

Little River Regional Park and Natural Area Management Plan



October 27, 2021



ORANGE COUNTY



Department of Environment,
Agriculture, Parks & Recreation

Little River Regional Park and Natural Area Management Plan

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I. Introduction

The Little River Regional Park and Natural Area (or “the Park”) opened to the public on December 5, 2004. It is a two-county partnership between Durham and Orange counties and is funded by both and managed by the Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation according to an Interlocal Agreement between the two counties. The Park is located at 301 Little River Park Way, along the east side of Guess Road, 1.1 mile north of the Orange County line and 11 miles north of the I-85 interchange at Guess Road. The Park straddles the Durham/Orange county line, with roughly 256 of the 391 acres in Durham County and 135 acres in Orange County.

The Park offers recreational opportunities with over seven miles of hiking trails, over eight miles of single-track mountain biking trails, a 1/3-mile paved accessible path with multiple picnic sites, two large-group picnic shelters, playground, large play meadow, pollinator garden, and Park Office with educational materials. The Park’s developed area covers less than 15 acres, while the remaining 376 acres boasts 1.5 mile of river frontage on the pristine North Fork Little River, as well as several forest types categorized as four distinct plant communities in Figure 1. Inventories of plant and animal species are relatively complete and include several regionally rare species (Master Plan Appendix G).



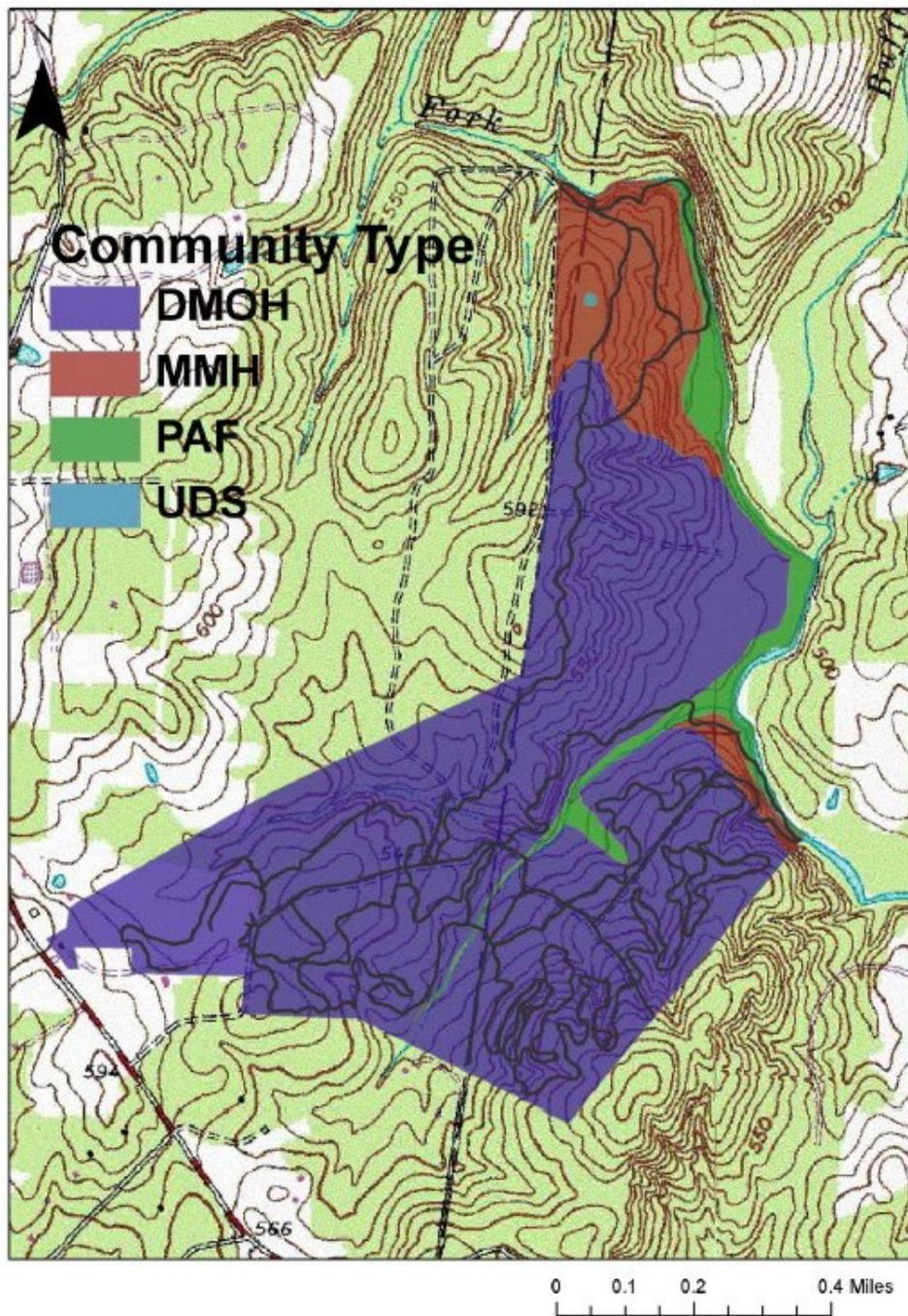


FIGURE 1. Plant Communities Identified at Little River Regional Park. Four communities were identified based the NC Natural Heritage Program classification¹: Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest (DMOH), Mesic Mixed Hardwood (MMH), Piedmont Alluvial Forest (PAF), and one Upland Depression Swamp Forest (UDS).

¹ Guide to the Natural Communities of North Carolina, 4th Approximation (2012). Michael P. Schafale, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, Department of Environment and Natural Resources

II. Strategic Direction

The Park is governed through an Interlocal Agreement between Orange and Durham counties. The Interlocal Agreement calls for a Master Plan, Management Plan, and Operating Guidelines to be adopted by both county boards of commissioners. This Management Plan document provides specificity on the management strategies and priorities needed to manage and operate the Park according to the vision presented in the Master Plan.

A. Vision

“Little River Regional Park and Natural Area is recognized as a valuable natural resource and community park. The park maintains the natural character along a portion of the North Fork Little River, providing a natural viewscape for those hiking through the woods. Further, it provides Orange and Durham residents and visitors opportunities to connect with nature and helps protect the Piedmont ecosystem. Together with nearby natural areas within the Little River Corridor, the regional park is part of a wider natural area network that facilitates a healthy community.”

B. Goals and Objectives

The following are Guiding Principles for the joint management of the Park:

- Protect the natural habitat, water quality and other unique cultural resources of this significant park and natural area
- Preserve the Park’s cultural and ecological heritage while highlighting these resources for the public where feasible
- Ensure the safety of all Park visitors
- Strive for the highest quality visitor experience through regular self-evaluation and within mutually agreed upon goals and budgets
- Implement the vision and goals of the Master Plan through collaboration and partnership of the two jurisdictions
- Evaluate financial and management options to achieve Park goals as creatively and cost effectively as possible
- Incorporate Orange County’s and Durham County’s sustainability goals and policies in everyday Park operations and long-term planning.

These Guiding Principles translate into the following goals and objectives:

1. Protecting and Conserving Nature

GOAL 1: Maintain the Park in a largely natural state.

Objective 1: Minimize development within the Park.

GOAL 2: Manage the Park in a way that respects and protects key natural values on-site.

Objective 1: Develop visitor opportunities in ways that consider natural area sensitivities.

Objective 2: Work with others to manage or maintain key values.

2. Connecting with Nature

GOAL 3: Create a connection between the public and the Park's natural and cultural values that fosters appreciation and respect. [Engage the public in the appreciation and respect for the Park's natural and cultural values.]

Objective 1: Provide opportunities for low-impact recreation that are based on, and linked to, experiencing the natural values of the Park.

Objective 2: Provide information on-site that connects visitors to the Park, its history, and its key values.

Objective 3: Promote awareness of ways the public can assist in the protection of nature and the Park.

3. Providing Quality Recreational Experiences

GOAL 4: Provide engaging recreational opportunities while protecting and conserving natural areas.

Objective 1: Work cooperatively with Park users to encourage respectful use of the trails.

Objective 2: Develop additional signage, both interpretative and informative, detailing the natural features of the Park, and the need to preserve them.

Objective 3: Maintain hiking and biking trails, along with other Park amenities, to minimize erosion and adverse impacts while still providing positive outdoor experiences.

4. Collaboration and Cost-effective Management

GOAL 5: Foster collaboration and partnership between Durham County and Orange County, Park Managers, and stakeholders, and seek ways to manage the Park with the most efficient use of public funds to create high quality recreational and conservation opportunities.

Objective 1: Work collaboratively to identify and secure additional funding sources to assist with development of park appropriate amenities or programs.

Objective 2: Identify conservation needs within the Park and seek funding opportunities and additional expertise to develop appropriate management priorities.

III. Description of Park Improvements and Management Areas

A. Facilities and Improvements

The Park includes two public access buildings; two picnic shelters; a paved, accessible loop path with five individual picnic sites; and seven staff-only maintenance structures.

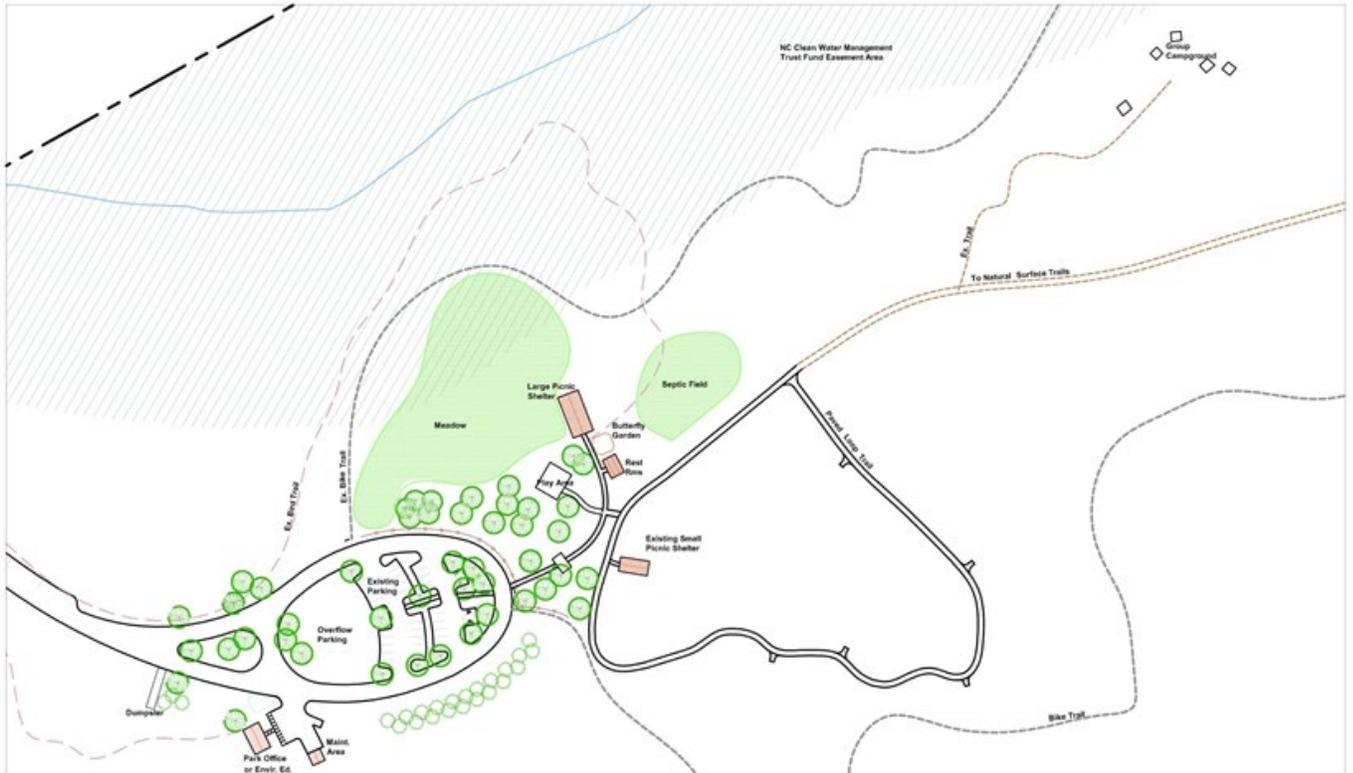


FIGURE 2. Park Developed Area

1. Public Amenities

- a) **Parking Area:** The parking area is at the end of a long meandering entrance road, culminating in a teardrop-shaped circulation pattern with drop off along the outer edge and designated parking for 40 spaces in the interior. Included within this are three accessible parking spaces. Exiting the teardrop is an additional elongated space for parking a bus or a trailer. The driveway and parking area are covered in a chip and seal surface treatment.
- b) **Public Restrooms:** This newly built structure is of similar architectural style as the Park Office, with separate male and female facilities, and a supply room.
- c) **Large Meadow Picnic Shelter:** This open-sided structure holds 12 picnic tables (two are wheelchair accessible) located near the public restrooms and playground, all of which are connected by a paved path.
- d) **Small Forest Picnic Shelter:** This open-sided structure is located just inside the paved loop trail, and holds eight picnic tables (two are wheelchair accessible).

- e) **Playground:** This accessible structure is recommended for 5- to 12-year-olds and contains three slides, two overhead components, a sliding pole, and a safety surface of engineered wood fiber. Safety surfacing needs weekly attention in the busy seasons, and yearly replenishment. Total replacement of the surfacing is recommended every 7-10 years.
- f) **Pack House / Hiker Shelter:** This historical structure was relocated from the front of the Park to the main junction of hiking trails. The pack house serves as a shelter for park users during inclement weather. A kiosk with trail maps and interpretive information is located at the trail head adjacent to the shelter.
- g) **Corn Crib / Visitor Information Center:** This structure was relocated from the Park entrance to the trail-head next to the parking area. The historical Corn Crib serves as an informal visitor information center and/or meeting spot with maps, brochures, donor recognition signs, interpretive information, and logos.



Visitor information structure (former corn crib)

- h) **Group Campground:** A group camping area was added in 2006 as an Eagle Scout project. It is located 100 feet from the end of the paved interpretive loop trail heading towards the Pack House. The site consists of four tent pads, two fire rings, a field hydrant, and three picnic tables.
- i) **Accessible Loop Trail:** This paved, quarter-mile-long trail loops through the woods next to the small picnic shelter and is one of the most heavily used facilities in the Park. The trail is used by young families with strollers, elderly visitors, and young children learning to ride bicycles. The trail is in need of major renovations as tree roots are encroaching into the asphalt surface and damaging the tread.
- j) **Pollinator Garden:** In Spring 2005 the area between the public restrooms and the Large Meadow Shelter was developed into a pollinator garden. The garden consists of mainly native plantings that attract a variety of pollinators at different stages of their life cycle. An arbor and bench was built in the center of the garden as part of an Eagle Scout project and the wooden entrance gates were built and donated by a volunteer.

