This section of the North Carolina Mountains-to-Sea Trail map was made in cooperation with:

NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Recreation

PTCOG
Piedmont Triad Council of Governments

State Trails Program
Recreational Trails Program Grant

04/25/2006

Mountains To Sea Trail

Eastern Piedmont Section
Central MST Planning Region
From Lake Townsend to Falls Lake Dam

- Mountains to Sea Existing Trail
- Mountains to Sea Primary Route
- Mountains to Sea Alternative Route
- Initial Undesignated MST Route
- Park
- Publicly Owned Land
- Open Space
- County
- Municipality
- Water Body
- Streams/Creeks
- Abandoned RR
- Railroad

5 2.5 0 5 Miles

N W E S

Proposed MST Route:
Eastern Piedmont Section
Central MST Planning Region

The following proposed routes will provide an outstanding regional trail system with loop-trail options for the Eastern Piedmont:

Primary Route: From Lake Townsend to Haw River State Park; down the Haw River through portions of Rockingham and Guilford Counties and much of Alamance County; up Cane Creek in Orange County to and through Hillsborough; along the Eno River through Orange and Durham Counties; and along Falls Lake through Durham and Wake Counties.

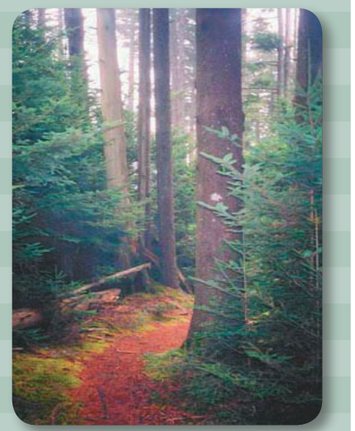
Alternative Routes: 1) Lake Townsend to the Haw River; 2) NE Guilford Park to Lake Mackintosh and the Haw River; 3) Town of Haw River to Hillsborough; 4) down the Haw River to Jordan Lake and then north to the Eno River via the New Hope Creek or the American Tobacco Trail.

This brochure was designed by the **Piedmont Triad Council of Governments.** The map is for reference only and is not intended for survey or legal purposes. Photos are provided courtesy of the **Friends of the Mountains To Sea Trail** (www.ncmst.org). 1,000 copies of this public document were printed for the **NC State Trails Program** at a cost of $462 or $0.462 each.

North Carolina's Mountains-to-Sea Trail

Linn Cove Viaduct

North Carolina has set the goal of creating a statewide trail that when complete, will link Clingman's Dome along the western edge of the state in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Jockey's Ridge State Park on the outer banks – a distance of over 900 miles. This ongoing effort known as North Carolina's Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) was first announced in 1977. Nearly 30 years later the dream of building a cross-state trail is alive and well. Thanks to the collective efforts of countless volunteers, public land managers and private property owners, there are currently over 450 miles of trail constructed and open for public use crossing both public and private lands and linking cities and counties from the mountains to the sea.



Trail at Bear Pin Gap

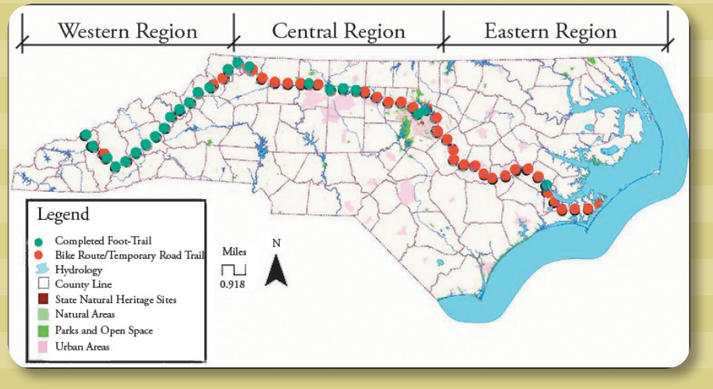
In 2000, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation (G.S. 113-44.1) authorizing the State to acquire and manage lands for the MST and directing the NC Division of Parks and Recreation to promote, encourage, and facilitate the establishment of dedicated trails through lands and easements managed by other entities to form a continuous trail across the state. With no funding specifically provided by the General Assembly for the MST, the Division has focused its efforts on partnering with local governments and volunteers along the proposed trail route.

