

# Parks and Recreation Authority Meeting

Carolina Beach State Park - Auditorium  
 1010 State Park Road, Carolina Beach, NC 28428  
 June 1, 2023



Authority meeting				
June 1	Agenda Item	Action	Presenter	Support
9:00 am	Morning coffee with staff			
9:15 am	Welcome from Carolina Beach State Park		State Park Staff	
9:30 am	Call to open		Mavis Gragg	Agenda
9:30 am	Members present/absent and recognition of guests	Information	Mavis Gragg	
9:35 am	Ethics statement / recusals	Information	Mavis Gragg	Ethics Statement
9:40 am	Minutes review March 28, 2023	Vote	Mavis Gragg	Draft minutes
Local Parks Grant Program				
9:45 am	Local Grants Update	Information	Vonda Martin	Presentation
10:15am Short Break				
10:30am	Grant Selection Process	Discussion	Vonda Martin	Presentation
Lunch Break 12-1pm				
State Parks System Business				
1pm	Anticipated Funding Available for FY23-24	Information	Brian Strong	
1:05pm	State Parks Requests	Vote	Brian Strong	Presentation
Other Business				
2pm	Departmental Update	Information	Jeff Michael	
2:30pm	Division Update	Information	Brian Strong	
3pm	Park Updates	Information	Brian Strong / Mavis Gragg	
4pm	Closing Remarks		Mavis Gragg	
4:15pm	Adjourn		Mavis Gragg	
Upcoming meetings				
August 11 <sup>th</sup> Nature Research Center Raleigh, NC		November 3 <sup>rd</sup> TBD Grandfather Mountain, NC		

# Parks and Recreation Authority Meeting

Teams Virtual Meeting

March 28, 2023 – DRAFT MINUTES

## Draft Minutes

### Call to open

Chairperson Mavis Gragg called the meeting to order and expressed gratitude for the Authority members and DNCR staff for organizing the meeting.

### Roll Call for Attendance

Roll call for the Parks and Recreation Authority (PRA):

Ms. Mavis Gragg, present

Mr. Doug Auer, present

Ms. Amber Brown, present

Mr. Chad Brown, present

Ms. Beth Heile, present

Mr. Lewis Ledford, not present

Ms. Margaret Newbold, not present

Mr. Barnes Sutton, present

Ms. Cynthia Tart, not present

Chairperson Gragg asked how many members were required for a quorum. Jonathan Avery confirmed five (5) are required.

### Ethics Statement

Chairperson Gragg then read the Ethics Statement:

*In accordance with The State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved. We ask members who recuse themselves do not participate in the discussion or voting of said matter.*

### Recusals

No Authority Members have any known conflicts of interest.

### Minutes Review

Chairperson Gragg asked for the board members to review and approve two sets of meeting minutes, January 9, 2023, and March 3, 2023.

*A motion to approve the minutes was made by Chad Brown. The motion was seconded by Beth Heile.*

A roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Doug Auer, aye

Ms. Amber Brown, aye

Mr. Chad Brown, aye

Ms. Beth Heile, aye

Mr. Barnes Sutton, aye

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Ms. Mavis Gragg, aye

The motion passed.

## AFP Remaining Funds Options

The purpose of this meeting is to address the AFP tied projects. The tied projects were tabled at the previous meeting to allow staff time to get recommendations on how the remaining funds can be allocated.

Vonda Martin presented options below based on feedback from DNCR Finance and Legal. The options and projects were read aloud for those participating in the meeting via audio only.

<b>Options for Remaining AFP Funds</b>
Option 1: Offer to Surry County, the 4th project tied in the votes. Surry County requested \$500,000. Their total project cost is \$600,000, with a \$100,000 local match. Surry County has already verbally not accepted this offer.
Option 2: Add funding to some of the projects already awarded AFP. Divide the remaining \$96,875 between the 8 projects who overmatched their grant requests, giving each of these projects an additional \$12,109 in the grant award to invest in their project or to reduce their local overmatched funds by this amount.
Option 3: Hold the funds until PARTF funding and award to PARTF applicant(s) going above the inclusion minimums. This would be for future PARTF projects that go above access and inclusion minimum requirements and thus would be eligible for the AFP funding. The matching grants can be used to build special facilities or adapt existing facilities that meet the unique needs of children and/or veterans living with physical and developmental disabilities.

# Parks and Recreation Authority Meeting

Teams Virtual Meeting

March 28, 2023 – DRAFT MINUTES

<b>Projects Related to Option #2</b>									
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Project name</b>	<b>Funded/Not Funded</b>	<b>Funds Awarded</b>	<b>Matching Amount</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Potential AFP Award</b>	<b>Reduced Local Match</b>	<b>Distribution of Remaining AFP Funds</b>
Town of Mills River	Henderson	Mills River Universal Play Space	Funded	\$251,288	\$85,644	\$336,932	\$ 263,397	\$73,535	\$12,109
Alamance County	Alamance	Cedarock Park Playground	Funded	\$450,000	\$110,000	\$560,000	\$462,109	\$97,891	\$12,109
Watauga County	Watauga	Howard Knob Park - Phase 1	Funded	\$350,000	\$1,083,000	\$1,433,000	\$362,109	\$1,070,891	\$12,109
Town of Huntersville	Mecklenburg	Abernathy Park	Funded	\$212,000	\$200,000	\$412,000	\$224,109	\$187,891	\$12,109
Town of Garner	Wake	GRC Outdoor Accessible Play	Funded	\$ 323,520	\$80,880	\$404,400	\$335,629	\$68,771	\$12,109
City of Wilmington	New Hanover	Maides Park Inclusive Playground	Funded	\$470,044	\$175,000	\$645,044	\$482,153	\$ 162,891	\$12,109
Lee County	Lee	OT Sloan Accessibility Project	Funded	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$412,109	\$87,891	\$12,109
City of Wilson	Wilson	All Children's Splash Pad	Funded	\$400,000	\$300,000	\$700,000	\$412,109	\$287,891	\$12,109
									<b><u>\$ 96,872</u></b>

Chairperson Gragg expressed appreciation to staff for looking into this, that it is important that the Board is well informed and acknowledged staff for taking great care in navigating this.