- k) **Birding Trail:** The half-mile long birding trail begins at the Park Office and ends at the pollinator garden. Birders are led through several habitats that attract a variety of bird species. Several benches along the trail enable birders to sit and observe. Improvements to the trail could be added, such as native plantings attractive to birds and bird hides.
- l) **Hiking Trails:** The Park has two separate trail systems: one for hikers and one for single-track mountain bikers (Figure 5b). The seven miles of hiking trails include over a mile along the North Fork Little River. The trails pass through areas that include 40-year-old pines with an understory of young hardwoods, typical of a Piedmont Loblolly forest in transition to an upland hickory forest. Hardwoods such as sycamore, red maple and river birch are found along the North Fork Little River. Several old logging roads were incorporated into the trail system resulting in stretches of wide, gravel-surfaced trail.
- m) **Mountain Bike Trails:** Mountain biking trails were built in progressive loops of increasing technicality, ranging from beginner to advanced (Figure 5a). The beginner loop is 1.2 miles in length, the intermediate loop is one mile, and the advanced loop is 4 miles. The mountain bike trails were designed and constructed by volunteers from the Durham-Orange Mountain Bike Organization (DOMBO). In 2012, DOMBO reorganized as the Triangle Off-Road Cyclists (TORC). TORC maintains the mountain bike trails in accordance with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Park.
- n) **Mountain Bike Skills Course:** A new skills course is under construction by TORC, which will enable mountain bikers to hone and refine their biking abilities and skill levels. As of January 2021 the skills course was still undergoing a risk assessment and safety evaluation, and that area was not yet open to users.

2. Park Operations and Infrastructure

- a) **Park Office:** The Park Office contains a visitor reception desk; a visitor area with park information, educational materials, and wildlife displays; and staff facilities (office, workroom/kitchen, and restroom). In addition to serving as a staff office and visitor information area, the Park Office is used for programming during inclement weather. There are four parking spaces (one is wheelchair accessible) in front of the building.
- b) **Maintenance Shed (former Tobacco Drying Barn):** Located next to the Park Office, this historical building was substantially renovated in 2004 to repurpose the structure for use as a maintenance shed. Security fencing was added.
- c) **Well Pump House:** The well pump is located on the north side of the Park entrance driveway to the east of the Caretaker Residence. A new well was drilled because of recurring contamination issues in the old well.
- d) **Caretaker Residence:** This private residence was relocated to the Park in 2003 to serve as the caretaker residence. The house is occupied by a caretaker (part-time Park employee) responsible for closing the park on weekends, covering for other staff, and being available after the Park closes for campers or emergencies.
- e) **Wood Storage Tobacco Barn:** Located near the Caretaker Residence, this historical building has not been restored. It is a traditional tobacco drying barn.
- f) **Former Well Pump House:** The old well pump house is located next to the paved interpretive loop trail and was capped after the new well was installed. It is used for storage of fence posts and traffic cones.

- g) **Materials Storage and Waste:** Materials storage needed for Park operations presently include an area for large rock and materials storage, gravel storage, brush piles, and composting bins. A dumpster is located on the south side of the entrance drive, near the Park Office. A brush pile and other waste debris (old lumber, concrete, chairs, grills) are temporarily located adjacent to the main entrance road just east of the Caretaker Residence. Rock for road repairs is temporarily stored within an open area at the South River trail. Maintenance gravel for the parking area is occasionally stored at the entrance to the parking lot. The need for gravel and materials storage will diminish once the driveway is repaved. Care is taken to avoid permanent impacts to the State's conservation easement area.
- h) **Laws Farmhouse.** The former Laws family farmhouse is a historical farmstead structure located near the Park entrance, separated from the Park operations. The Laws farmhouse was built between the 1860s and 1880s, with a turn-of-the-19th-century addition, and was inhabited through the 1960s. The abandoned structure was in a state of neglect and disrepair when the Park property was purchased in 2001. The structure will receive future funding (as deemed appropriate) from Orange County.

At the time of Park development, the farmhouse was investigated for its potential to restore and integrate with the Park, either in its current location or relocated elsewhere within the Park. When it was determined that use of the structure as a park office or information center, cultural/historical museum, or caretaker residence was not feasible due to prohibitive cost or loss of historical significance if relocated, the house was potentially slated to be deconstructed. Orange County has opted to delay this, pending a future decision by that County regarding renovation. The exterior needs repainting and other maintenance to protect the structure. The building is currently used for the storage of lumber and roofing materials for use in the Park.



The former Laws family residence (unoccupied)

Park Management Areas for:

Little River Regional Park & Natural Area

A Durham County / Orange County Partnership

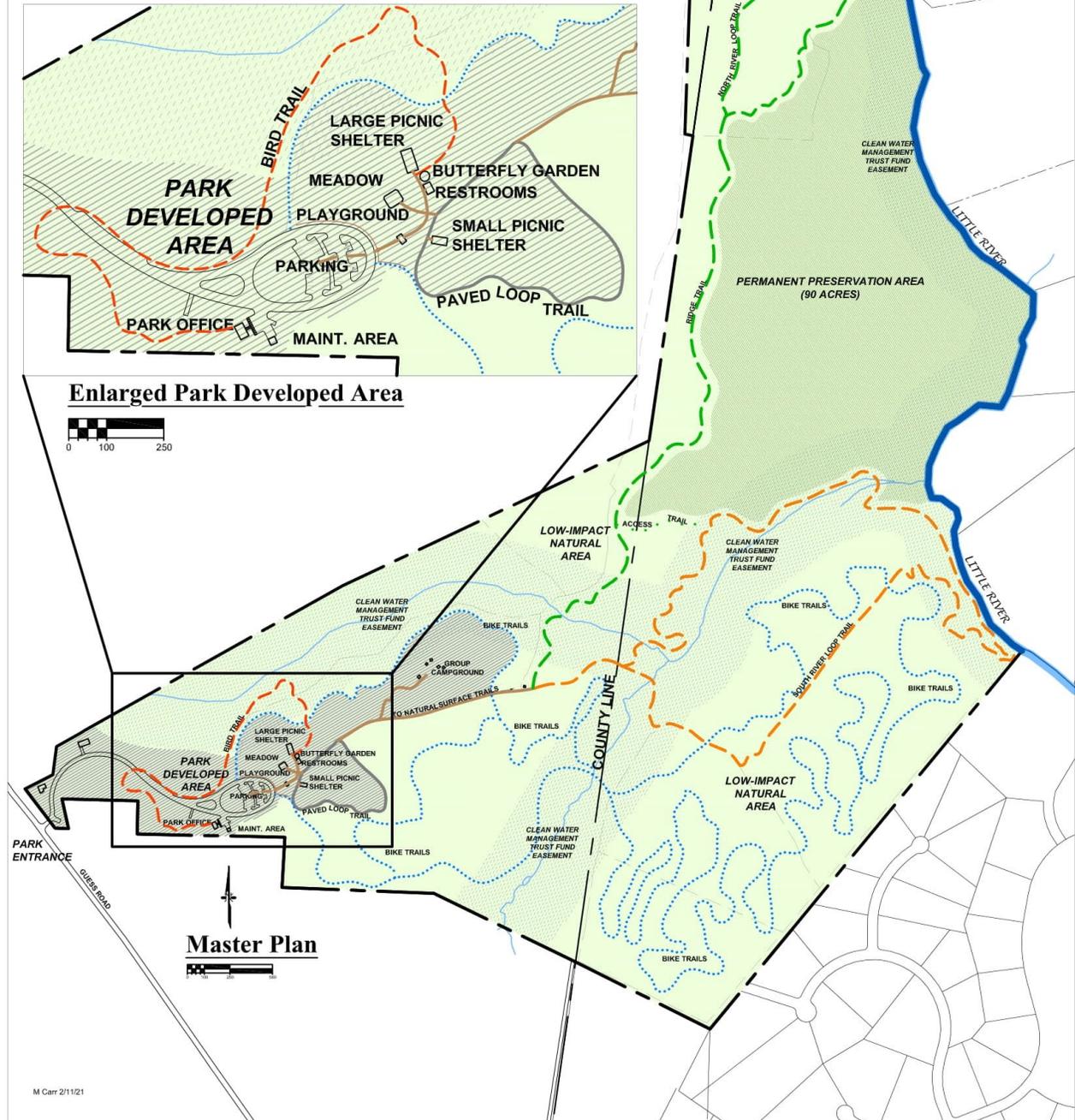


FIGURE 3. Park Management Areas

B. Management Areas

The Park consists of four management areas described below and shown in Figure 3.

1. Park Developed Area

The developed portion of the Park is where the bulk of the Park improvements and facilities are located (see also Figure 2).

The Management Objective for the so-called Park Developed Area is to provide safe facilities for the public to enjoy and to provide safe and adequate facilities for staff.

2. Low-Impact Natural Areas

The bulk of hiking and mountain biking trails are located within the area identified as the Low-Impact Natural Areas. The main stems of the hiking trails were developed from former logging roads, and consist of the Ridge / North River Trail and the South River Loop Trail (Figure 5b). Other trails were constructed for visitors to appreciate interior sections of the Park. All hiking trails are easy to moderate in difficulty and are clearly marked with numbers to aid in locating oneself on the Park brochure map.

The Management Objective for the Low-Impact Natural Area is to monitor and manage natural communities and provide meaningful, educational, natural space for the public through hiking and biking trails.

3. Permanent Preservation Area

A 90-acre portion of the Park located along an intact stretch of the North Fork Little River will remain as a preserved natural area and wildlife habitat, set aside from human visitation (Figure 3). Many key wildlife species, including reptiles, amphibians and ground nesting birds, utilize this core area of the park and avoid human interactions.² A map of significant natural features is provided as Figure 7.

The Management Objective for the Permanent Preservation Area is to monitor and manage natural plant and wildlife communities and to minimize access as much as possible. No development is to occur within this area of high ecological significance.

4. Conservation Easement Area

Funding to acquire the Park was provided in part by the State of North Carolina's Land and Water Fund (formerly the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, or CWMTF). The grant required that a permanent conservation easement be recorded that restricts development along the North Fork Little River and an unnamed perennial stream that bisects the Park. The conservation easement encumbers a 300-foot-wide riparian buffer (Figure 4). The conservation easement area encumbers 131.1 acres of the 391-acre Park. A copy of the recorded conservation easement agreement is provided as Appendix D of the Master Plan; the specific requirements for managing the parkland subject to the conservation easement are summarized below:

² North Carolina Natural Heritage Program site survey form (2019-20); available from Park staff.

The CWMTF Conservation Easement* requirements are summarized as follows:

The Property shall be maintained in its natural, scenic, wooded and open condition and restricted from any development or use that would impair or interfere with the conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement set forth above. The following uses are considered compatible:

- Passive recreational uses and access to the easement area requiring only incidental alteration of the land and posing no threat to conservation values, including, walking, fishing, animal and plant observation; educational tours, and scientific study;
- Recreational trails are permitted, including but not limited to horseback riding and biking, subject to limitations spelled out in the easement

The following activities and uses are expressly prohibited or restricted in the easement area:

- Limited Disturbance of Natural Features, Plants and Animals. There shall be no timber harvesting, cutting or removal of trees, or the disturbance of other natural features except as needed for:
 - boundary marking, fencing, signage, construction and maintenance of nature trails and public access allowed hereunder;
 - manual vegetation removal for the control of non-native plants,
 - selective cutting and prescribed burning or clearing of vegetation
 - archeological research that disturbs no more than 5,000 square feet at any one time,
 - vegetation management, including mowing, to maintain the existing open areas as shown when the easement was recorded
- Construction of Buildings and Recreational Use. No new buildings, antenna, utility pole, dock or any other temporary or permanent structure or facility are generally permitted;
- Permitted improvements include fencing and recreational improvements such as trails, boardwalks, benches, tables and any incidental filling required to produce such improvements.
- Impervious surfaces. Concrete, asphalt, gravel, or other improved surfaces used for trail construction, access or related purposes is acceptable so long as it does not exceed one (1) percent of the easement area and is permitted by state and federal regulations.
- Signage. Most signage is prohibited, but trail signage is allowed.
- Mineral Use, Excavation. There shall be no filling, excavation, mining or drilling; no removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rock, peat, minerals or other materials, and no change in the topography of the land in any manner except as necessary for the purpose of combating erosion or incidental to any conservation management activities otherwise permitted in this Conservation Easement.
- Wetlands and Water Quality. Pollution or alteration of water bodies is prohibited and no activities that would be detrimental to water purity or that would alter natural water levels, drainage, sedimentation and or cause soil degradation or erosion nor diking, alteration, draining, filling or removal of wetlands, except activities to restore natural hydrology or wetlands enhancement as permitted by state and any other appropriate authorities.
- Dumping. Dumping of soil, trash, ashes, garbage, waste, abandoned vehicles, appliances, or machinery, or other materials within the easement is prohibited.

* Program name changed to NC Land and Water Fund in 2021

Site Constraints for:
Little River Regional Park
& Natural Area

A Durham / Orange County Partnership

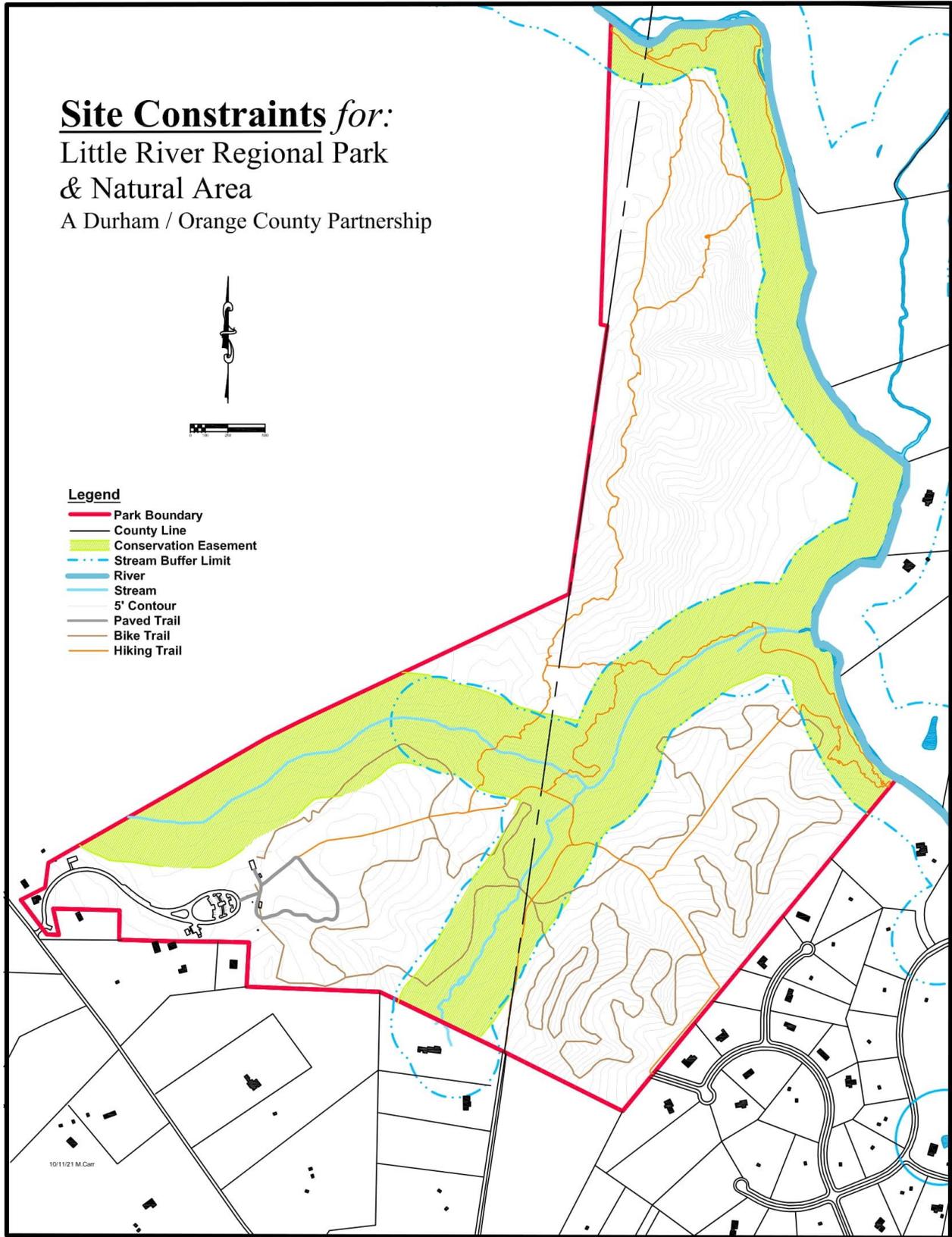


FIGURE 4. Site Constraints Map

IV. Management Plan

The purpose of the Management Plan is to provide direction for how the Park will be managed over time, consistent with the Master Plan. Visitor facilities and services will remain concentrated in the developed portions near the Park entrance, with the bulk of the Park left natural and experienced through the hiking and biking trails.

