



THE MOUTH OF THE HAW

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HAW RIVER TRAIL PARTNERSHIP

Spring 2009

www.thehaw.org

What is the Haw River Trail Partnership?

In 2006, 10 governmental agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to work together for the development of the Haw River Trail and the conservation of its land and waters.

In this spirit, the cities of Burlington and Graham have partnered with Alamance County, the Elon University Center for Environmental Studies and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to fund a full-time position to coordinate conservation and trail efforts on the Upper Haw River. This newsletter, and our website: www.thehaw.org, are an effort to inform the public about the accomplishments and goals of these positions and the ongoing work stemming from the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding.

HAW RIVER TRAIL PARTNERSHIP ACQUIRES 191 ACRES FOR MOUNTAINS TO SEA TRAIL



**Perennial Stream on the
Gerringer Mill Property**

The Haw River Trail Partnership finalized the acquisition of 191 acres on the Haw River in February. The property, located off Gerringer Mill Road north of Burlington, will extend the Haw River Trail/Mountains-to-Sea Trail by over a mile.

The purchase was a joint effort by Haw River Trail Partnership members North Carolina State Parks and Alamance County. Conservation of the property, formerly owned by Lon Harris, protects approximately a mile of frontage on the Haw River, as well as over 7,000 feet of perennial streams. One of the largest privately owned tracts remaining on the Haw, the tract was identified in as a “high priority” property by the Haw River Riparian Corridor Conservation Plan conducted by the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments in 2005.

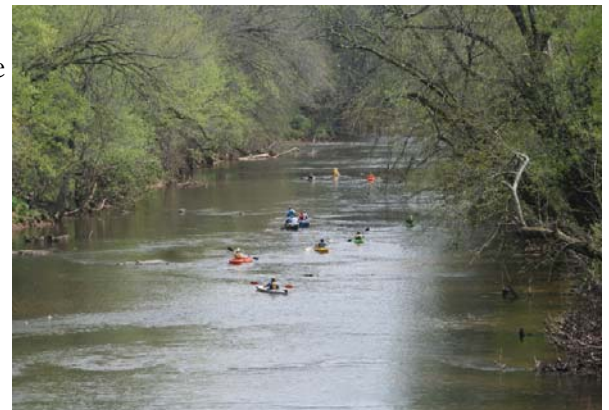
“This is a milestone in the creation of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail in central North Carolina. We’ve known all along that creating the trail wouldn’t be possible without partner-

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2009 YEE-HAW! RIVER PADDLE SLATED FOR APRIL 25TH

Based on the overwhelming response to last year’s Yee-Haw! River Paddle, a bigger and better event is slated for April 25th, 2009.

Last year, 175 people came together on the Haw for the community event. This year we anticipate an even larger crowd for the day-long paddle. This year’s event will still include paddles for beginners, families and experienced paddlers and will again take place between Glencoe Paddle Access and Swepsonville River Park. However, improvements have been made to include a post-paddle party, expanded food vendors and increased shuttles. Registration for the event begins March 16th. More details and registration for the paddle will be available soon on www.thehaw.org.



**Paddlers color the river during the 2008
Yee-Haw! River Paddle**

For questions, comments, or to remove your name from the mailing list, email info@thehaw.org or call 336/229-2229



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Trail Specialist Hired

Alamance County has hired Burlington resident Chris Clark to be the new Trail Specialist. Chris has participated in numerous projects for the department at Cedarock Park as a Boy Scout. He will be working part-time while completing his studies in Alamance Community College's Veterinary program.

Chris will be patrolling the river on the weekends and will be responsible for organizing and leading volunteers for the newly formed Haw River Trail Patrol Crew and the Haw River Trailblazers Crew.

To contact Chris, email: chris.clark@alamance-nc.com

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR YEE-HAW! RIVER PADDLE

The Haw River Trail Partnership is seeking sponsors for the Second Annual "Yee-Haw! River Paddle" on Saturday, April 25, 2008. Last year's paddle brought over 175 paddlers from across the state to the Haw River for a day-long event. Our goal for the event is to raise public awareness of our efforts on the Haw River and to raise funds for future projects. This year, we hope to cover the costs of the event through sponsorships, so that the paddlers' registration fees may be used to promote our "conservation through recreation" mission.