*A motion to award \$12,109 to the eight projects listed above was made by Beth Heile. The motion was seconded by Chad Brown.*

A roll call vote was taken:

- Mr. Doug Auer, aye
- Ms. Amber Brown, aye
- Mr. Chad Brown, aye
- Ms. Beth Heile, aye
- Mr. Barnes Sutton, aye
- Ms. Mavis Gragg, aye

*The motion passed.*

# Parks and Recreation Authority Meeting

Teams Virtual Meeting

March 28, 2023 – DRAFT MINUTES

## 2023 PARTF Meetings

For the June meeting, staff requested a change of schedule – arrive Wednesday (May 31), meet on Thursday (June 1), and depart on Friday (June 2). Everyone agreed to the schedule change. Staff will contact board members who were not present to confirm their availability.

The August meeting will be held in Raleigh, NC, on August 11. The November meeting will be held at Grandfather Mountain on November 3.

## Final Remarks and Adjourn

*A motion to adjourn was made by Chad Brown. The motion was seconded by Doug Auer.*

A roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Doug Auer, aye

Ms. Amber Brown, aye

Mr. Chad Brown, aye

Ms. Beth Heile, aye

Mr. Barnes Sutton, aye

Ms. Mavis Gragg, aye

DRAFT

**Subject:** State Parks System Land Acquisition Projects for FY 2023-2024

**Presenter:** Mr. Brian Strong – Deputy Director for Planning and Natural Resources

**Attachment:** Project list and write-ups.

**Background:** Mr. Strong will present the land acquisition projects proposed for approval. Mr. Strong will request \$9,899,907 be allocated for acquisition projects at Bear Paw State Natural Area, Gorges State Park, Haw River State Park, Lake Norman State Park, Lumber River State Park, Mayo River State Park, Mount Mitchell State Park and New River State Park.

**Conclusions and Recommended Actions:** The Division will ask Authority members to approve land acquisition projects at Bear Paw State Natural Area, Gorges State Park, Haw River State Park, Lake Norman State Park, Lumber River State Park, Mayo River State Park, Mount Mitchell State Park and New River State Park.

**North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation  
State Parks System Land Acquisition Projects  
For Fiscal Year 2023-24**

Unit	Acres	PARTF Request	Match	Total	Comments
Bear Paw SNA	403	\$850,000	\$2,126,667	\$2,976,667	Acquisition of the Peak property adjacent to Bear Paw and Grandfather Mountain Watauga/Avery counties
Gorges SP	15	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000	Water Quality protection
Haw River SP	240	\$1,935,907	\$1,935,907	\$3,871,814	3 tracts to protect water quality in a county with significant development pressures
Lake Norman SP	30	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$1,700,000	Mature Hardwood Forest and Tributary to Lake Norman
Lumber River SP	3,000	\$2,850,000	\$2,850,000	\$5,700,000	Extensive hardwood Forest High Heritage and river access
Mayo River SP	336	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	Critical tracts on east side of Mayo River
Mount Mitchell SP	215	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	Acquisition of the "J" properties
New River SP	62	\$264,000	\$264,000	\$528,000	Acquisition of Nana Falls Tract
	4,301	\$9,899,907	\$11,176,574	\$21,076,081	

## **BEAR PAW STATE NATURAL AREA**

Project: Land Acquisition of the Peak Property

Location: Avery and Watauga Counties

Funds Requested: \$850,000

Acres: 403

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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This property lies in between Grandfather Mountain State Park and Bear Paw State Natural across Highway 105. Property is currently owned by the Blue Ridge Conservancy. The peak will be a valuable addition to Bear Paw State Natural Area. The peak is a Significant Natural Heritage Area that can provide a much-needed hiking trail off the popular Highway 105 corridor. The Blue Ridge Conservancy is donating \$1,276,667 of the appraised value.

### **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

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\$1,276,667 Donated Value

\$ 850,000 NC Land and Water Fund Application

**\$850,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$2,976,667 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

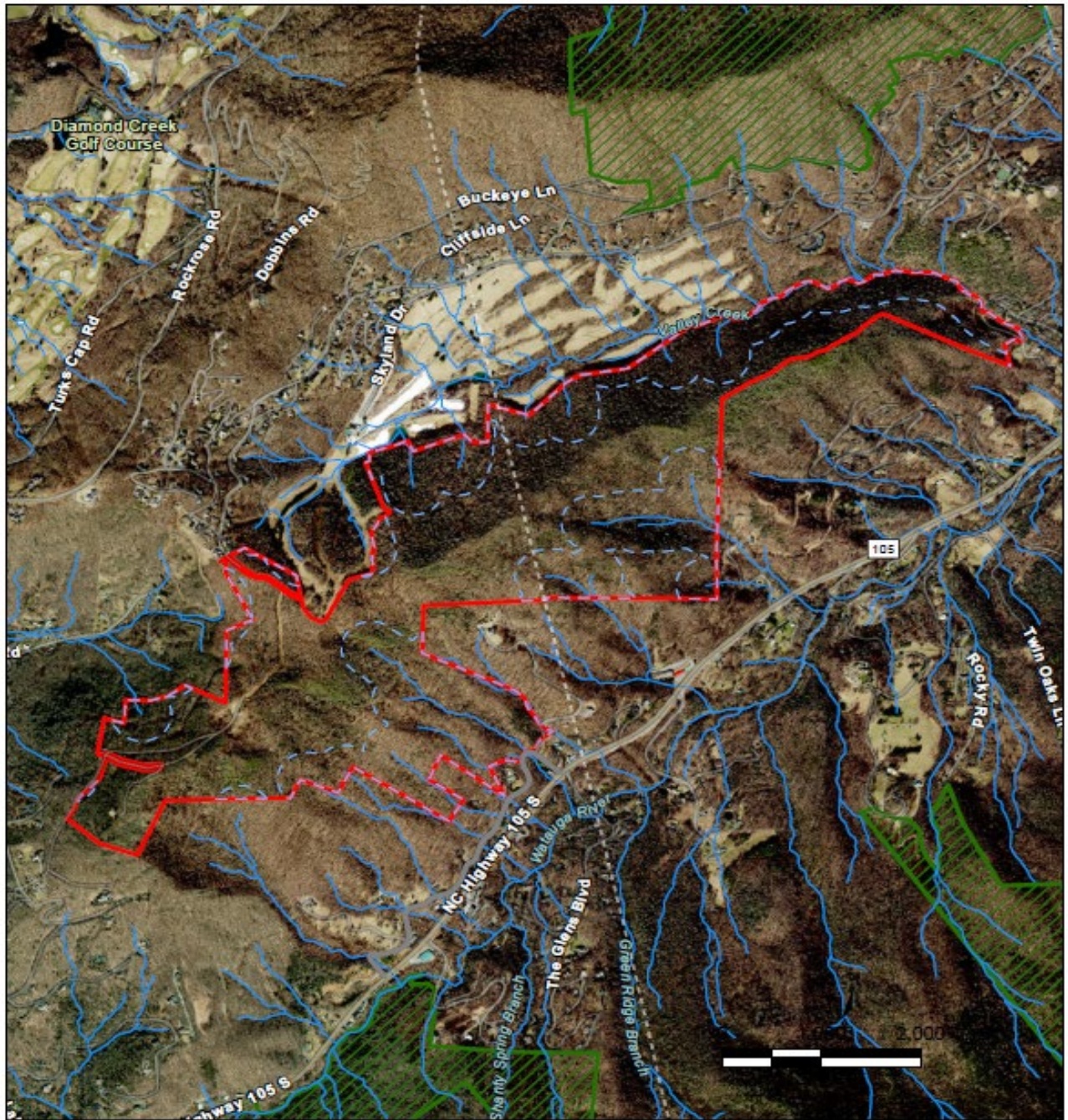
The properties are under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