Hiking and off-road biking trail opportunities provide the primary means for the public to experience the Park. Park facilities will be maintained and replaced as needs and funds allow, but may not expand outside of the currently developed areas.

A. Overall Management Principles

The following management principles guide decision-making for the Little River Park.

1. Natural Area Conservation

- a) Environmental conservation will focus on protection of critical habitat for species at risk in the Park.
- b) Land management will abide by all provisions of the conservation easement held by the NC Land and Water Fund (formerly NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund) (Figure 4 and Master Plan Appendix D).
- c) Durham and Orange counties will consider partnership/stewardship agreements with appropriate groups to support ecological restoration or research in the Park.
- d) Visitor facilities will be maintained regularly. Renovations and replacement facilities will be planned and designed with conservation and operational sustainability in mind.

2. Cultural Heritage Management

- a) The recommendations included in the 2001, 2003, and 2009 reports of cultural resource investigations (by Legacy Research Associates) shall be reviewed and, where feasible, implemented in the next five years.
- b) Park Staff will work with Orange and Durham county experts to gather cultural and ecological information for display on park information kiosk panels.

3. Visitor Opportunities

- a) The public will experience nature in the Park through hiking trails, mountain biking trails, and a bird watching trail.
- b) Trails will be developed with consideration of user safety, natural and cultural protection, and operational sustainability.
- c) The public will be encouraged to follow “Leave No Trace” principles.

4. Park Operations

- a) All aspects of Park operations will follow the guidelines established in the Operational Guidelines adopted by both counties’ respective boards of commissioners.

- b) Park operations and development will be limited to that which is necessary to minimize visitor impacts to the environment and to maintain designated visitor facilities.

In addition to the priority management plan actions previously described, additional management of Park facilities will be performed on a routine basis.

B. Facilities and Improvements Management Objectives

1. Hiking Trails

- a) **Trail Sustainability and Maintenance.** Trail sustainability must be of the highest priority in terms of natural areas management. Trail sustainability means ensuring that the trails are safe and enjoyable for users, while minimizing impacts on the natural environment.

Hiking trails, markers, benches, boardwalks, bridges and signs are to be maintained by Park staff using best practices established by the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Student Conservation Association. Findings from regular inspection should be addressed within a reasonable time (a month or less). Bridges and boardwalks should be monitored during routine trail inspections, leaves and debris removed, and repairs made as needed. Trees that pose safety hazards should be removed by staff or by contracted experts when needed. Washouts and rock armoring should be monitored seasonally; leaves and built-up soil should be removed and small trees grubbed out.

When trail renovations are needed the work should occur in the following priority order:

- i. Re-route the trail to avoid chronic areas of erosion, drainage, soggy areas;
 - ii. Renovate or replace existing boardwalk, preferably elevated at least one foot to allow for small wildlife movement underneath;
 - iii. Construct new boardwalks, again preferably elevated at least one foot to allow for small wildlife movement underneath;
 - iv. Armor trails with rock or other hardened treatments as a last resort where less-intrusive options are not viable
- b) **Trail Inspections and Safety.** Trail inspections by Park staff should occur on a weekly, monthly, and seasonal basis, as well as after major storms. Safety hazards should be removed or identified, including:
 - i. Safety hazards within close proximity to trails should be removed.
 - ii. Stumps on trails should be trimmed to the ground or spray painted for visibility to reduce preventable tripping hazards.
 - iii. Holes within or adjacent to trails should be filled.
 - iv. Temporary hazards such as stinging insect nests should be marked to assist public safety (e.g., use of chicken wire cages with an educational note).
 - v. Overhanging trees that pose safety risks should be removed.

2. Mountain Biking

- a) **Trail Sustainability and Maintenance.** Mountain biking trails are to be maintained and improved, as necessary, by both Park staff and volunteers from TORC following guidelines established by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA). Trail closures are determined by Park staff based on precipitation and subsequent ground conditions. A copy of the trail closure protocol is available from the staff at the Park office. A bi-monthly maintenance schedule is to be monitored by staff and carried out by TORC volunteers. Volunteer monitoring of hiking and biking trails should be encouraged, including filling out trail inspection forms.

3. Signage and Trail Markings

Park and trail signage and informational kiosk materials should be inspected and replaced when broken, faded, outdated, or as otherwise necessary. Ideas for additional signage should be brought to the Park management team (Orange and Durham county staff) to coordinate the placement, design and wording.

- a) All signage (permanent and temporary) should be neutral and professional in tone.
- b) Directional signage should be evaluated to ensure it clearly communicates the visitor's location, which trail they are on, and how to return to the parking lot.
- c) Park signage should be cleaned on a regular basis.
- d) New signage is to be approved by Orange and Durham county staff.
- e) Trail markings should utilize an easily understood color-coded system.

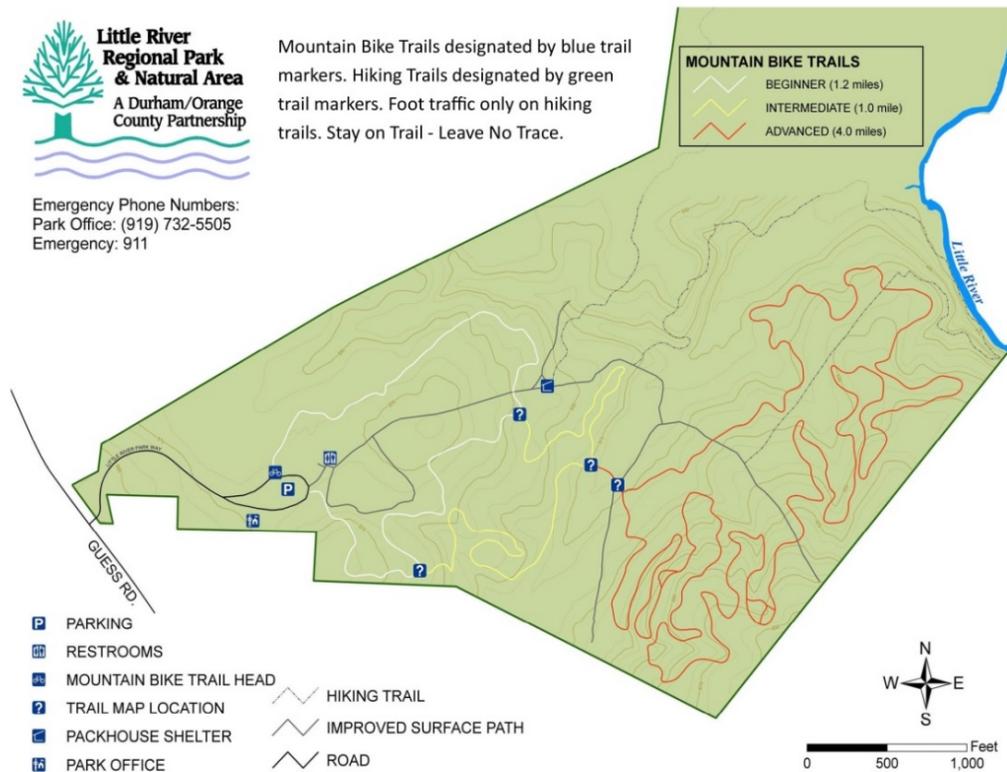


FIGURE 5a. Mountain Bike Trails Map



Emergency Phone Numbers:
 Park Office: (919) 732-5505
 Emergency: 911

Hiking Trails

-  Ridge Trail (0.84 mi)
-  North River Loop (1.2 mi)
-  Homestead Trail (0.2 mi)
-  South River Loop (1.4 mi)
-  Bird Trail (0.5 mi)
-  Mountain Bike Trail

-  PARKING
-  RESTROOMS
-  HIKING TRAIL
-  HIKING TRAIL MAP
-  PARK OFFICE
-  PACKHOUSE SHELTER
-  GROUP CAMPING
-  MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL
-  BIKE TRAIL MAP



Hiking Trails designated by green trail markers. Foot traffic only on hiking trails.

Mountain Bike Trails designated by blue trail markers. Stay on Trail - Leave No Trace.

FIGURE 5b. Hiking Trails Map

C. Historic and Cultural Resources Management Objectives

1. Historical Resources

Several cultural and archaeological assessments of the Park property have been completed since the land was acquired in 1999. Those studies have identified several areas of historical significance and areas that would benefit from additional study.

County staff maintain maps showing the locations of archaeological significance, marked as “special resource areas.” These maps are consulted prior to making any site improvements or adding new park amenities, including trails, to help ensure that sensitive resources are protected from being damaged or destroyed.

Staff will determine which “special resource areas” are appropriate for public access and interpretation. Signage will be developed to educate and engage the public.

D. Natural Resources Management Objectives

- 1. Natural Community Management** – The distinct forest types found within the Park vary in age and vegetation type and will be managed to encourage a mosaic of species and habitat diversity (Figure 1). As staff time and resources allow, less densely-vegetated areas around the developed portion of the Park will be tended to support uneven-age forest stands and diverse wildlife habitats.

Staff will seek opportunities to support early-successional areas within the Park as they occur naturally while prioritizing native plant and animal communities. Any management considerations and planned activities will be made annually, incorporated in the annual work plan, and budgeted as resources permit.

A number of low-cost management activities will be used to support the health and sustainability of the Park’s natural areas with the primary goal to create a wild and natural habitat. Damaged or dead trees will be mitigated for safety reasons, but otherwise left in situ for habitat services.

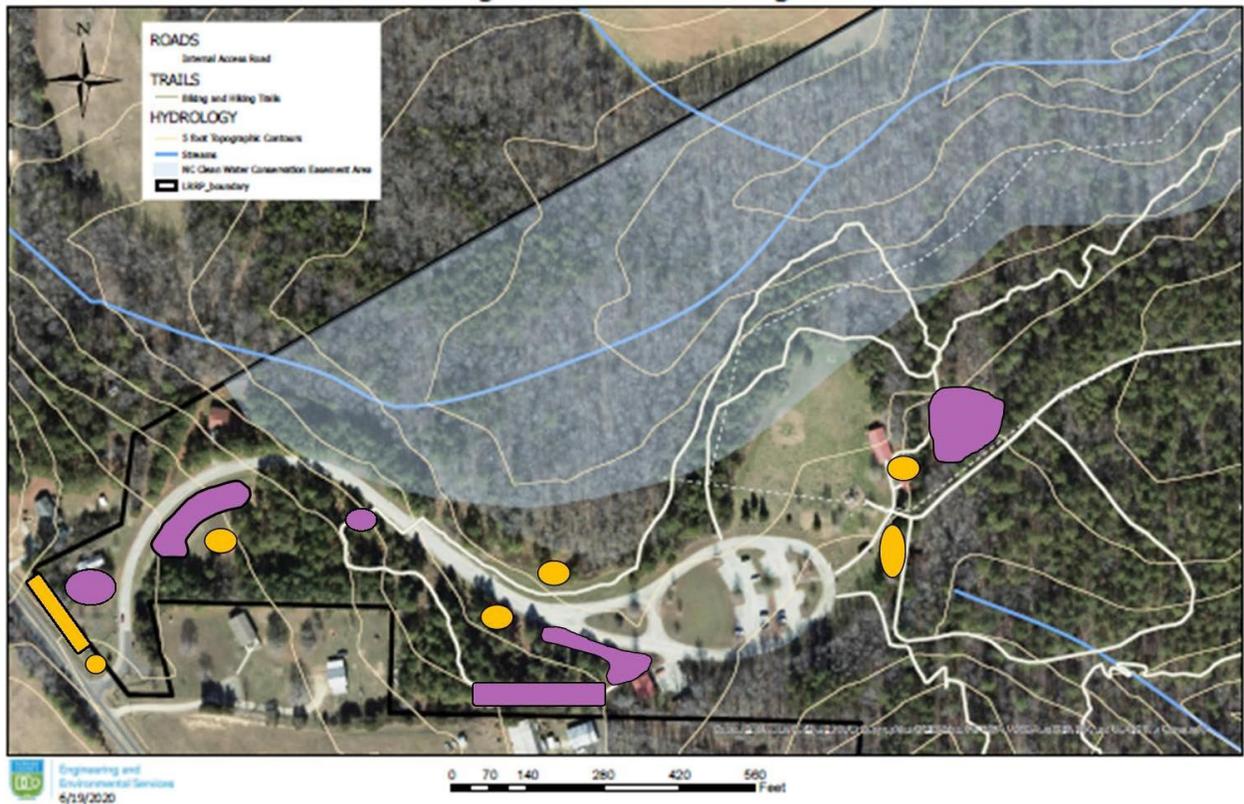
Dead trees provide important nesting sources for many cavity dwelling species, including woodpeckers, bluebirds, and barred owls. To support the varied wildlife in the park, dead trees should not be removed unless they are endangering buildings or threatening trail safety. In addition, fallen tree biomass should be left on site as it provides additional habitat for many types of reptiles and amphibians.

- 2. Pollinator Habitat Management** – The pollinator garden was created in 2005 between the public restrooms and large shelter. The garden contains over 60 species of plants, over 50 of which are native to the region. Plantings around the front entrance sign and the corn crib also provide some small pollinator habitats. In addition, several areas of milkweed growing naturally in the developed area are maintained to allow the plants to spread. These “milkweed waystations” are used in several Citizen Science projects involving Monarch butterfly populations. Other areas in the developed area could be

utilized as potential pollinator habitats including along the entrance driveway and around the two septic fields (Figure 6).