In addition to supporting our conservation and trail building work, sponsorship provides an opportunity to associate with a popular and growing event. Following last year's inaugural event, a post-paddle survey revealed that 97% of respondents planned to return this year. In addition, sponsorship provides direct advertising to the rapidly growing paddling community. Last year, 45% of paddlers indicated they were "very likely" to purchase a canoe or kayak in the next year.

Sponsorships of \$250 and \$500 are available and include recognition on all printed materials, on our website, and in the media coverage of the event. Booths at the post-paddle party, are also available to sponsors. If you are willing to serve as a sponsor for this year's event, please email info@thehaw.org or call (336)-229-2229.

2008 YEAR IN REVIEW

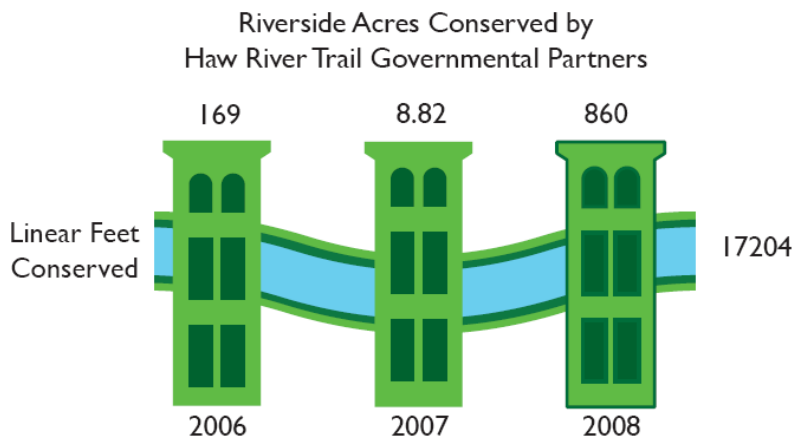
2008 proved to be the most productive yet for the Haw River Trail. In the third year since signing a Memorandum of Understanding pledging to work toward conservation and recreation goals on the Haw, governmental partners conserved 860 acres in 2008, bringing the total acres conserved to 1229.

Most notable among the conservation efforts was a 692 acre purchase by the State of North Carolina from the Bluegreen Corp. to expand Haw River State Park.

The HRT Partnership also added another mile of land trail with the opening of the Indian Valley to Glencoe section. This section stands to add another mile in 2009, as the construction of the trail from Glencoe to Carolina

Mill is already underway. A land trail milestone was reached last Spring as the first section of Haw River Trail was designated as an official part of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. The one-mile section at Swepsonville River Park, is one of the most heavily used on the river. It will hopefully be the first in a series of sections designated as Mountains to Sea Trail.

The Paddle Trail saw significant increases as well in 2008. Work began on three new paddle accesses at Red Slide Park in Haw River, Altamahaw and Greensboro-Chapel Hill Road. All three accesses are slated to open in 2009. Once completed, only an access in Saxapahaw will be needed to open the entire river through Alamance County.





HRT EXTENDED WITH DONATION OF TRAIL EASEMENT IN THE TOWN OF HAW RIVER

A gap in the Haw River Trail/Mountains to Sea Trail was filled last week thanks to the donation of a trail easement by Doug and Debra Moon of Haw River. The 575-foot trail easement provides a vital connection between Red Slide Park and a trail easement donated by Tom Sykes in 2008. The connection creates a mile-long section of trail between US-70 and Highway 49/Main Street in Haw River.

The donation was one of several received in the past few years by residents of the small town of Haw River. At \$15,853, the Town of Haw River has the lowest per capita of income of any town along the Haw River Corridor, yet the generosity of its residents toward the Trail has been unparalleled. Thanks to this spirit of giving, the path of the HRT through the Town is nearly complete. Thanks to the Moons and to the residents of Haw River for making the Haw River Trail a reality.



The Granite Mill complex dominates views from the HRT in the Town of Haw River

“Gerringer Mill” CONTINUED

and conservation groups,” said Lewis Ledford, state parks director. “Alamance County has been among the first to step forward and help us to see real progress.”