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The annual operating budget is \$194,095 and the nonrecurring funding is \$250,700. This would include a Maintenance Mechanic I and a Park Ranger I position.





Grandfather Mountain  
State Park

February 2023

- Project
- Protected
- Stream
- State Park

## **GORGES STATE PARK**

Project: Batsel Tract

Location: Transylvania County

Funds Requested: \$150,000

Acres: 15

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Acquisition has been identified as future need and contains exceptional natural heritage rating. Acquisition of the property will protect more of this high-quality natural area within a fast growing second home market. In addition, this project will protect the watershed of Lake Jocassee. The property will also allow park staff to access park property for emergencies in a remote part of the park.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$150,000 NC Land and Water Fund Application

**\$150,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

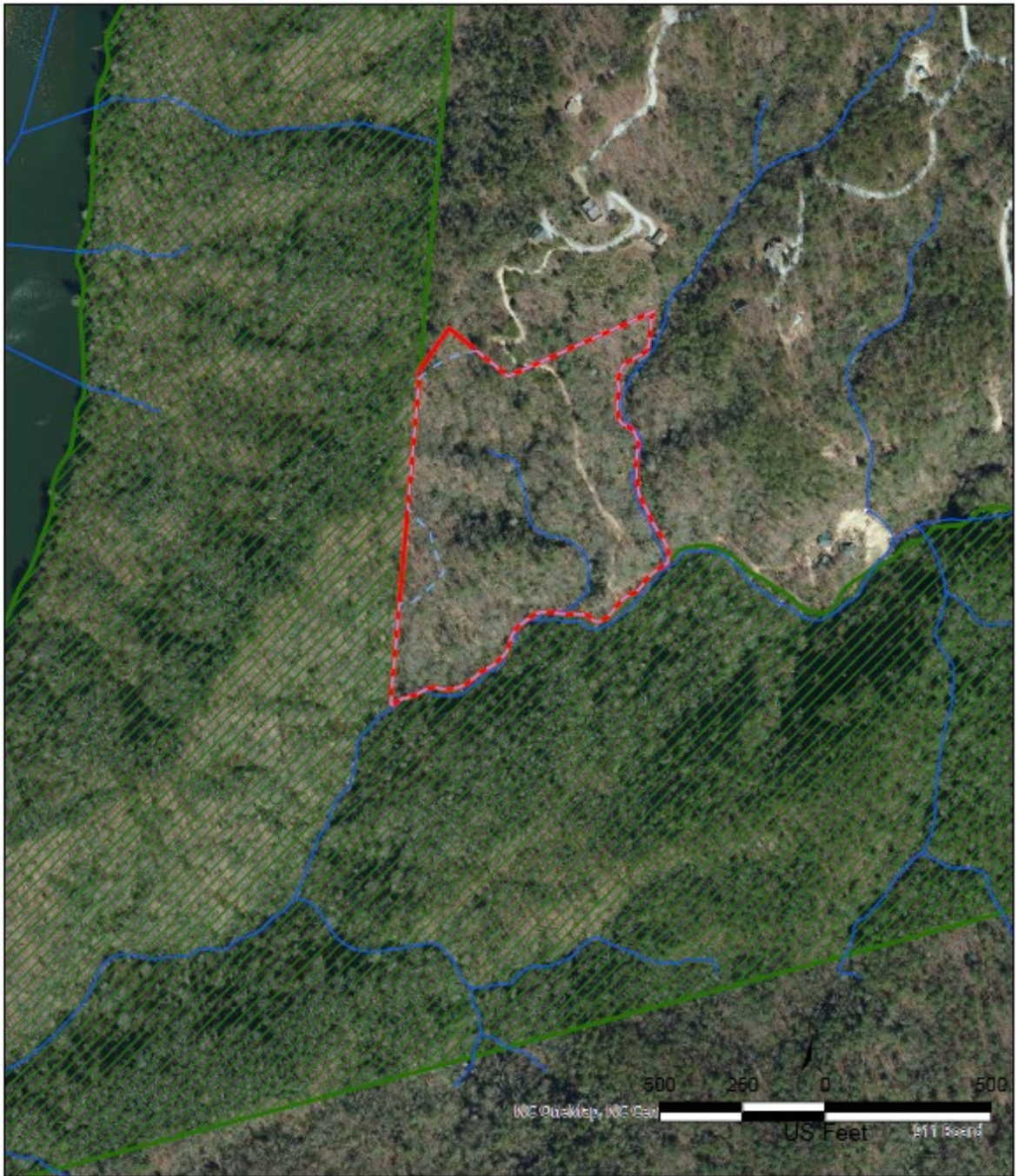
\$300,000 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

This tract is under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.