Pollinator habitats should follow a sustainable approach in their location, selection and management.

- a) New and existing habitat areas should use native species whenever possible
- b) Pollinator habitats will be maintained using organic or biological pest control and organic fertilizers or other treatments
- c) New habitats areas will be developed in manageable sizes depending on plant needs and available staffing
- d) Plant species within the pollinator habitat should be selected to provide year-round benefits to pollinators.



● Existing Pollinator Areas ● Potential Pollinator Areas

FIGURE 6. Pollinator Areas (Existing and Potential)

- 3. Invasive Species Management** -- Several varieties of non-native, invasive plants threaten the Park's natural plant communities and should be located, documented, monitored, removed and/or treated when possible. These plants include Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimenium*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*). Over the years, Park staff have treated and managed invasive plants where feasible, focusing primarily on areas along hiking and biking trails. Invasive plants can impact the natural regeneration of native plants, particularly non-woody understory perennials, but they also impact seed germination of woody shrubs and trees. Invasive plants displace native plants, impact ecosystem processes, reduce biodiversity, and disrupt wildlife populations. Aquatic areas are also monitored for problematic aquatic invasive plants like hydrilla. Although native to this region, poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) and common greenbriar (*Smilax rotundifolia*) are nuisance plants that are identified and managed in publicly accessible areas.

Management Objectives

- a) Prevent introduction and spread of invasive plants by prioritizing native plants for landscaping, minimizing soil disturbance, and cleaning vehicles to minimize seed spread.
- b) Map invasive plant locations and maintain records that include species, location, date and description of any removals and/or treatment.
- c) Prioritize and review areas for management every 2-3 years, focusing on areas within the State's conservation easement area and the low-impact natural areas.
- d) Work with local technical experts/resources on using best management practices for removal and/or treatment (e.g., NC Cooperative Extension, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and NC Forest Service) recognizing that priorities and treatment strategies change.
- e) Leverage citizen scientists and other volunteers to assist with locating, identifying, removal and/or treatment.
- f) For management try to (1) remove plant physically (digging, weed wrench, etc.), (2) cut and spray/brush remaining stump with herbicide, and then (3) broadcast foliar spray. The use of Roundup (glyphosate) is not permitted.

E. Park Facilities and Operations Management Objectives

1. Park Buildings

- a) Routine inspections of buildings and shelters occur monthly to ensure the safe operation of the Park. Needed repairs or improvements will be addressed through identification and budgeted through annual budgets and capital improvement plans for more substantial upgrades.

2. Park Infrastructure

- a) The Park's well and septic systems are inspected every three years by Orange County Planning and Inspections staff. The well water is inspected quarterly by Orange County Environmental Health Services staff. Septic tanks should be serviced every three to five years.
- b) Areas around the well house, electric hot box, and septic tanks should be kept clear of plants and debris.

3. Playground Monitoring

- a) Routine inspections of the playground equipment and safety surfacing occur monthly. A full annual audit is performed according to the National Playground Safety Institute guidelines for playground safety inspectors. Staff will maintain Certified Playground Safety Inspector credentials and be responsible for documenting results of all inspections. Monthly Inspection reports and annual audits are available for review in the Park Office upon request.
- b) Safety surfacing requires weekly attention during busy seasons, and yearly replenishment. Total replacement of the surfacing is recommended every 7-10 years.

4. Entrance and Parking Areas

- a) The entrance to the property welcomes visitors and is the first impression they have of the Park. Staff will insure the landscaping, park signage, and entrance road are in good repair. Any needed improvements outside of the normal maintenance will be proposed and approved during the annual budget process.
- b) The parking areas will be maintained to provide safe access and egress to and from the Park. All traffic signs will be maintained and replaced as needed. Any landscaping necessary to provide adequate site lines will be performed on a routine schedule. Cross walks will be clearly delineated and repainted as needed.
- c) The top priority for the driveway and parking area is to pave them in their entirety. Staff will determine if any additional parking can be created through paving. Staff will also investigate the possibility of incorporating additional paved walking/biking paths around the perimeter of the parking area.
- d) Staff has identified areas in the open field that may be used as overflow parking during certain large events.

5. Historical Farm Structures Function and Assessment

- a) The pack house was moved to its present location near the Ridge Trail trailhead and serves as a hiker shelter during inclement weather. A small sign describes the historic use of the building when the Laws family farm was in operation. Possible improvements to the area include: utilizing the open area around the building as pollinator habitat, improving daylighting if practical and cost-efficient, freshening signage explaining the previous use as a pack house, trail head interpretative signage describing what can be found on the different trails, as well as difficulty, seasonal plants, etc.
- b) The maintenance shed (a former tobacco curing barn) was renovated in 2004, with an addition built in 2009. It was built from roughhewn oak logs chinked with cement with a cement pad floor. The building does not have running water or HVAC. Possible improvements include building a more modern structure for park operations equipment and chemical storage utilizing the historical building for the storage of lumber, fencing and hand tools. A small interpretive sign is posted on the security fence surrounding the building that describes the building's use during the operation of the Laws farm. Updated signage may be desirable.
- c) The Laws family farmhouse has had no money budgeted for its upkeep nor has any decision been made on its fate. It will need some maintenance soon including repainting the exterior and addressing the roof seam between the original structure and the back addition. The farmhouse sits at the park entrance and may not serve to create a good first impression of the park. The building could be dismantled and the materials repurposed. The space could be used as a location for an outdoor classroom, more pollinator habitat or materials storage for park operations.

6. Property Boundaries

- a) Property lines should be walked once annually to check on encroachments; boundary signs should be posted and freshened as needed
- b) Buffers should be maintained to reduce views into adjoining residential areas where possible (not possible by Park Office)

7. Landscaping, Erosion and Drainage Issues

- a) Park landscaping should be with native species whenever possible
- b) The use of deer resistant and drought tolerant species is preferable
- c) Areas of grass that must be mowed frequently should be reduced, converting to more native grasses and flowers that are drought tolerant and support pollinator habitats to improve sustainability
- d) Any areas of soil erosion, including on fields and in drainage swales, should be addressed with rip-rap, re-seeding, etc. Drainage problems should be addressed through grading, top-dressing, and construction of swales and drainage pipes. Trail erosion should be addressed through the re-routing of problem sections and by following the Park's protocol for trail closings.

8. Materials Storage and Waste Management

- a) Park operation and maintenance requires places to store construction materials, gravel/rock for improvements, weedy debris and limbs, and vegetative composting materials. Although these are an essential component of internal park operations they can be unattractive for park visitors and incompatible with the CWMTF conservation easement restrictions. Locations for these activities should be sited carefully to minimize unsightly views outside of the CWMTF conservation easement stream buffer areas.
- b) The construction of a pole barn or similar storage area for landscaping materials (e.g., gravel, dirt and mulch) would greatly aid in organization and distribution of those materials. A central location would be ideal, such where the Law's house is located or near the current maintenance shed.
- c) A dumpster for most refuse is located on the south side of the entrance drive in close proximity to the Park Office. Wood, metal, electronics and solvents are prohibited and must be taken to the Orange County solid waste convenience center, and a tipping fee paid each time.
- d) A dump site along the north side of the entrance drive should be limited only to organic brush. Other kinds of refuse (e.g., chairs, grills, lumber, concrete) should be hauled off site when enough has been collected to warrant paying the tipping fee at the convenience center or when a river clean-up is organized.

9. Caretaker Residence

- a) The caretaker residence is managed by the Orange County Parks Division. Inspections of the building and grounds occur annually by the Division Superintendent as per the rental agreement.
- b) Maintenance issues are reported to the park manager. Issues are resolved in-house when possible. The park manager arranges for a repair service when needed.

10. Emergency Access

- a) Several routes are designated for emergency access vehicles should a visitor become injured on the trails. A lockbox with the key to the front gate is available to emergency services personnel if entry is needed after hours.
- b) Access routes should be maintained to a clearance of 15 feet overhead and 20 feet on both sides for emergency vehicles.
- c) Downed trees and debris should be removed immediately from emergency access routes.
- d) Emergency access route maps are reviewed and updated annually. Updated maps are available in the Park Office and filed with Orange County Emergency Services.

V. Management Plan Priorities

A. Pave the existing entrance road and parking lot

The 2004 chip and seal surface treatment of the Park driveway has a life expectancy of 8 to 15 years. The roadway has worn away in many places and developed potholes beneath the original aggregate layer. Repeated applications of pea gravel are needed to keep them filled. Paving or other sustainable alternative would improve the overall appearance of the park and enhance a visitor's experience. Grading and design should take into account the use of overflow parking on the areas of grass along the driveway and parking area.

B. Re-pave and expand the existing accessible loop trail

The paved accessible loop trail is in need of major renovations due to tree roots that have been damaging the asphalt steadily for many years. As part of this renovation, plans should be made to expand the paved trail with an additional loop around the perimeter of the driveway or in the forested area adjacent to the current loop trail.

C. Obtain community input for design and replacement of existing play structure

The play structure was installed in 2004 when the Park originally opened; however this type of equipment is nearing the end of its normal life expectancy. Surveys from the Master Plan questionnaire show respondents favor the installation of swings and a sun shade if upgrades or replacement were done. Another option for future play areas is the development of a natural playground.

D. Complete the installation of interpretative park signage

Several areas of the Park could benefit from permanent interpretive signage including the historic buildings, pollinator garden, birding trail and areas of cultural significance like the old wagon road, homestead sites and mill operation.

E. Establish permanent preservation areas within the park that will remain free from trails or other intrusions

The formal establishment of designated "no development" areas within the Park ensures the preservation of important habitat for wildlife and plant communities along the North Fork Little River corridor. Bank erosion is often a consequence of trails located along waterways as humans and pets naturally want to explore these wet areas. Human activity has also been shown to reduce the use of natural areas by wildlife.

F. Construct new maintenance/storage facilities

When the Park was designed and built in 2004, several of the existing tobacco farm buildings were repurposed including the tobacco drying barn, which is used for equipment storage and maintenance. This is a log structure with a metal roof and a concrete pad that replaced the dirt floor. There is no HVAC system or running water in the building. Equipment such as lawn mowers, generators, and power tools as well as chemicals like gasoline, herbicides and paints, are stored in the barn and are subject changes in temperature and humidity. The closest safety wash station is in the Park Office located approximately 20 yards away. To protect the large investment in equipment and provide a

safer work environment, a new maintenance facility should be constructed using sustainable building practices.

VI. Management Plan Monitoring

Durham County and Orange County staff will monitor jointly the implementation of the management plan through the Annual Report and Annual Objectives.

An amendment or update to the management plan will be considered if unexpected circumstances, significant issues, or critical new information arise that warrant substantive changes to the plan. Durham and Orange county staff will work collaboratively to amend or update the management plan. Any substantive changes to the management plan must be approved by both counties' respective board of commissioners.

Prior to initiating a comprehensive update to this management plan, staff will undertake an evaluation of the current plan that will consider the following:

- Have the vision, goals and objectives been useful in guiding park management and are they still relevant?
- Has the strategic direction adequately addressed all or most of the major issues and management considerations that arose over the lifespan of the management plan?
- To what extent were the management actions implemented and are any outstanding actions still relevant?
- Have the requirements of the conservation easement been adhered to?
- Are changes to the plan's direction needed?