Oyster Point

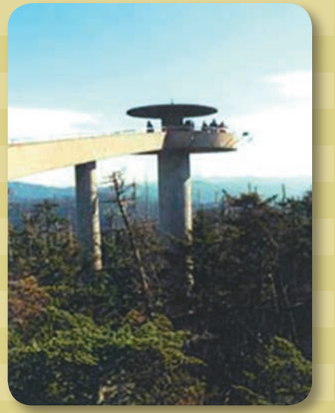
Partners across North Carolina are planning and building the MST to link our State's communities together and to serve as the backbone for a growing system of land and water trails. As new sections of the MST are completed they provide regular access points and trail heads offering safe, convenient entry for residents and visitors to enjoy as they travel through the natural, historic and scenic areas of our beautiful state. Please join in supporting this exciting effort as the MST advances its way through your community.

Regional MST Route Planning

The proposed routing of the MST across North Carolina and its three trail planning regions is illustrated on the map below.



WESTERN REGION – From Clingman's Dome in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park to Stone Mountain State Park in Wilkes County. This portion of the MST is about 332 miles in length. Most of the planning for this region is complete. Over 240 miles of trail are currently open with the remaining 92 miles being planned, partially completed, or awaiting formal MST designation by the State. This segment of the MST affords hikers spectacular views of North Carolina's scenic mountain ranges.



Clingman's Dome

CENTRAL REGION – From Stone Mountain State Park to the Falls Lake Dam north of Raleigh. Plans for the MST through the central piedmont region of the State have not been formally defined. However, efforts are currently underway to identify the most promising trail corridors in the eastern section of the region to connect existing MST segments in Greensboro and Raleigh. Planning efforts to define MST routes in the western piedmont section between Stone Mountain State Park and Greensboro will follow in the near future.

EASTERN REGION – From Falls Lake Dam in Wake County to Jockey's Ridge on Cedar Island in Carteret County. A conceptual routing for this region was completed in 2004. Wake County and the City of Raleigh plan to extend the MST down the Neuse River from the Falls Lake Dam to the Wake/Johnston County line. In addition, several planning efforts are currently underway to extend the MST through Johnston County to Smithfield, from Smithfield to Goldsboro and from the Croatan National Forest through Carteret County to Cedar Island.

Falls Lake, Wake County

EASTERN PIEDMONT SECTION

FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY:

MST planning and development efforts are currently focused in the eastern piedmont section of the central planning region. In February of 2006 local and state government staff and interested citizens met in a three-hour workshop designed and facilitated by the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments. Two existing sections of the MST served as anchor points for the planning session; the Northern Greensboro Lakes Trail System and the South Shore Falls Lake Trail north of Raleigh. Workshop participants defined routing options and set route priorities to connect these two existing MST anchor sections using the following criteria: local government support, landowner support, public ownership, water quality, and the presence of scenic, natural and cultural resources.

Trail at Lake Higgins, Greensboro

WORKSHOP RESULTS:

Participants identified a Primary MST Route and seven Alternate or Connector MST Routes as shown on the map on the reverse side of this document. Completion of primary and alternate or connector trail routes will provide a robust regional trail system with multiple loop-trail opportunities throughout the eastern piedmont.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

Local government participants within the eastern piedmont are encouraged to:

1. Review and refine the Draft Eastern Piedmont MST Route Map and participate in a second planning workshop if necessary.
2. Share the draft map with local advisory boards & elected bodies for their consideration - request State Trails Program support if needed.
3. Encourage local government advisory boards and elected bodies to formalize some or all of the draft map by taking the following actions.
    - Pass a Resolution of Support endorsing the draft map – request a draft resolution from the State Trails Program if needed.
    - Adopt the draft map or a modified version of the map as a component of their local trails and greenways system plan.
    - Determine which segments of the proposed MST trail system identified in the draft map are most important to their jurisdiction.
    - Agree to plan, acquire land, design, build and manage specific top-priority MST segments within their jurisdiction.

NEXT STEPS

As local government entities accomplish these recommended actions, a strong foundation will be laid for linking local and regional trail plans to the proposed statewide Mountains-To-Sea Trail network. The Division of Parks and Recreation will forward these local and regional plans and resolutions of support to the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for approval as key components of the State's first regional trails system plan. Inclusion in this regional plan may provide priority funding status for the Adopt-A-Trail and Recreational Trails Programs and other State funding sources. The Division intends for this innovative planning effort to be replicated in other regions of the state and for the trails identified within these regional plans to become the basis for a Statewide Trails System Plan for North Carolina.