Gorges  
State Park

January 2023

-  Project
-  Protected Area
-  State Park
-  Stream

## **HAW RIVER STATE PARK**

Projects: Kotis, Waynick & Moore tracts

Location: Guilford and Rockingham Counties

Funds Requested: \$1,935,907

Acres: 78,82 and 80 - 240 total

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Although at the end of the acquisition plan, these parcels have been identified as future need for water quality protection. Roughly half of the parcel has an exceptional natural heritage rating.

Acquisition of the property will protect more of this high-quality natural area within a fast growing second home market. Acquisition will provide access for hiking and wildlife viewing.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$1,935,907 NC Land and Water Fund application

**\$1,935,907 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

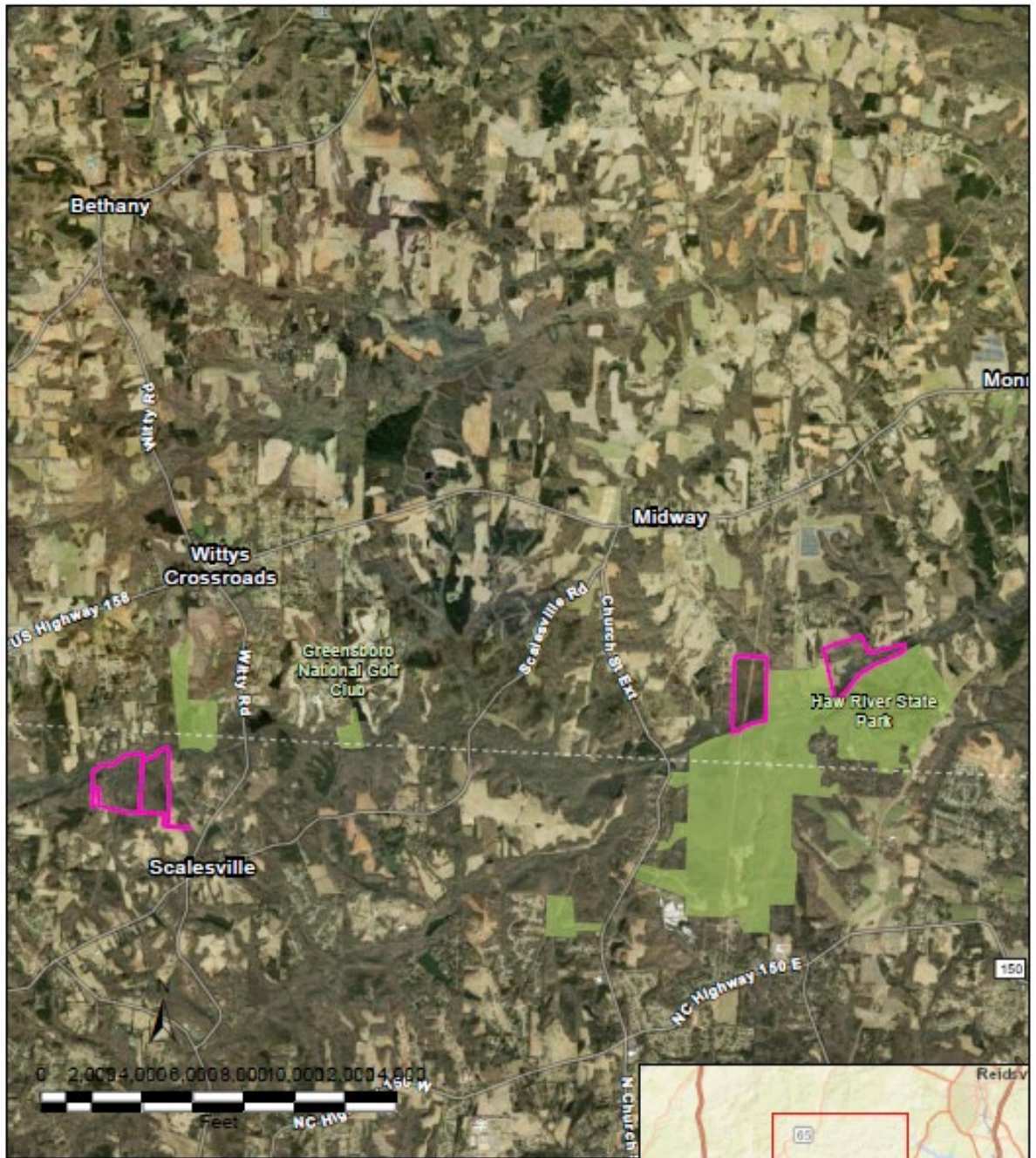
\$3,871,814 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

These tracts are under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.



Haw River  
State Park

- State Parks Unit
- Subject

May 2023



## **LAKE NORMAN STATE PARK**

Project: Scheld Tract

Location: Iredell County

Funds Requested: \$850,000

Acres: 30

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project has a mature hardwood forest as well as extensive open meadow that is rare in the park. These areas will provide extensive recreational resources from the continuation of existing biking and hiking trails to stargazing and early successional environmental opportunities in the open field at Lake Norman State Park. This is a rare opportunity to add to the park in an area of extensive residential growth. This project also protects the water quality of Lake Norman.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$850,000 NC Land and Water Fund application