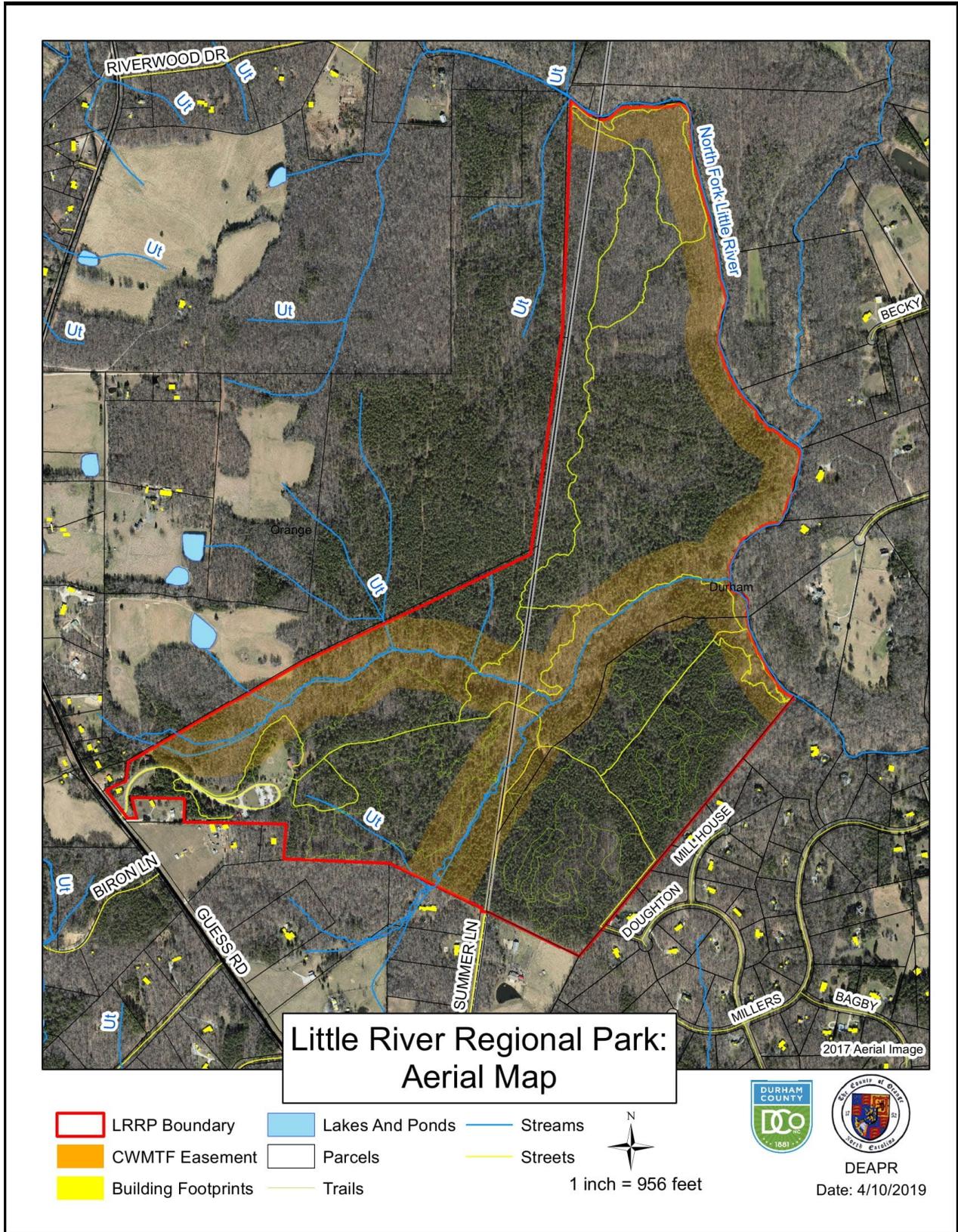
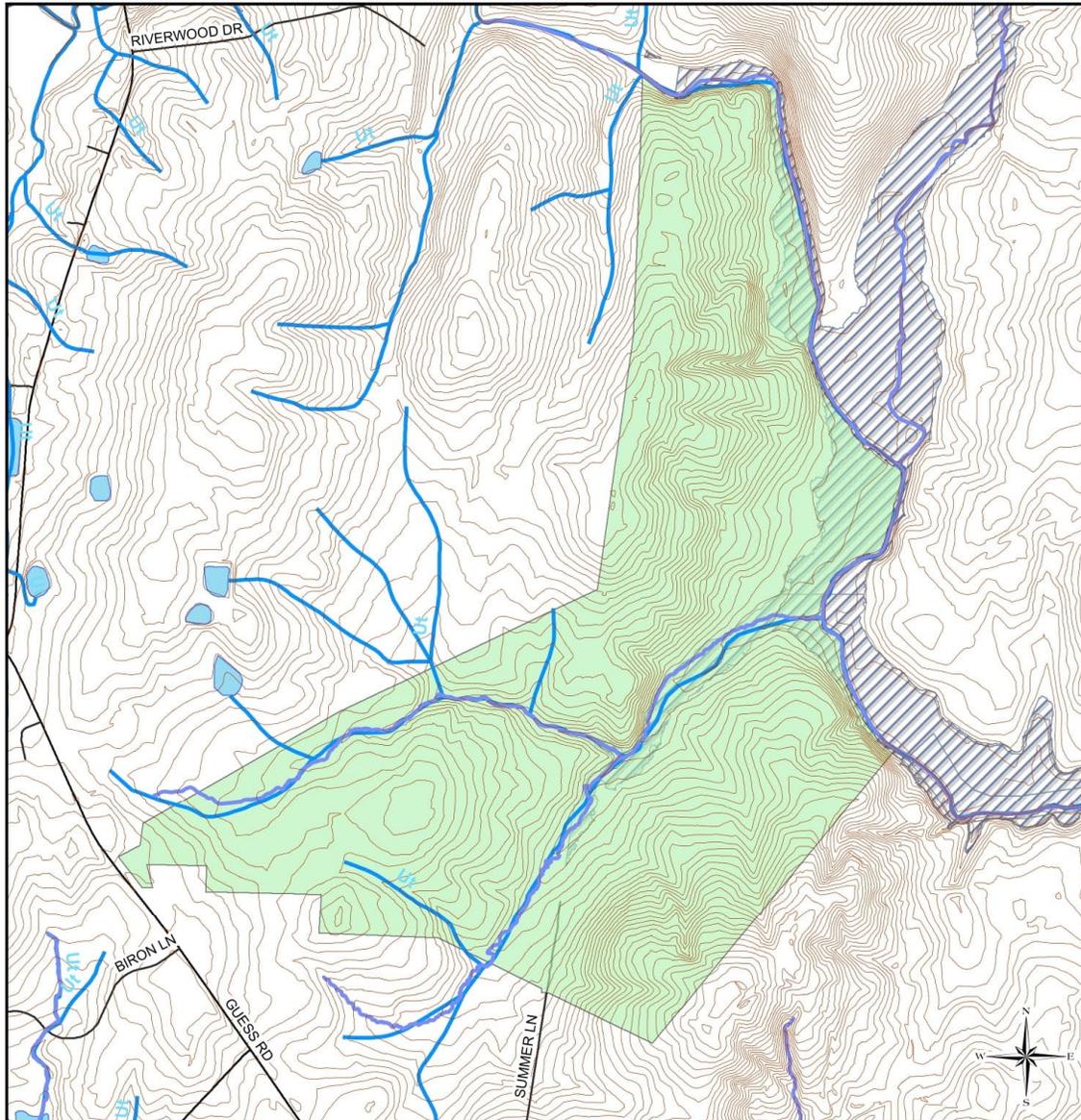
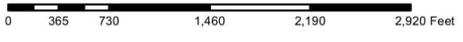


FIGURE 7. Aerial Map (2017)

Little River Regional Park-Topographical and Hydrological Map



Tract Information:
 Lat: 36' 09.81"
 Long: 78' 57.64"
 Date: 10/13/2021
 Image: 2017 Aerial Photo
 Created By: Christian Hirni
 Acres: N/A



ORANGE COUNTY



Department of Environment,
 Agriculture, Parks & Recreation

Legend	
	Roads
	USGSTopo
	Streams
	LRRP_boundary
	100 Year Floodplain

FIGURE 8. Topographic and Hydrological Map

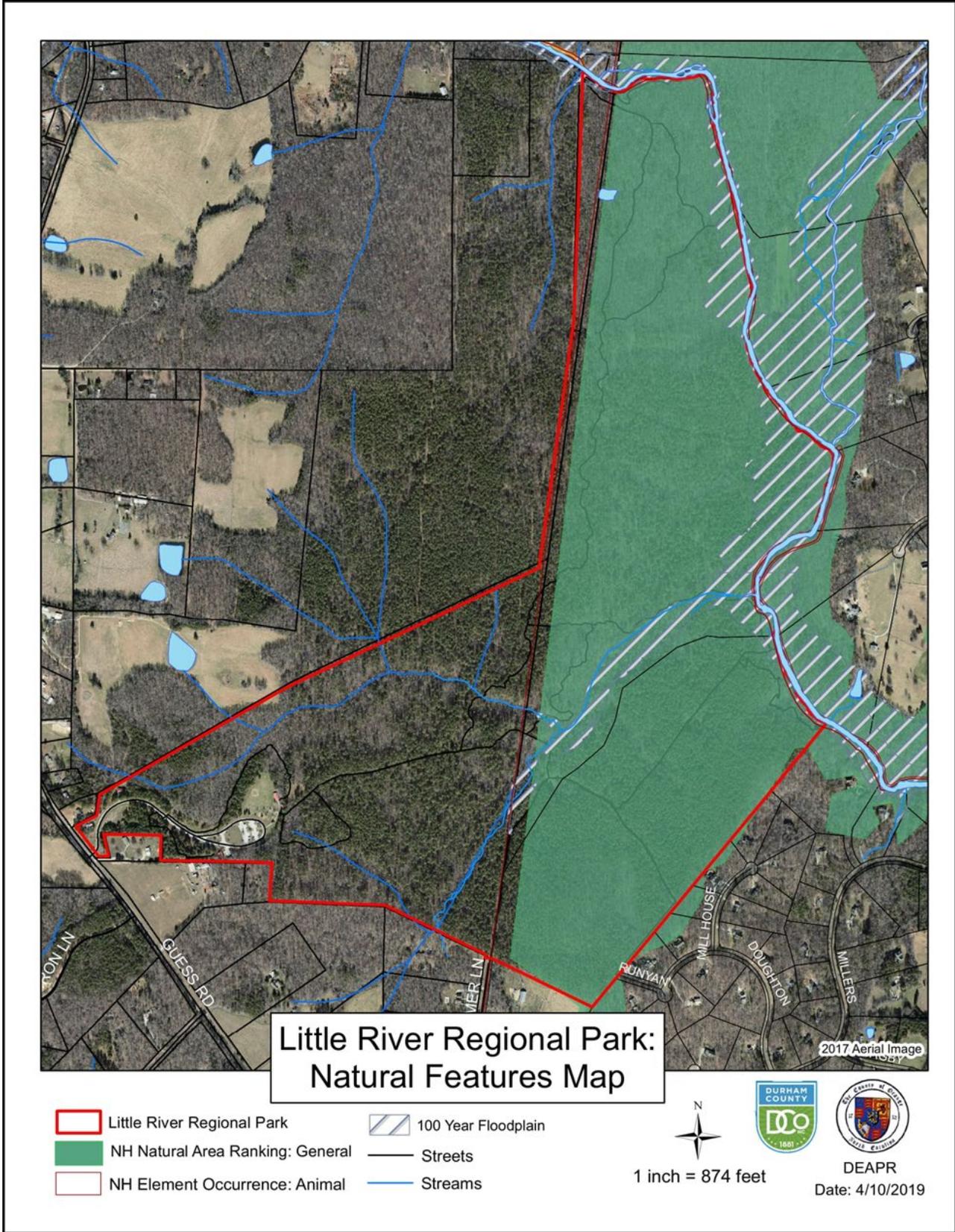


FIGURE 9. Natural Features Map

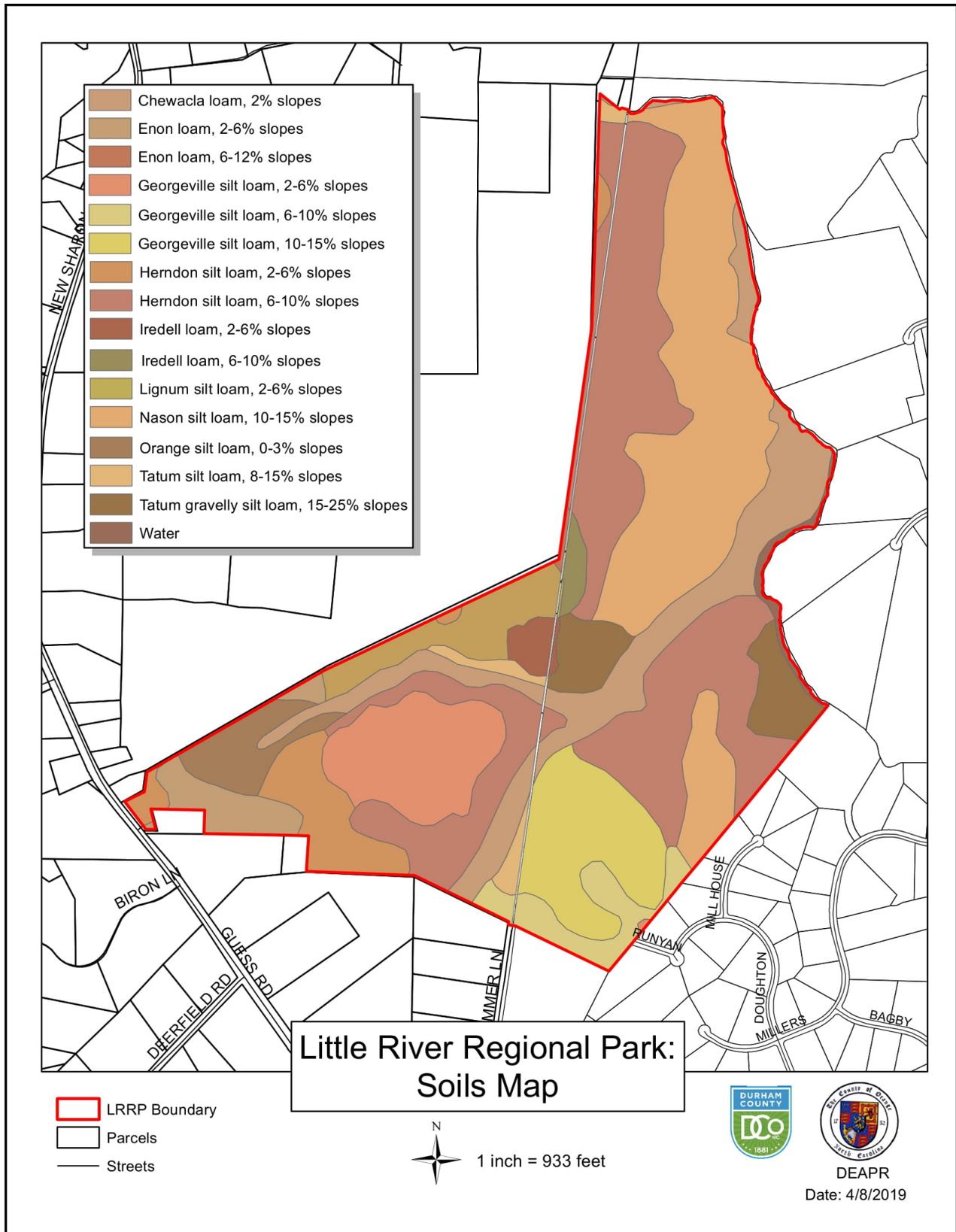
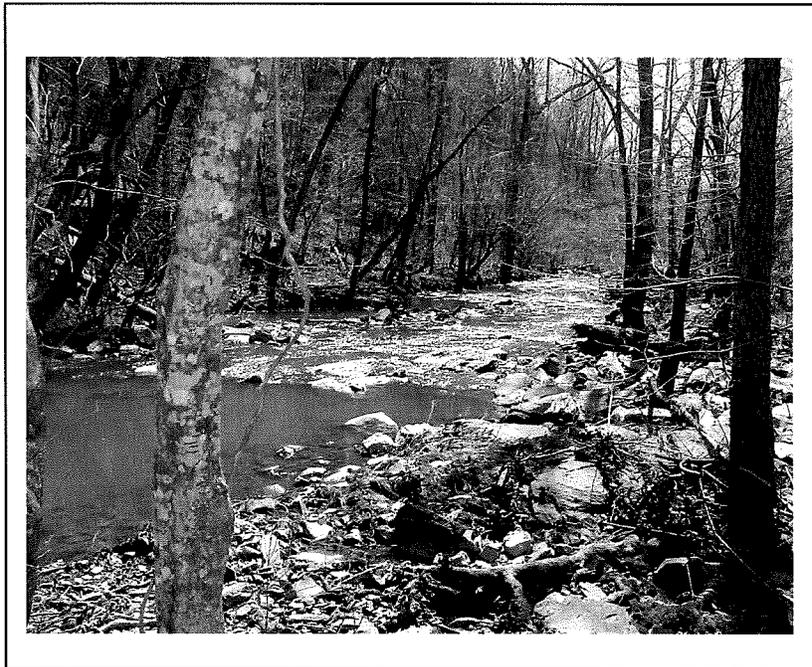


FIGURE 10. Soils Map

**Recommendations on Allowed Uses
in the
Little River Regional Park and Natural Area**

An Interim Report of the
Little River Park Advisory Committee

August 1, 2001



Project Partners:
Durham County
Orange County
Eno River Association
Triangle Land Conservancy

Recommendations on Allowed Uses in the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area

Executive Summary

This interim report from the Little River Park Advisory Committee includes a set of recommendations on what uses should be allowed within the new park. These recommendations are based on seven meetings held thus far by the committee (November 2000 to July 2001), during which members toured the park property, evaluated the property values and site limitations, received input from different user group representatives, and gathered citizen input on desired park uses and facilities.

The Committee recommendations for uses to be allowed within the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area are provided in three categories: a) allowed uses, b) conditional uses and c) prohibited uses.

