
	R-2 Residential Medium Density
	R-3 Residential
	R-MU Rural Mixed Use
	G-B General Business
	O-I Office and Institutional

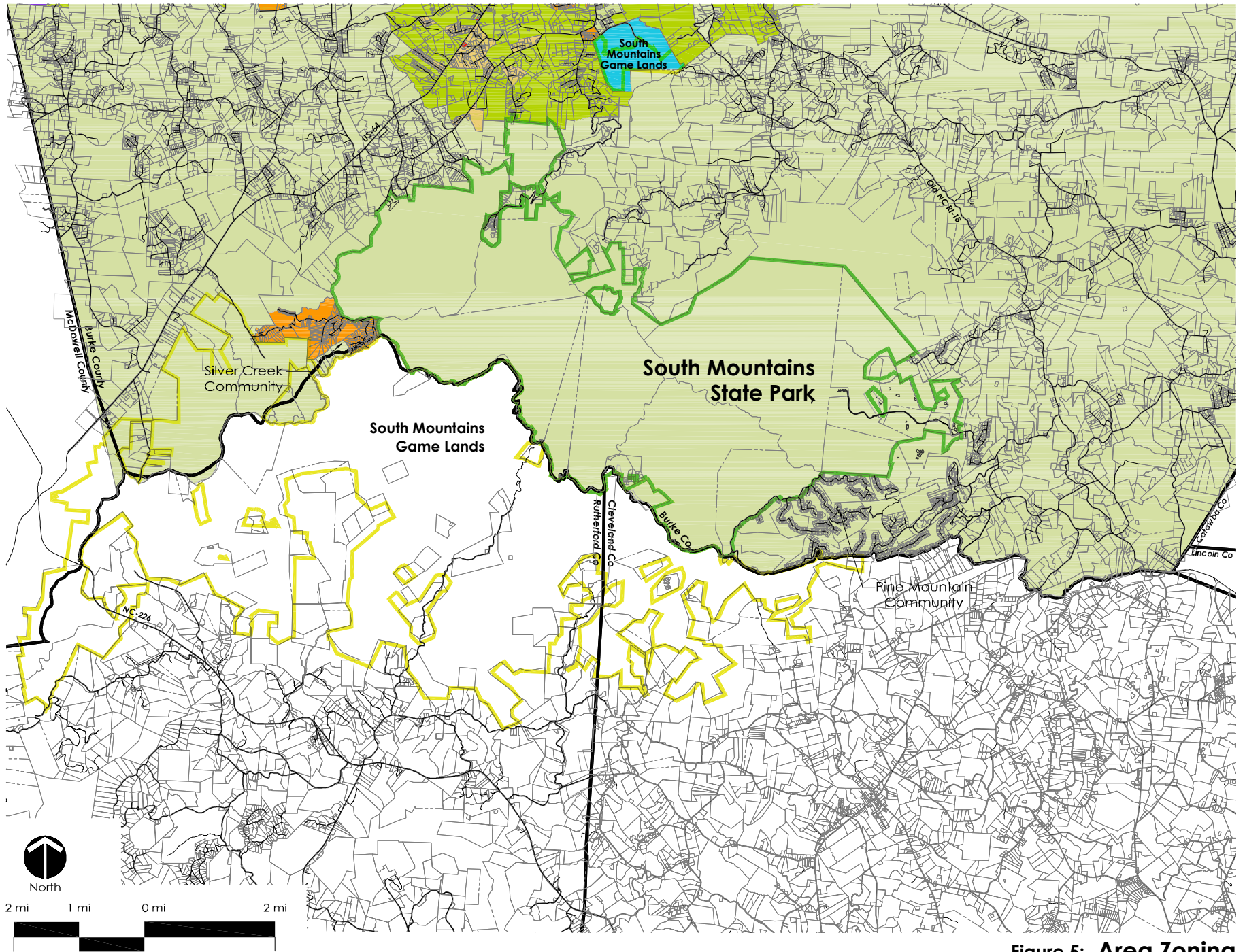


Figure 5: Area Zoning