**\$850,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

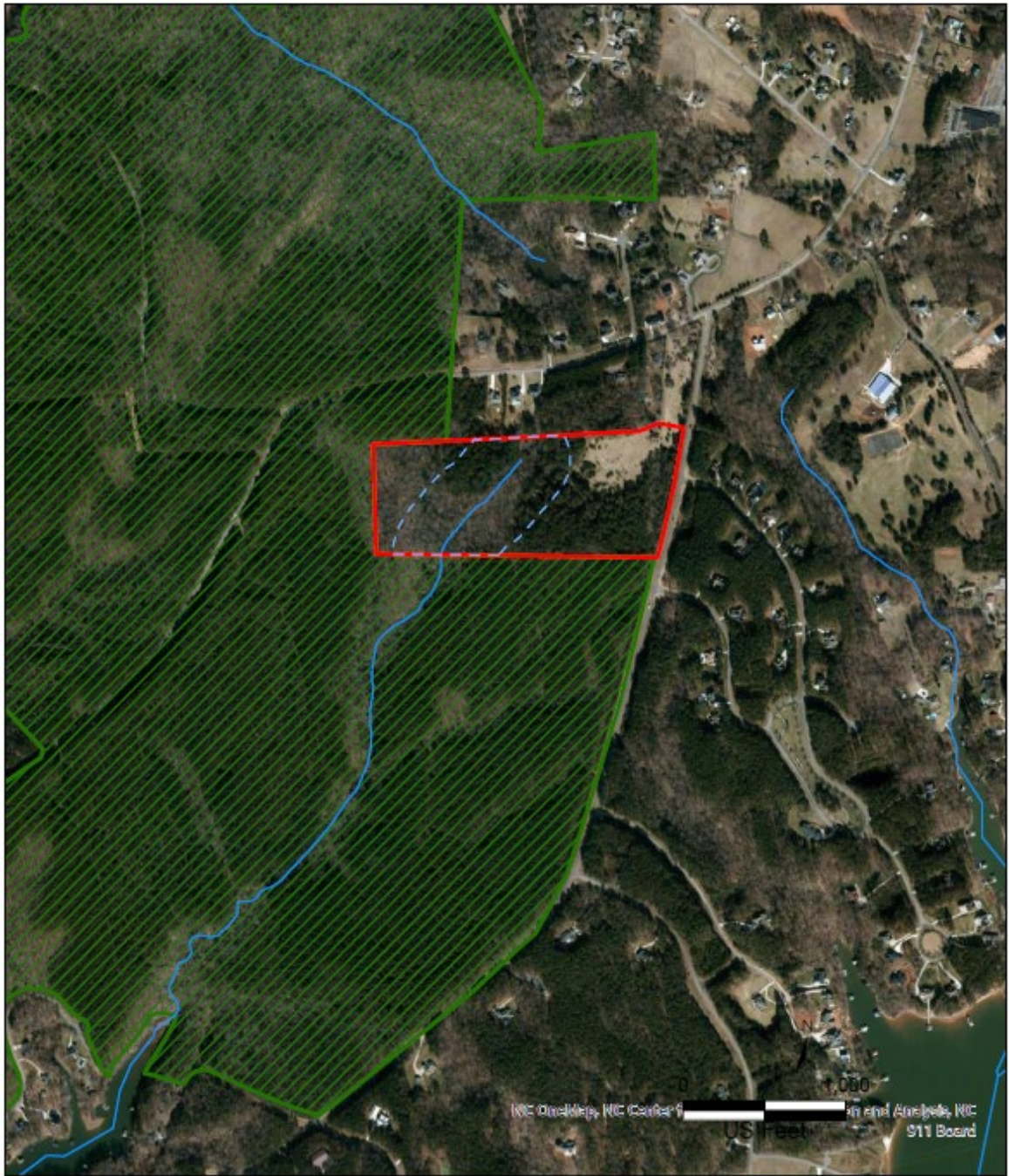
\$1,700,000 Total cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

This tract is under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.



Lake Norman  
State Park

February 2023

-  Project
-  Protected
-  State Park
-  Stream

## **LUMBER RIVER STATE PARK**

Schoolfield Tract

Location: Robeson County

Funds Requested: \$2,850,000

Acres: 3,000

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

An extensive bottomland hardwood forest with excellent heritage and recreational values. This tract has impressive opportunities for wildlife viewing from innumerable turtles to beavers, otters and neotropical migrants. This tract also provides several opportunities for canoe put-ins and take-outs. In addition, this property protects the Lumber River as well as extensive bottomland hardwood forests.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$2,850,000 NC Land Water Fund application