Allowed Uses

The Committee recommends allowing the following uses in the park for reasons described in the report:

1. Hiking/Nature Trails
2. Picnic Area/Shelter
3. Hard Surface Trail/Picnic Loop
4. Playground
5. Open Play Meadows
6. Fishing

Conditional Uses

The Committee recommends allowing the following uses in the park, but only if certain conditions can be achieved in terms of identifying enough suitable land area to sustain the activity and appropriate operating funds to maintain and manage the activity in an appropriate fashion.

1. Horseback Riding
 2. Mountain Biking
 3. Camping
1. Proposed Conditions for Allowing Horseback Riding
 - a) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper site management and stewardship.*
 - b) *That there be at least 3-5 miles of suitable trails designated for public use.*
 - c) *That the equestrian trails are located and designed to minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources.*

- d) *That the equestrian trails are located so as not to cause significant adverse impacts to other park users or adjacent landowners.*
 - e) *That there be a memorandum of agreement with a local group of horseback riders (an "equestrian council") for the provision of volunteer resources needed to design, construct and maintain equestrian trails within the park.*
2. Proposed Conditions for Allowing Mountain Biking
- a) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper site management and stewardship.*
 - b) *That the bike trails are located and designed to minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources.*
 - c) *That the bike trails are located so as not to cause significant adverse impacts to other park users or adjacent landowners.*
 - d) *That there be a memorandum of agreement with a local mountain bike club for the provision of volunteer resources needed to design, construct and maintain bike trails within the park.*
3. Proposed Conditions for Allowing Camping
- a) *That camping be allowed only for groups such as scouts, youth associations and church groups on a reservation basis.*
 - b) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper site management and stewardship.*
 - c) *That camp site(s) is located in area(s) that will not cause harm to adjacent private property or to natural/cultural resources found within the Park.*

Prohibited Uses

The Committee recommends that the following uses be prohibited from the park for reasons described in the report:

- Motorized vehicles
- Hunting
- Firearms

The above recommendations are offered by the Little River Park Advisory Committee to the Durham and Orange county commissioners who will make final decisions on what uses will be allowed in the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area.

The Committee will meet again in the late Fall to review and comment on the initial conceptual design for the Park. A revised plan will come back to the Committee for consideration at a public meeting. A site plan will then be presented to the Durham and Orange county commissioners in Spring 2002 for approval.

In the coming months staff will continue to research the following internal management issues and make recommendations to their respective managers and boards of commissioners:

- Development of an interlocal agreement between Durham and Orange counties, which will address budget, management, staffing, security and other issues important for ensuring safe and enjoyable experiences for park visitors and adjacent landowners.
- A capital improvement plan for potential future parkland acquisition and development.
- A policy for the naming of park facilities and trails.
- The feasibility of providing an on-site caretaker residence to help address security and operational needs.

Copies of the full report on recommended uses are available from the Orange County ERCD at 919/245-2597 and from the Durham City/County Planning Department at 919/560-4137.

Recommendations on Allowed Uses in the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area

This interim report from the Little River Park Advisory Committee (hereafter, "the Committee") includes a set of recommendations on what uses should be allowed within the new park. These recommendations are based on seven meetings held thus far by the Committee (November 2000 to July 2001), during which members toured the park property, evaluated the property values and site limitations, received input from different user group representatives, and gathered citizen input on desired park uses and facilities. The Committee charge and list of members is provided at Attachment A.

I. Property description

The park property is comprised of 391 acres straddling the Orange/Durham county boundary (256 acres in Durham Co.; 135 acres in Orange). The main entrance to the park will be on Guess Road (NC 157). The areas to the west, north and east of the property are primarily woodlands. There is low-density residential development to the south along Summer Lane and within the adjacent North Fork Subdivision. There are two other public roads that provide access to the property: Summer Lane dead ends at the property and Runyan Road stubs out at the park boundary. Neither of those points is proposed for park access other than allowing pedestrian access for residents of those neighborhoods. A map of the property is provided as Attachment B.

There is a 15-acre meadow near the Guess Road entrance to the park property. This area was used for agricultural production until 1995. Most of the park amenities are proposed to be developed in the meadow area. The rest of the property is wooded, primarily with pine in the uplands and hardwoods in low-lying riparian areas. The property boundary includes over one mile of frontage along the North Fork of the Little River. The property is located five miles upstream from the Little River Reservoir, which supplies drinking water to Durham. There are two unnamed perennial streams that flow through the property and into the Little River. The grant from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund stipulates that the parkland within 300 feet of the river and streams be protected by permanent conservation easements. That protection will help ensure the continued excellent health of these waters. A contour map of the property is provided as Attachment C.

The property was once owned by Continental Can Company, which clear-cut most of the trees in the 1960s and replanted with loblolly pine. The pines were thinned in the early 1990s. Several of the old logging roads remain today, used as walking/riding trails. Today the wooded areas include 40-year-old pines with an understory of young hardwoods. The property is typical of a managed Piedmont

loblolly forest in succession to an upland oak-hickory forest, which should predominate within the next 100 years. The forest consists mostly of hardwoods along the Little River (sycamore, red maple, and river birch). Portions of the site have downed trees from Hurricane Fran (Sept. 1996) and a May 2000 windstorm.

II. Property Values

Riparian buffers established by forming the park will help protect aquatic species in the Little River. The river supports populations of four freshwater mussels listed by the state as "threatened" (yellow lampmussel, Atlantic pigtoe, triangle floater, squawfoot), and another that is "significantly rare" in NC (notched rainbow). Three of the five mussel species are candidates for federal listing as threatened or endangered species. The presence of these mussels is evidence of the high water quality of the Little River.

Wildlife known to use the property includes deer, wild turkey, beaver, river otter, weasel, salamanders and numerous migratory birds.

The property includes a number of historic and archaeological features, including the old Law family farmhouse and outbuildings, remnants of old roads, and an old mill site, which likely served to meet the needs of the owners of this property and possibly some of the neighboring landowners. An archaeological survey of the entire property was recently completed to help identify the locations of important sites. The information from that survey will be used for siting future park facilities and for identifying areas of historic and cultural interest for interpretation.

III. Public Meeting

The Committee held a public meeting on March 1, 2001 at the Pleasant Green Community Center. The meeting started with short presentations about the park property, including the history of use, natural and cultural resources, site conditions, and proposed park facilities. Committee members and staff received comments and answered questions on topics ranging from site features to park design to future park management. Citizens were then provided an opportunity to "vote" on what uses they would like to see allowed in the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area. It was explained that the allowed uses would not be determined by popular vote, but the information would be useful to gauge the demand for certain kinds of proposed uses. A total of 44 people participated in the exercise. The results are provided as Attachment D. A summary of comments is provided as Attachment E.

IV. Discussion of Proposed Uses

The Little River parkland is being acquired with a combination of public and private funds. Since the beginning of the project the stated purposes of acquiring this land have been watershed protection, preservation of open space and wildlife habitat, and low-impact recreation, including hiking, picnic areas and nature study.

Horseback riding and mountain biking were also listed as potential uses on portions of the property that might accommodate those activities.

Those purposes and potential uses were also stated in the applications for state grant funds that were awarded to Durham and Orange counties for land acquisition and were listed as possible uses in applying for park development funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF awarded a total of \$262,000 for park development and further land acquisition. A preliminary site plan that was included in the LWCF application is provided as Attachment F.

With those parameters in mind, the Committee spent a considerable amount of time discussing the proposed uses of the park and the ability of the land to accommodate and sustain those uses. The Committee sought community input on what kinds of trails were desirable and should be established. The LRPAC also recognized the need for park policies and rules to manage those uses, and determined that the level of resources (i.e., staff and operating funds) afforded to the park would help determine the ability to manage the variety of uses that are envisioned. The Committee felt that while some uses could be allowed from the beginning, other uses might need to be phased in at a later date, as more resources become available. Some uses should not to be allowed at all.

Other factors were considered by the Committee, such as the possible effects that particular uses might have on neighboring properties. Some of those issues will enter into consideration during the design phase of the park. Also discussed was the fact that some uses, such as horseback riding, are considered by many as a traditional use of the property and the surrounding lands.

The Committee determined that some uses would be relatively easy for the property to accommodate without any substantial or long-term impact on the landscape and the native biota, and which could be attained with minimal management costs. Those include hiking trails, picnic areas, a playground, and open play areas in what is now field. The LWCF grant anticipated those uses and will provide funds necessary for the initial amenities for the park. Specifically, the grant budget identifies funds for the following facilities:

- Park entrance signage and landscaping
- Entrance road (gravel) to the rear portion of the meadow
- Parking lot and walkways
- Picnic shelter and restrooms
- Playground
- Play meadow
- Hard surface trail (1/4 mile) with picnic sites (ADA accessible)
- Trail improvements (bridges, culverts, water bars, etc.)

Each of the proposed facilities above received a high level of support from members of the public that attended the Committee's March 1, 2001 public input meeting.

The Committee determined that horseback riding, mountain biking and camping would also require some initial cost outlay, but would then also require a relatively greater long term investment in continual oversight, maintenance and enforcement of rules. The committee received good input from representatives of horseback riding and mountain biking user groups. Staff also provided information from a variety of sources, on the possible impacts to the park from these uses. Those sources included local park and recreation departments, equestrian and mountain biking clubs, N C State Parks, N C State University, N C Horse Council and extensive research by an intern working for the Durham Planning Department. A summary of that information is provided as Attachment G.

V. Recommended Uses

The Committee recommendations for uses to be allowed within the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area are provided in three categories: a) allowed uses, b) conditional uses and c) prohibited uses.

A. Allowed Uses

The Committee recommends allowing the following uses in the park for the reasons provided below:

- Hiking/Nature Trails
- Picnic Area/Shelter
- Hard Surface Trail/Picnic Loop
- Playground
- Open Play Meadows
- Fishing

1. Hiking/Nature Trails

Hiking trails have been identified as one of the primary uses of this park. The former logging roads provide a base for a future network of pedestrian trails that would allow people to experience different features of the property, including the upland forest, stream crossings, the North Fork Little River and floodplain, and some of the identified historic and cultural areas (e.g., mill site, house sites, old road beds, etc.). LWCF grant funds are earmarked for improvements to existing trails and the creation of new trails (Attachment F). Volunteers will be used for trail construction and maintenance through a proposed volunteer site steward program.

2. Picnic Area/Shelter

The meadow area (former agricultural field) would accommodate a picnic shelter and associated amenities in close proximity to the parking area and proposed restroom facilities. LWCF grant funds are allocated for a small picnic shelter, picnic

tables, well/pumphouse, toilet facility, and drinking fountain. These facilities should be located outside of the conservation easement area.

3. Hard Surface Trail/Picnic Loop

A short (1/4-mile) hard surface loop trail is recommended for construction through a portion of the woodlands closest to the meadow. An adjoining, natural surfaced loop trail could be added for a longer hike—perhaps a Figure 8. Such a trail would enable many people to experience a woodland walk without having to travel very far from the parking area and associated amenities. Along the trail, there could be special plantings of native wildflowers to attract birds and butterflies. This activity would be designed to accommodate people with special needs, including disabled persons and people with baby carriages and strollers.

4. Playground

Construction of a small playground is recommended close to the picnic shelter and toilet facilities. A non-traditional design would help it to blend in with the natural surroundings. LWCF grant funds are allocated for a small playground facility.

5. Open Play Meadows

It is recommended that large portions of the existing meadow remain open areas for informal playing of games and for aesthetic enjoyment. Some of the open areas near the picnic shelter and playground could be mowed on a regular basis to accommodate Frisbee, volleyball, and other games.

6. Fishing

It is recommended that fishing be allowed, but that no special facilities or management needs would be needed. People wanting to fish would need to carry their gear along the pedestrian trails to access the river. Depending on which part of the river is to be used, the walk could be from 1 to 2 miles.

B. Conditional Uses

The Committee recommends allowing the following uses in the park, but only if certain conditions can be achieved in terms of identifying enough suitable land area to sustain the activity and enough operating funds to maintain and manage the activity in an appropriate fashion.

- Horseback Riding
- Mountain Biking
- Camping

1. Horseback Riding

The Committee recommends allowing horseback riding within the park, but only under the following conditions:

- a) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper management and stewardship.* While most, if not all, facilities needs could be paid for using the LWCF grant, additional funds would be needed for operational needs. Issues include management for the trail system to avoid damage to resources and improper use.
- b) *That there be at least 3-5 miles of suitable trails designated for public use.* This would require the acquisition of additional adjacent land for inclusion in the park or establishing an equestrian trail easement agreement with adjoining landowners. [Initial discussions with adjacent landowners have been positive.]
- c) *That the equestrian trails are located and designed to minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources.* Equestrian trails should avoid steep slopes and be located outside of the riparian areas and archaeological sites known to exist in the park. Any crossing of streams should be perpendicular to the corridor.
- d) *That the equestrian trails are located so as not to cause significant adverse impacts to other park users or adjacent landowners.*
- e) *That there be a memorandum of agreement with a local group of horseback riders (an "equestrian council") for the provision of volunteer resources needed to design, construct and maintain equestrian trails within the park.* Staff has met with a group that is interested in this proposal.

2. Mountain Biking

The Committee recommends allowing mountain biking within the park, but only under the following conditions:

- a) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper management and stewardship.* While most, if not all, facilities needs could be paid for with the LWCF grant, additional funds would be needed to insure proper management and oversight of both the trails and trail users.
- b) *That the bike trails are located and designed to minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources.* Bike trails should avoid steep slopes and riparian areas, should not impair or "fragment" the more sensitive natural areas, and should avoid archaeological sites known to exist in the park.
- c) *That the bike trails are located so as not to cause significant adverse impacts to other park users or adjacent landowners.*
- d) *That there be a memorandum of agreement with a local mountain bike club for the provision of volunteer resources needed to design, construct and maintain bike trails within the park.* A Durham-based group has been developed and is interested in performing this function. This type of agreement has been successful at Parks managed by Wake County.

3. Camping

The Committee recommends allowing primitive group camping within the park, but only under the following conditions:

- a) *That camping be allowed only for groups such as scouts, youth associations and church groups on a reservation basis.* Camping for general public use is not recommended, as camping sites are readily available at Eno River State Park, Falls Lake and Jordan Lake.
- b) *There are adequate funds available for any special facilities and to ensure proper management and stewardship.* No funds are budgeted for developing camping areas within the park. A site manager would be needed to reserve the camp site(s), provide user education, enforce campsite use and oversee campfires.
- c) *That camp site(s) is located in area(s) that will not cause harm to adjacent private property or to natural/cultural resources found within the Park.*

C. Prohibited Uses

The Committee recommends that the following uses be prohibited from the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area for the reasons provided below:

- Motorized vehicles
- Hunting
- Firearms

1. Motorized vehicles

The use of motorized vehicles, such as "all terrain vehicles" (ATVs) or motorcycles, is considered an incompatible use of parkland that was acquired for protecting water quality and wildlife habitat. There is evidence of recent ATV use on the park property, some of which is causing erosion along riverbanks and the sedimentation of streams. These activities are not consistent with the intended use of the park for low-impact recreation use.