Linda Massey, Chair of the Alamance County Board of Commissioners stated "On behalf of the County of Alamance, we are very excited to be a part of the Mountains -to-Sea Trail project. The Haw River is a vital resource historically in Alamance County and especially in the small town of Haw River. The creation of this trail can be very beneficial for many small towns that the river runs through as more and more land is designated and developed as recreational. We look forward to the continuance of our partnership."

The N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund provided funding to the state parks system for the land purchase. In 2008, the trust fund awarded a matching grant directly to Alamance County to acquire other recreation property on the Haw River within the Mountains-to-Sea Trail corridor. Similar local grants have recently targeted trail development in Guilford and Johnston counties.

Though owned by the State, the property will be managed by Alamance County as a natural area. Development plans for the property have not been finalized, but possibilities include hiking trails, a paddle access and camping areas. In addition to the recreational benefit, the location of the land also presents a wealth of environmental education opportunities. The property is located within a mile of Western Alamance High School and Western Alamance Middle School. Special thanks to the Harris family for their cooperation in preserving this extraordinary resource.

Want More Pictures?

To see more pictures of the Yee-Haw! River Paddle, or of life on the Haw River Trail, visit the Haw River Trail Group on Flickr.com.

Upload a few of your own while you are there.

Want To Help?

We welcome community involvement in our projects and can always use motivated volunteers. We currently need volunteers to assist:

- Picking up Litter on the Trail and in the River
- Manning Booths at Festivals and Events
- Organizing and Leading Volunteer Events
- Creating Newsletters and Promotional Materials
- Building Trails and Footbridges

To help, email us at getinvolved@thehaw.org



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Please Send Us Your Trip Reports

For visitors and first-time paddlers on the Haw River Paddle Trail, knowing what water levels are required for each section of the river can be difficult. To help, we are considering placing gauges near the accesses that display proper water levels. We need your help to determine what water levels to recommend. Next time your on the Haw, take a quick minute to tell us what section you paddled, what the water level was (or when you paddled) and whether that level was acceptable. Please email trip reports to info@thehaw.org or call 336/229-2229.

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WORK CONTINUING AT 3 FUTURE HRT SITES

Progress is slow but steady at three HRT sites preparing to open in 2009. Altamahaw Paddle Access, Red Slide Park, and a new section of trail between Glencoe Paddle Access and Carolina Mill are all in various stages of development as they move toward becoming open to the public. Altamahaw Paddle Access has seen dramatic improvements in recent months, in part thanks to local Eagle Scout Candidate Baden Piland. Baden is constructing two sets of steps at the access as his Eagle Scout project. The new steps appear first-rate and the work has been much appreciated by staff with Alamance County Recreation and Parks.

At Red Slide Park in the Town of Haw River, site grading is complete and the parking lot is finished. A new trail easement adjacent to the park will allow the HRT/MST to connect Hwy 70 to Highway 49/Main Street via Red Slide Park. Haw River Parks and Recreation is a few finishing touches away from a grand opening at the 15 acre park.

Finally, trail construction is progressing on the newest section of Haw River Trail/ Mountains-to-Sea Trail between Glencoe Paddle Access and Carolina Mill. For much of the one-mile distance of the new trail segment, the trail traces the route of the old mill race to historic Carolina Mill. The challenging topography of the site requires the construction of at least 15 bridges, boardwalks and steps before opening to the public. The trail is being developed by Burlington Recreation and Parks.



“New” Bridge at Altamahaw Paddle Access. The bridge was removed from Burlington’s NorthPark, renovated and placed by NCDOT.

TWO NEW OUTFITTERS OPEN FOR BUSINESS IN HAW RIVER

Two new businesses have cast their lots on the expanded Haw River Paddle Trail recently, both centered near the new Red Slide Park in Haw River. River Run Outfitters and Haw River Outfitters are both open for business, offering guided trips and canoe and kayak rentals. River Run Outfitters is a joint venture by local residents Gary Geringer and Jonathon Day. River Run offers a fleet a recreational kayaks, sit-on-top kayaks and canoes with trip prices starting at \$35. They can be found in downtown Haw River or by calling 336-212-2697.

Haw River Outfitters, fronted by Todd Blair, is also offering kayaks and canoes for guided trips or day rentals. Haw River Outfitters also offers shuttles for self-guided paddlers. Todd can be reached at the company’s website, www.hawriveroutfitters.com, or at (336) 212-0124.

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