**\$2,850,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$5,700,000 Total cost

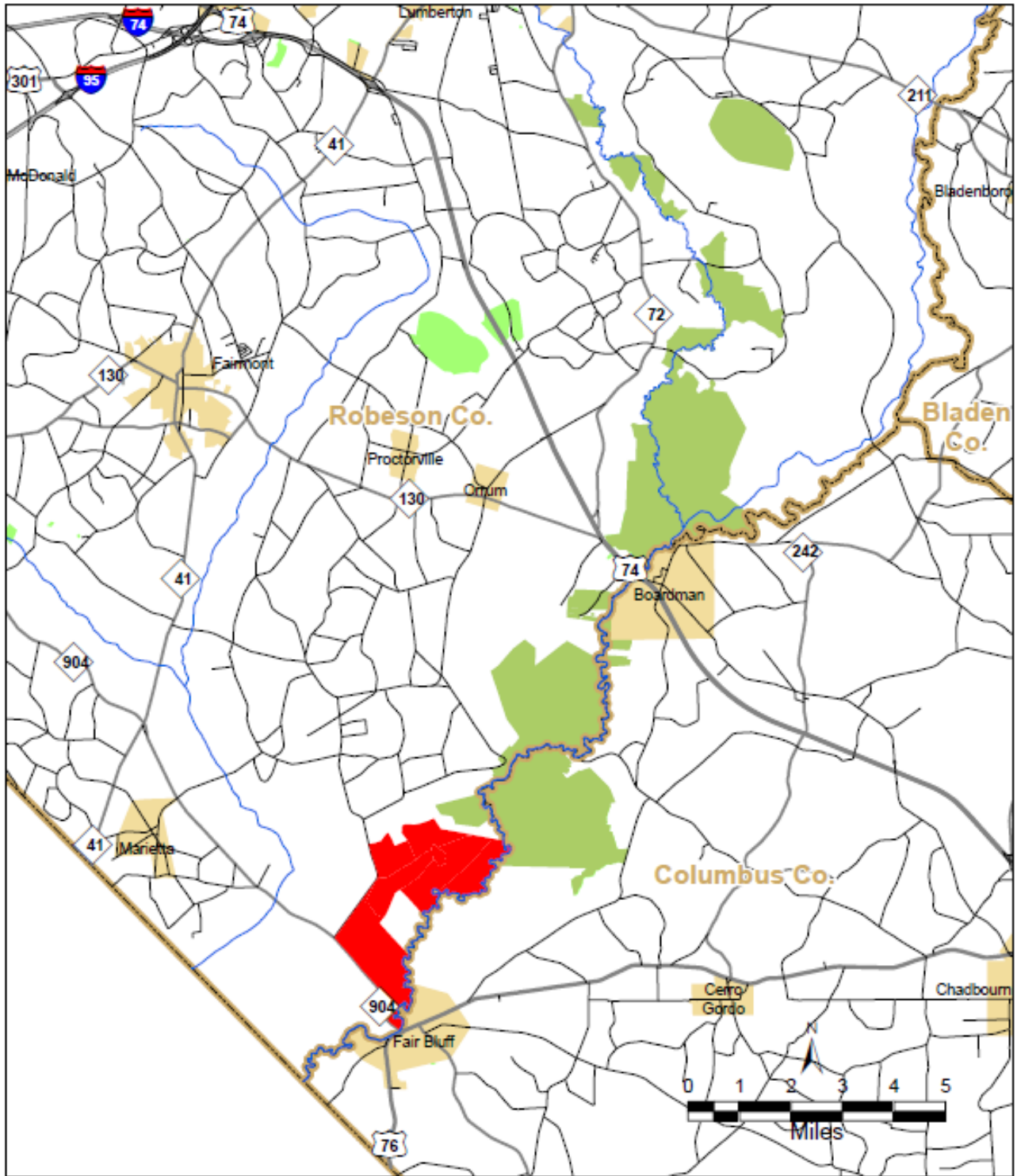
### **PROJECT STATUS**

This tract is under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.





Lumber River  
State Park  
Locator

January 2022

- Project
- County Line
- Municipality
- State Park
- Conservation Land

## **MAYO RIVER STATE PARK**

Project: Roma tracts

Location: Rockingham County

Funds Requested: \$1,000,000

Acres: 336

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project represents critical acquisition tracts in the Mayo River Land Protection Plan. The Roma tracts are flat with easy access to the Mayo River and quick access from Mayodan and Madison. The tract has flat sandy slopes as well as bluffs and an impressive wetland with many frog species. These large flat areas will allow new recreational opportunities as this is not typical of existing parkland.

## **FUNDING STATUS**

\$1,000,000 NC Land and Water Fund application

**\$1,000,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

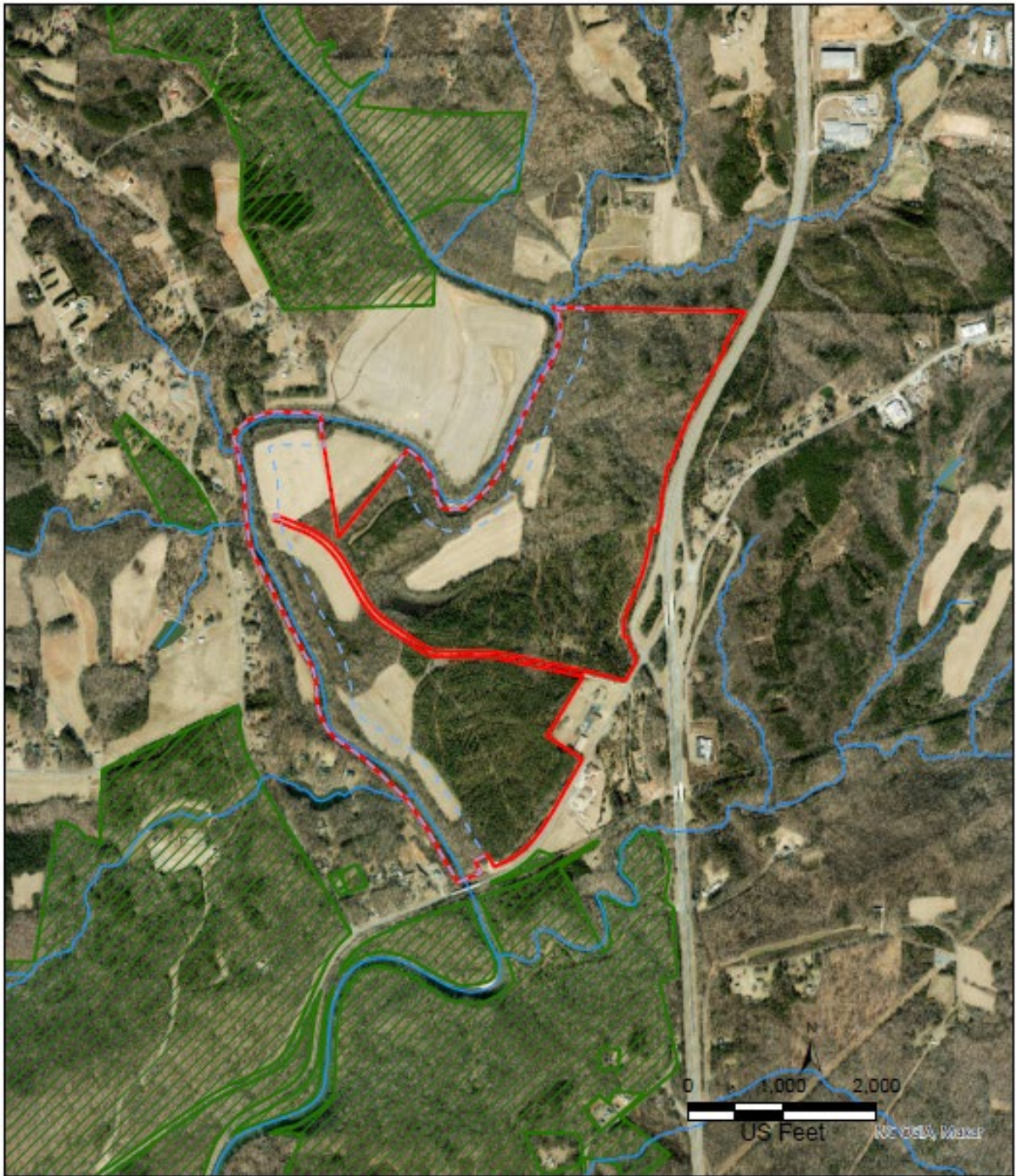
\$2,000,000 Total cost

## **PROJECT STATUS**

This tract is under contract.