2. Hunting

Hunting is a traditional use of this property and some of the neighboring properties. The land was managed for many years as gamelands under the supervision of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Changing this particular property from private woodlands to a public park with hiking trails and picnic areas creates an environment within which hunting would be an incompatible use. The potential danger to Park users far outweighs the need to allow hunting on the property.

The Committee notes, however, that the exploding nature of the White tailed Deer population in this area may warrant the counties to consider allowing periodic managed hunting to reduce the population and thereby reduce the negative impacts that population has on the park resources. Mecklenburg County Parks in Charlotte has this type of program.

3. Firearms

The same factors that make this property unsuitable for hunting make it unsuitable for the use of firearms of any kind except by authorized law enforcement personnel.

* * * * *

The above recommendations are offered to the Durham and Orange boards of commissioners who will make final decisions on what uses will be allowed in the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area.

VI. Park Development Timetable

The following are current estimates for the length of time needed to complete each step of the way toward opening the new park for public use and enjoyment.

April 2001: Cultural Survey of park property completed

August 2001: LRPAC recommendations on use conveyed to Orange/Durham BOCCs

Sept/Oct. 2001: Bidding/selection process completed for Conceptual Design/Site Plan

Dec. 2001: Conceptual Design presented to LRPAC for Review and Comment

Jan. 2002: Revised Conceptual Design presented to LRPAC (Public Meeting)

March 2002: Site Plan submitted to Orange/Durham BOCCs

April 2002: Construction bidding and selection process completed

August 2002: Construction completed

October 2002: Park opens to public (dedication ceremony)

VII. Future Issues

In the coming months, the Little River Park Advisory Committee will discuss and make recommendations on the design and construction of facilities for the Little River Regional Park and Natural Area. An initial conceptual design for the park will be presented to the Committee in December 2001. A revised plan will come back to the Committee for review at a public meeting. The site plan will then go to the Durham and Orange county boards of commissioners for their consideration and ultimate approval.

In the meantime staff will continue to research the following internal management issues and make recommendations to their respective managers and boards of commissioners:

- Development of an interlocal agreement between Durham and Orange counties that will address budget, management, security, staffing, and operational needs etc.
- Capital improvement plan for potential future parkland acquisition and development.
- Policy decision on the naming of park facilities and trails.
- Feasibility of providing a caretaker residence to provide security and operational needs.

LITTLE RIVER PARK

Little River Township
Orange County, North Carolina

VICINITY MAP



SEAL:

CLIENT:
DURHAM COUNTY
AND
ORANGE COUNTY

CONSULTANTS:
HadenStanziale
planning
landscape architecture
civil engineering

For more information, visit our website at www.hadenstanziale.com

REVISIONS:



SCALE: 1" = 50'

DATE: 5.30.03

PROJECT NUMBER: 02725

FILE NAME: alt-based.vwg

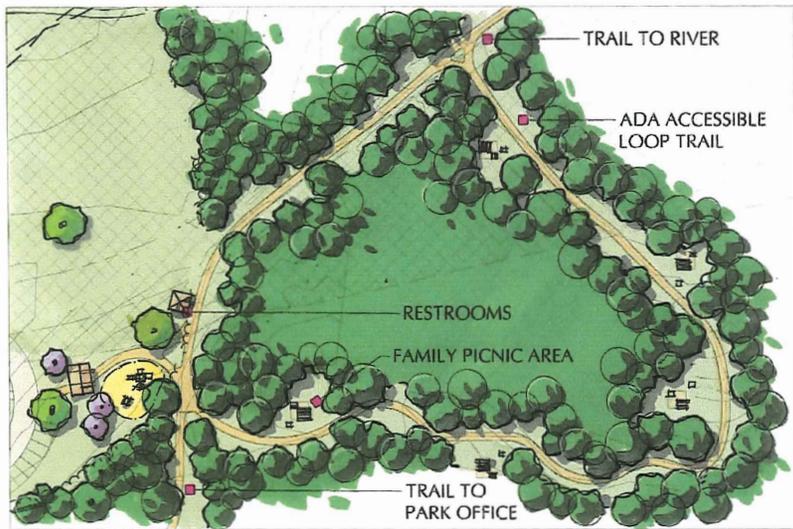
DRAWN BY: KT

APPROVED: TS

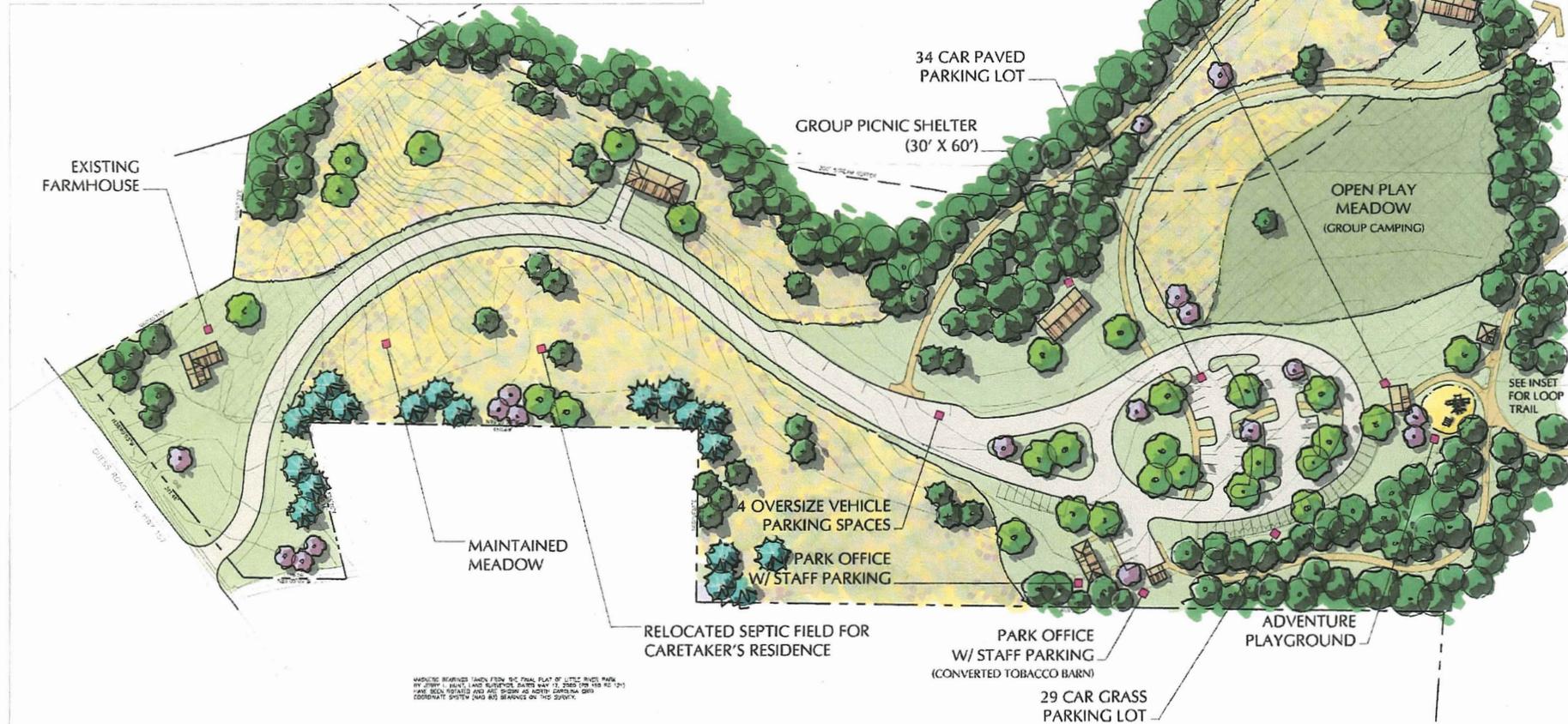
TITLE:

**MASTER
PLAN
ALTERNATE**

SHEET: MP-1.0A



LOOP TRAIL



WARNING: REVISIONS TAKEN FROM THE FINAL PLAN OF LITTLE RIVER PARK BY OTHER PLANNING AND SURVEYING FIRMS MAY BE SHOWN HERE AND MAY HAVE BEEN FORWARDED AND ARE SHOWN AS SUCH AS ACCORDING TO THE COORDINATE SYSTEM AND AS SHOWN ON THE SURVEY.

APPENDIX D. CWMTF Deed of Conservation Easement

BOOK **2198** PAGE **256**

This instrument prepared by *[signature]* should be returned to: D. MICHAEL PARKER, P.O. BOX 100
Kimberly M. Grantham, Durham County Attorney's Office, Post Office Box 3508, Durham, North Carolina
27702 HILLSBOROUGH, NC 27278

Durham County Tax Parcel ID

Orange County Tax Parcel ID
0818-13-2024
0807-98-4796 JH

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF DURHAM
and
COUNTY OF ORANGE

FOR REGISTRATION WILLIE L. COVINGTON
REGISTER OF DEEDS
DURHAM COUNTY, NC
2001 MAR 16 11:13:13 AM
BOOK: 3027 PAGE: 194-205 FEE: \$0.00
INSTRUMENT # 2001010092

**CONSERVATION EASEMENT
Little River Regional Park and Natural Area**

31 THIS CONSERVATION EASEMENT ("Conservation Easement") is made on this day of January, 2001, by and between DURHAM COUNTY with an address at 200 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701, and THE COUNTY OF ORANGE with an address at P.O. Box 8181 Hillsborough NC 27278, ("Grantor") and the STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, with its address c/o State Property Office, 1321 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1321 ("State" or "Grantee"), acting solely through the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund, with its address at 2313-B Executive Park Circle, Greenville, NC 27834 ("Fund").

RECITALS & CONSERVATION PURPOSES

- A. Grantor owns, in fee simple, the property as follows: approximately 68.1 acres located in Durham County is owned by Grantor Durham County, and approximately 56.57 acres located in Orange County is owned by Grantor County of Orange and being all of the property that is more particularly described in Exhibit A attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein ("**Property**"); and
- B. The State of North Carolina will be the Grantee and holder of this Conservation Easement; and,
- C. Fund is authorized by Article 13A, Chapter 113 of the General Statutes of North Carolina ("N.C.G.S.") to finance projects and to acquire land and interests in land, including conservation easements for riparian buffers for the purposes of providing environmental protection for surface waters and urban drinking water supplies and establishing a network of riparian greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational uses; and
- D. The Grantor has received a grant from the Fund for acquisition of the Property in consideration of which Grantor has agreed that it will be conserved and managed in a manner

that will protect the quality of the waters of the North Fork of the Little River and otherwise promote the public purposes authorized by Article 13A, Chapter 113 of the N.C.G.S; and,

E. The parties hereto recognize the conservation and water quality values of the Property in its present state as a riparian buffer and intend that said conservation values of the Property be preserved and maintained.

F. The characteristics of the Property, its current use and state of improvement are described in Exhibit A, which is the appropriate basis for monitoring compliance with the objectives of preserving the conservation and water quality values; the Exhibit A is not intended to preclude the use of other evidence (e.g. surveys, appraisals) to establish the present condition of the Property if there is a controversy over its use.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and the mutual benefits recited herein, together with other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged by the parties hereto, the Grantor hereby unconditionally and irrevocably gives, grants and conveys forever and in perpetuity to the Grantee, its successors and assigns, and the Grantee hereby accepts, a Deed of Conservation Easement of the nature and character and to the extent hereinafter set forth in, over, through and across the Property, together with the right to preserve and protect the conservation values thereof as described in the Recitals herein.

The purposes of this Conservation Easement are to provide environmental protection for surface waters and to protect the wildlife and natural heritage values and it shall be so held, maintained, and used therefore. It is the further purpose of this Easement to prevent any use of the Property that will significantly impair or interfere with the preservation of said conservation values. Grantor intends that this easement will restrict use of the Property to such activities as are consistent with the purposes of conservation.

ARTICLE I. DURATION OF EASEMENT

This Conservation Easement shall be perpetual. It is an easement in gross, runs with the land, and is enforceable by Grantee against Grantor, its representatives, successors, assigns, lessees, agents and licensees.

ARTICLE II. RIGHTS RESERVED TO GRANTOR

Grantor reserves certain rights accruing from ownership of the Property, including the right to engage in or permit others to engage in uses of the Property that are not inconsistent with the purpose(s) of this Easement. All rights reserved by Grantors are reserved for Grantors, their representatives, successors, and assigns, and are considered to be consistent with the conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement. The following rights are expressly reserved:

A. To engage in passive recreational uses of the Property (requiring only incidental alteration of the land and posing no threat to conservation values), including, without limitation, walking, fishing, or animal and plant observation; and,

B. To allow public access to the property for the purpose of conducting educational tours, scientific study, maintenance of the Property and any other purpose consistent with maintaining the conservation value; and

C. To allow limited recreational trails including but not limited to horseback riding and biking, subject to the limitations in Article III below.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Grantor and Grantee have no right to agree to any activity that would result in the termination of this Conservation Easement.

ARTICLE III. PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

Any activity on, or use of, the Property inconsistent with the purposes of this Conservation Easement is prohibited. The Property shall be maintained in its natural, scenic, wooded and open condition and restricted from any development or use that would impair or interfere with the conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement set forth above.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following activities and uses are expressly prohibited or restricted.

A. Industrial and Commercial Use. Industrial and commercial activities and any right of passage for such purposes are prohibited.

B. Agricultural, Timber Harvesting, Grazing and Horticultural Use. Agricultural, timber harvesting, grazing, horticultural and animal husbandry operations are prohibited.

C. Disturbance of Natural Features, Plants and Animals. There shall be no cutting or removal of trees, or the disturbance of other natural features except for the following: (1) as incidental to boundary marking, fencing, signage, construction and maintenance of nature trails and public access allowed hereunder; (2) manual vegetation removal for the control of non-native plants, (3) selective cutting and prescribed burning or clearing of vegetation and the application of mutually approved pesticides for fire containment and protection, disease control, restoration of hydrology, wetlands enhancement and/or control of non-native plants; subject however, to the prior approval of Fund, (4) hunting and fishing pursuant to applicable rules and regulations, (5) archeological research that disturbs no more than 5000 square feet at any one time, and (6) vegetation management, including mowing, to maintain the existing open areas described in Exhibit A.

D. Construction of Buildings and Recreational Use. There shall be no constructing or placing of any building, mobile home, billboard or other advertising display, antenna, utility pole, tower, conduit, line, pier landing, dock or any other temporary or permanent structure or facility on or above the property except as otherwise granted herein. Permitted improvements include fencing and recreational improvements such as, but not limited to, trails, boardwalks, benches, tables and any incidental filling required to produce such. Concrete, asphalt, gravel, or other improved surfaces used for trail construction, access or related purposes is acceptable so long as it does not exceed one (1) percent of the

Property. Any such improvements must also be permitted by state and federal regulations.

E. Signage. Signage is prohibited except for the following: placing and display of no trespassing signs, local, state or federal traffic or similar informational signs, for sale or lease signs, signs identifying the conservation or educational values of the Property, and/or signs identifying the Grantor as owner of the Property and State as holders of this Conservation Easement and as the source of funding for the acquisition of this Property, educational and interpretative signs, identification labels or any other similar temporary or permanent signs, reasonably satisfactory to the Fund.