## **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.



Mayo River  
State Park

January 2023

- Project
- Protected Area
- State Park
- Stream

## **MOUNT MITCHELL STATE PARK**

Project: The "J"

Location: Yancey County

Funds Requested: \$2,000,000

Acres: 215

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

These parcels have been considered critical acquisition tracts for decades within the Mount Mitchell Land Protection Plan. These high elevation tracts connect existing pieces of high elevation (over 6,000 ft) to existing parkland. The heritage value of these tracts is extremely high and helps extend connections to thousands of acres of conservation land.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$2,000,000 NC Land and Water Fund application

**\$2,000,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

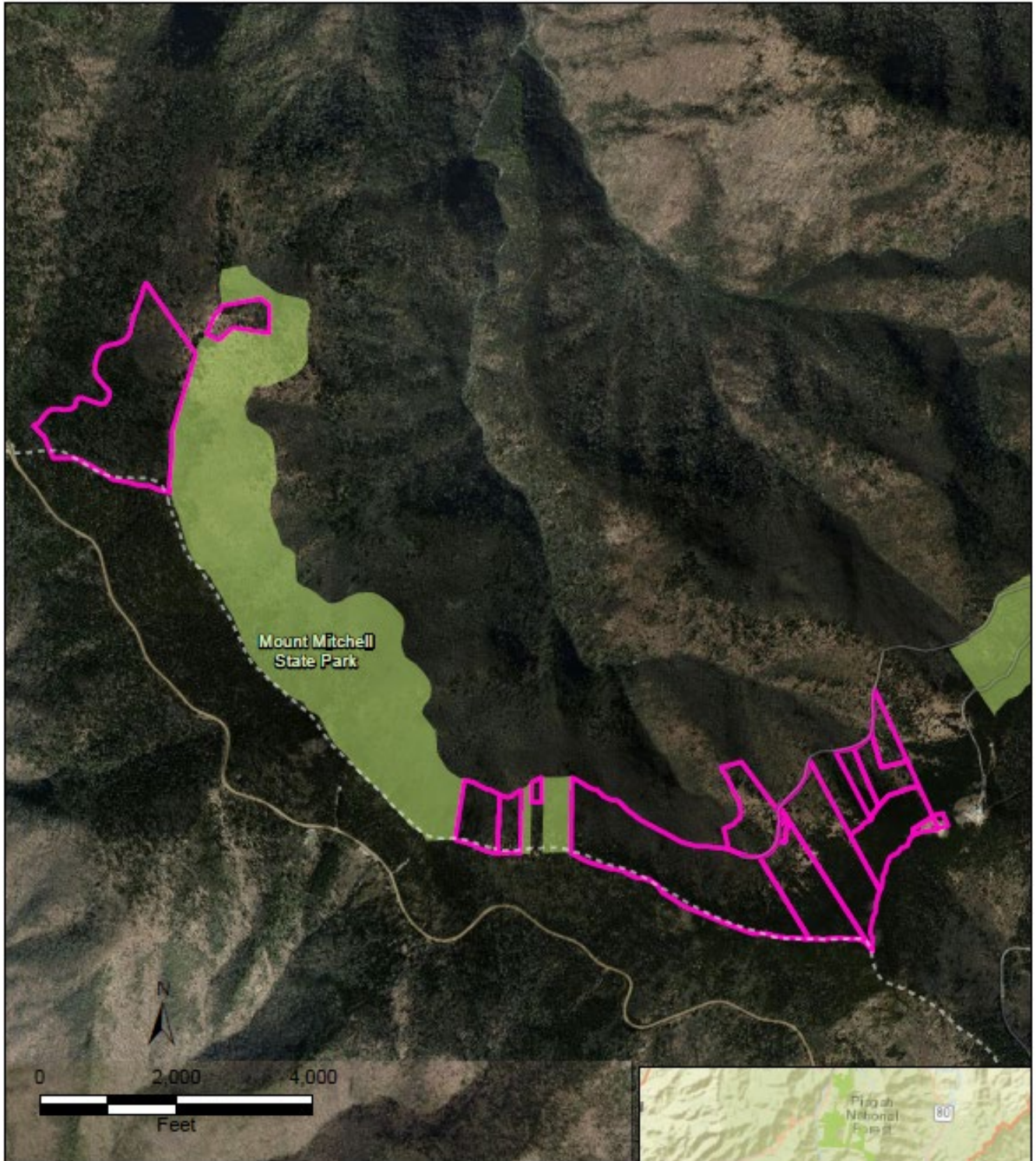
\$4,000,000 Total cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

These tracts are under contract.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

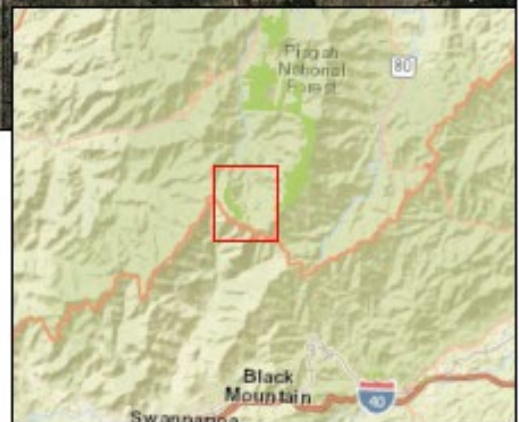
No additional operating expenses are expected from this acquisition.



Mount Mitchell  
State Park

State Parks Unit  
Subject

May 2023



## **NEW RIVER STATE PARK**

Project: Mezey Tract

Location: Ashe County

Funds Requested: \$264,000

Acres: 62

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project will acquire a tract along the new River with a waterfall. This disjunct tract along the New River provides an opportunity for quiet hiking. It buffers the New River as well as protects a tributary (containing Nana Falls) and will provide great educational resources to teach forest ecology.

### **FUNDING STATUS**

\$264,000 NC Land and Water Fund application

**\$264,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$528,000,000 Total cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

This tract is under contract.


### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are requested at this time.



New River  
State Park

January 2023

-  Project
-  Protected Area
-  Stream

**Subject:** State Parks System Capital Projects for FY 2023-2024

**Presenter:** Mr. Brian Strong – Deputy Director for Planning and Natural Resources

**Attachment:** Project list and write-ups

**Background:** Mr. Strong will present the capital projects proposed for approval. Mr. Strong will request \$8,738,731 to be allocated for capital projects at Lower Haw State Natural Area, Chimney Rock, Lake Waccamaw and Lumber River State Parks as well as several parks for electronic vehicle (EV) charger installations.

**Conclusions and Recommended Actions:** The Division will ask Authority members to approve the capital projects for: Lower Haw State Natural Areas, Chimney Rock, Lake Waccamaw and Lumber River State Parks as well as several parks for EV charger installations.



**North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation  
State Parks System Capital Projects  
For Fiscal Year 2023-24**

<b>Park Unit</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>PARTF Request</b>	<b>Cost Share</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Operating Costs Recurring/ Non-recurring funding</b>
Lower Haw SNA	Day-Use Area Improvements	\$1,592,274	\$203,250	\$ 1,795,524	\$134,214 recurring and \$87,400 nonrecurring
Lumber River SP	Contact Station/Day-use Area	\$ 2,333,090	\$2,713,750	\$ 5,046,840	NA
Chimney Rock SP	Sky Lounge Fire Suppression System	\$ 560,000	\$ 935,000	\$ 1,495,000	NA
Lake Waccamaw SP	New Campground Development	\$ 4,160,127	\$ 1,506,000	\$ 5,666,127	\$318,461 recurring and \$149,130 nonrecurring
Multiple Parks	Installation of 3 EV Chargers at Hanging Rock, Jones Lake and Stone Mountain State Parks	\$93,240	\$372,960	\$466,200	NA
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$8,738,731</b>	<b>\$5,730,960</b>	<b>\$14,469,691</b>	

## **LOWER HAW STATE NATURAL AREA**

Project: Day-Use Area

Location: Chatham County

Funds Requested: \$1,592,274

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Lower Haw State Natural is located in Chatham County near the town of Bynum. This day-use area is located on the former mill site and will serve as day-use area for paddling, hiking and wildlife observation. This project was funded by the 2016 Connect NC Bond. Additional funding is requested related to inflation, original funding only provided 75 percent of the total cost and upgrading the toilet building to a flush toilet. Project will include a new toilet building, improved car parking lots, site utilities, and trail to river for canoe/kayak put in/takeout area.

### **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

\$ 203,250 Connect NC Bond

**\$ 1,592,274 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$ 1,795,524 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

Project is currently in design and is projected to bid in November 2023.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

The annual operating budget is \$134,214 and the nonrecurring funding is \$87,400. This would include a Maintenance Mechanic III position.

## **LUMBER RIVER STATE PARK**

Project: Contact Station/Day-use Area

Location: Robeson County

Funds Requested: \$2,333,090

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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The Wire Pasture Development project is in Robeson County near Maxton. The day-use site is situated on the Lumber River in between the Chalk Banks access and the Princess Anne access. Project will provide day-use to this historically used water access location. Project will include a visitor contact station, paved access road, vehicle parking area, gazebo shelter, and minor site improvements and amenities. The contact station will include park offices, a small retail area, exhibits, public restrooms, a changing area, and a classroom. Site amenities will include an educational trail with wayside exhibits, picnic area, and river beach access improvements. All facilities will meet state building code and ADA compliance.

### **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

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\$ 2,628,750 Connect NC Bond

\$ 85,000 Previous PARTF Request (Nov. 2020)

**\$ 2,333,090 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$ 5,046,840 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

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Project is currently in design and is projected to bid in November 2023.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

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Operating funds have already been received.

## **CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK**

Project: Sky Lounge Fire Suppression System

Location: Rutherford County

Funds Requested: \$560,000

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project is located at Chimney Rock Park in the town of Chimney Rock. At the direction of the State Construction Office and the Department of Insurance the Division has been requested to upgrade their fire suppression system to meet current code. Since the Sky Lounge is extremely remote a unique system is necessary to meet the appropriate code. This project will install the new system and bring the Sky Lounge up to meet the state building fire code.

### **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

\$ 935,000 State Repair and Renovation Fund

**\$ 560,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$ 1,495,000 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

Project is currently in design and is projected to bid in August 2023.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

No additional operating expenses are required.

## **LAKE WACCAMAW STATE PARK**

Project: New Campground

Location: Columbus County

Funds Requested: \$4,160,127

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Lake Waccamaw State Park currently provides only primitive camping options. This new campground will provide for overnight facilities for RV's, tents and cabins. Initial funding for the project was provided by the Connect NC Bond of 2016. Additional funding is requested related to inflation, original funding only provided 75 percent of the total cost and expansion of the project footprint. The project will include a new campground shower house, campsites (8) RV full hookup (water, sewer, electric), (2) new camper cabins, (12) tent site improvements, campsite amenities, new campground road, all needed utilities (septic system, water, electric). All facilities will meet state building code and ADA compliance.

### **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

\$ 1,506,000 Connect NC Bond

**\$ 4,160,127 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$ 5,666,127 Total Project Cost

### **PROJECT STATUS**

Project is currently in design and is projected to bid in November 2023.

### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

The annual operating budget is \$318,461 and the nonrecurring funding is \$149,130. This would include a Park Ranger II position and a Maintenance Mechanic I position.

## **MULTIPLE PARKS**

Project: EV Chargers

Location: Hanging Rock, Jones Lake and Stone Mountain State Parks

Funds Requested: \$93,240

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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The purpose of this project is to add 3 new EV fast chargers at Hanging Rock, Jones Lake and Stone Mountain State Parks. By installing chargers at free, public venues that attract large populations, the State Parks system is facilitating broad public access to charging infrastructure that is convenient and accessible. The Park system will allow drivers to charge their vehicles for free, alleviating financial barriers to switching to green technology and making electric vehicles within reach for more people to accelerate the adoption of zero emissions vehicles.

## **CURRENT PROJECT FUNDING STATUS**

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\$ 372,960 US DOT's Federal Highway Administration Grant

**\$ 93,240 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Request**

\$ 466,200 Total Project Cost

## **PROJECT STATUS**

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Project is currently in design and is projected to bid in November 2023.

## **OPERATING EXPENSES**

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No additional operating funds are required.