F. Mineral Use, Excavation, Dredging. There shall be no filling, excavation, dredging, mining or drilling; no removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rock, peat, minerals or other materials, and no change in the topography of the land in any manner except as necessary for the purpose of combating erosion or incidental to any conservation management activities otherwise permitted in this Conservation Easement.

G. Wetlands and Water Quality. There shall be no pollution or alteration of water bodies and no activities that would be detrimental to water purity or that would alter natural water levels, drainage, sedimentation and/or flow in or over the Property or into any surface waters, or cause soil degradation or erosion nor diking, dredging, alteration, draining, filling or removal of wetlands, except activities to restore natural hydrology or wetlands enhancement as permitted by state and any other appropriate authorities.

H. Dumping. Dumping of soil, trash, ashes, garbage, waste, abandoned vehicles, appliances, or machinery, or other materials on the Property is prohibited.

I. Conveyance and Subdivision. The Property may not be subdivided, partitioned nor conveyed, except in its current configuration as an entity or block of property.

ARTICLE IV. ENFORCEMENT AND REMEDIES

A. Enforcement. To accomplish the purposes of this Easement, Grantee is allowed to prevent any activity on or use of the Property that is inconsistent with the purposes of this Easement and to require the restoration of such areas or features of the Property that may have been damaged by such activity or use. Upon any breach of the terms of this Conservation Easement by Grantor that comes to the attention of the Grantee, the Grantee shall, except as provided below, notify the Grantor in writing of such breach. The Grantor shall have ninety (90) days after receipt of such notice to correct the conditions constituting such breach. If the breach remains uncured after ninety (90) days, the Grantee may enforce this Conservation Easement by appropriate legal proceedings including damages, injunctive and other relief. The Grantee shall also have the power and authority, consistent with its statutory authority: (a) to prevent any impairment of the Property by acts which may be unlawful or in violation of this Conservation Easement; (b) to otherwise preserve or protect its interest in the Property; or (c) to seek damages from any appropriate person or entity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Grantee reserves the immediate right,

without notice, to obtain a temporary restraining order, injunctive or other appropriate relief if the breach of the term of this Conservation Easement is or would irreversibly or otherwise materially impair the benefits to be derived from this Conservation Easement. The Grantor and Grantee acknowledge that under such circumstances damage to the Grantee would be irreparable and remedies at law will be inadequate. The rights and remedies of the Grantee provided hereunder shall be in addition to, and not in lieu of, all other rights and remedies available to Grantee in connection with this Conservation Easement, including, without limitation, those set forth in the Grant Agreement under which this Conservation Easement was obtained.

B. Inspection. Grantee, its employees and agents and its successors and assigns, have the right, with reasonable notice, to enter the Property at reasonable times for the purpose of inspecting the Property to determine whether the Grantor, Grantor's representatives, or assigns are complying with the terms, conditions and restrictions of this Conservation Easement.

C. Acts Beyond Grantor's Control. Nothing contained in this Conservation Easement shall be construed to entitle Grantee to bring any action against Grantor for any injury or change in the Property caused by third parties, resulting from causes beyond the Grantor's control, including, without limitation, fire, flood, storm, and earth movement, or from any prudent action taken in good faith by the Grantor under emergency conditions to prevent, abate, or mitigate significant injury to life, damage to property or harm to the Property resulting from such causes.

D. Costs of Enforcement. Any costs incurred by Grantee in enforcing the terms of this Conservation Easement against Grantor, including, without limitation, any costs of restoration necessitated by Grantor's acts or omissions in violation of the terms of this Conservation Easement, shall be borne by Grantor.

E. No Waiver. Enforcement of this Easement shall be at the discretion of the Grantee and any forbearance by Grantee to exercise its rights hereunder in the event of any breach of any term set forth herein shall not be deemed or construed to be a waiver by Grantee of such term or of any subsequent breach of the same or of any other term of this easement or of Grantee's rights. No delay or omission by Grantee in exercise of any right or remedy shall impair such right or remedy or be construed as a waiver.

ARTICLE V. DOCUMENTATION AND TITLE

A. Property Condition. The parties acknowledge that the Property is currently undeveloped land, with no improvements other than as described in Exhibit A and easements and rights of way of record.

B. Title. Grantor Durham County, as to the 68.1 acres of the Property located in Durham County, and Grantor County of Orange, as to the 56.57 acres of the Property located in Orange County, covenants and represents that it is the sole owner and it is seized of the Property in fee simple and has good right to grant and convey the aforesaid

Conservation Easement; that there is legal access to the Property, that the Property is free and clear of any and all encumbrances, except easements of record, none of which would nullify, impair or limit in any way the terms or effect of this Conservation Easement. Grantor Durham County, as to the 68.1 acres of the Property located in Durham County, and Grantor County of Orange, as to the 56.57 acres of the Property located in Orange County, shall defend its title against the claims of all persons whomsoever, and covenants that the Grantee shall have the use of and enjoy all of the benefits derived from and arising out of the aforesaid Conservation Easement.

ARTICLE VI. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Subsequent Transfers. Grantor hereby covenants and agrees, that in the event it transfers or assigns the Property, the transferee of the Property will be a qualified organization as that term is defined in Section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any successor section, and the regulations promulgated thereunder (the "**Internal Revenue Code**"), which is organized or operated primarily for one of the conservation purposes specified in Section 170 (h)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code. Grantor agrees for itself, its successors and assigns, to notify Grantee in writing of the names and addresses of any party to whom the Property, or any part thereof, is to be transferred at or prior to the time said transfer is consummated. Grantor, for itself, its successors and assigns, further agrees to make specific reference to this Conservation Easement in a separate paragraph of any subsequent lease, deed or other legal instrument by which any interest in the Property is conveyed.

B. Conservation Purpose.

(1) Grantee, for itself, its successors and assigns, agrees that this Conservation Easement shall be held exclusively for conservation purposes.

(2) The parties hereto recognize and agree that the benefits of this Conservation Easement are in gross and assignable, provided, however that the Grantee hereby covenants and agrees, that in the event it transfers or assigns this Conservation Easement, the organization receiving the interest will be a qualified organization as that term is defined in Section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which is organized or operated primarily for one of the conservation purposes specified in Section 170 (h)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code, and Grantee further covenants and agrees that the terms of the transfer or assignment will be such that the transferee or assignee will be required to continue to carry out in perpetuity the conservation purposes that the contribution was originally intended to advance, set forth in the Recitals herein.

(3) Unless otherwise specifically set forth in this Conservation Easement, nothing herein shall convey to or establish for the public a right of access over the Property.

C. Construction of Terms. This Conservation Easement shall be construed to promote the purposes of the North Carolina enabling statute set forth in N.C.G.S. 121-34 et. seq. which authorizes the creation of Conservation Easements for purposes including those

set forth in the Recitals herein, and the conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement, including such purposes as are defined in Section 170(h)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code.

D. Recording. Grantor shall record this instrument and any amendment hereto in timely fashion in the official records of Durham County, North Carolina and Orange County, North Carolina, and may re-record it at any time as may be required to preserve its rights.

E. Notices. All notices, requests or other communications permitted or required by this Agreement shall be sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the parties as set forth above, or to such other addresses such party may establish in writing to the other. All such items shall be deemed given or made three (3) days after being placed in the United States mail as herein provided. In any case where the terms of this Conservation Easement require the consent of any party, such consent shall be requested by written notice. Such consent shall be deemed denied unless, within ninety (90) days after receipt of notice, a written notice of approval and the reason therefore has been mailed to the party requesting consent.

F. Amendments. Grantor and Grantee are free to jointly amend this Conservation Easement to meet changing conditions, provided that no amendment will be allowed that is inconsistent with the purposes of this Conservation Easement or affects the perpetual duration of this Conservation Easement. Such amendment(s) require the written consent of both Grantor and Grantee and shall be effective upon recording in the public records of Durham County, North Carolina and Orange County, North Carolina.

G. Environmental Condition of Property; Responsibility for Damages. The Grantor warrants, represents and covenants to the Grantee that to the best of its knowledge, after appropriate inquiry and investigation, that: (a) the Property described herein is and at all times hereafter will continue to be in full compliance with all federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations, and (b) as of the date hereof there are no hazardous materials, substances, wastes, or environmentally regulated substances (including, without limitation, any materials containing asbestos) located on, in or under the Property or used in connection therewith, and that there is no environmental condition existing on the Property that may prohibit or impede use of the Property for the purposes set forth in the Recitals and the Grantor will not allow such uses or conditions. The Grantor shall be solely responsible for all claims, losses, liabilities, damages, and costs, and expenses suffered as a direct or indirect result of any violation of any federal, state, or local environmental law or regulation or of the use or presence of any hazardous substance, waste or other regulated material in, on, or under the property.

H. Entire Agreement. This instrument sets forth the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the Conservation Easement and supersedes all prior discussions, negotiations, understandings or agreements relating to the Conservation Easement. If any provision is found to be invalid, the remainder of the provisions of this Conservation Easement, and the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is found to be invalid, shall not be affected thereby. The party(ies) hereto

intend this document to be an instrument executed under seal. If any party is an individual, partnership or limited liability company, such party hereby adopts the word "SEAL" following his/her signature and the name of the partnership or limited liability company as his/her/its legal seal. The Recitals set forth above and the Exhibits attached hereto are incorporated herein by reference.

I. Interpretation. This Conservation Easement shall be construed and interpreted under the laws of the State of North Carolina, and any ambiguities herein shall be resolved so as to give maximum effect to the conservation purposes sought to be protected herein.

J. Parties. Every provision of this Conservation Easement that applies to the Grantor or to the Grantee shall likewise apply to their respective heirs, executors, administrators, assigns, and grantees, and all other successors in interest herein.

K. Merger. The parties agree that the terms of this Conservation Easement shall survive any merger of the fee and easement interest in the Property.

L. Subsequent Liens. No provisions of this Conservation Easement shall be construed as impairing the ability of Grantor to use this Property for collateral for borrowing purposes, provided that any mortgage or lien arising therefrom shall be subordinated to this Easement.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD unto THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, its successors and assigns, forever. The covenants agreed to and the terms, conditions, restrictions and purposes imposed as aforesaid shall be binding upon Grantor, Grantor's representatives, successors and assigns, and shall continue as a servitude running in perpetuity with the Property.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Grantor, by authority duly given, has hereunto caused these presents to be executed by its officers and its seal affixed, to be effective the day and year first above written.

GRANTOR:

DURHAM COUNTY

By: Mary Ann E. Black
Mary Ann E. Black
Durham County Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:

Garry E. Umstead
Garry E. Umstead,
Durham County Clerk to the Board of Commissioners



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF Granville

I, a Notary Public of the County and State aforesaid, certify that Garry E. Umstead personally came before me this day and acknowledged that he is Clerk to the Board of Commissioners for Durham County and that by authority duly given and as the act of said County, the foregoing instrument was signed in its name by Mary Ann E. Black, the Chairman of the Durham County Board of Commissioners, and attested by him as Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this the 9th day of January, 2001.



S. Harper
Sandra P. Harper

commission expires: April 26, 2004

GRANTOR:

THE COUNTY OF ORANGE

By: John M. Link, Jr.
John M. Link, Jr.
Orange County Manager

ATTEST:

Beverly A. Blythe
Beverly A. Blythe,
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

[SEAL]

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF Orange

I, a Notary Public of the County and State aforesaid, certify that Beverly A. Blythe personally came before me this day and acknowledged that she is Clerk to the Board of Commissioners for The County of Orange, North Carolina and that by authority duly given and as the act of said County, the foregoing instrument was signed in its name by John M. Link, Jr., the County Manager, and attested by her as Clerk to said Board of Commissioners.

Witness my hand and official stamp or seal, this the 31 day of January, 2001.



Evelyn M Cecil
Notary Public

My commission expires: 10-13-2004

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
_____ COUNTY

State of North Carolina-Orange County
The foregoing certificate(s) of Sandra P. Harper and Evelyn M. Cecil

The foregoing certificate of _____
certified to be correct.

~~X X X X X~~ (Notaries) Public for the Designated Governmental units ~~X~~ (are) certified to be correct. See filing certificates herein.

This the 13th day of February, D. ~~XX~~ 2001.

Joyce H. Pearson
Register of Deeds By: Russella D. Mize
~~_____~~ / Deputy

FILED
13 FEB 2001, at 02:25:14pm
Book 2198, Page 256 - 266
Joyce H. Pearson
Register of Deeds,
Orange County, N. C.

_____, Notary Public is

certified to be correct.

This _____ day of _____, 2001.

Register of Deeds

EXHIBIT A**Description of Property Condition:**

The conservation easement property consists of 300 foot wide riparian buffers along the North Fork of the Little River and an unnamed perennial stream that bisects the Little River Regional Park. The park site parcels acquired which contain the easement consists of a total of 305.32 acres. The Orange County parcels are Parcel A, which totals 7.61 acres and includes 1.8 acres of conservation easement; and Parcel "B" which consists of 128.14 acres and 54.77 acres within the conservation easement. In Durham County parcel "C" consists of 169.57 acres of which 68.1 acres is contained with the easement property. Durham County parcel D will be acquired in July 2001, and consists of another 85.34 acres of which 6.47 acres will be within the easement property. When all park acquisitions are completed, 131.14 acres of the 390.66-acre park will be within the easement property.

The easement property consists largely of mixed hardwoods and pines. A number of old timber roads cross or run through the easement property; the locations of such roads are shown on the attached survey maps. No other structures or improvements exist within the easement property.

Two locations are without existing tree cover: Within Orange County Parcel "B", approximately 2 acres are in existing meadow that was former agricultural land. On Parcel D approximately one-half acre is in open area created during former logging activities. The boundaries of both open areas are drawn on the attached survey using aerial photographs. Both areas may be retained in their present open condition so long as vegetated cover is maintained.

Legal Description:

Parcel A: The 1.8± acres identified as "IN CONSERVATION EASEMENT" on the plat referred to in the description of Tract 1 in the deed from Triangle Community Foundation, Inc. to County of Orange, North Carolina, which deed is recorded at Book 2157, Page 548 of the Orange County Registry.

Parcel B: The 54.77± acres identified as "IN CONSERVATION EASEMENT" on the plat referred to in the description of Tract 2 in the deed from Triangle Community Foundation, Inc. to County of Orange, North Carolina, which deed is recorded at Book 2157, Page 548 of the Orange County Registry.

Parcel C: The 68.1± acres identified as "IN CONSERVATION EASEMENT" on the plat referred to in description in the deed from Triangle Community Foundation, Inc. to Durham County, North Carolina, which deed is recorded at Book 2943, Page 10 of the Durham County Registry.

2019 LRRP Master Plan Survey Results

Q1

Please rank your top 5 reasons for visiting the park. (Please rank 1-5 with 1 being the top priority)											
	1	2	3	4	5	Total					
Walking	9.59%	7	39.73%	29	20.55%	15	23.29%	17	6.85%	5	73
Trail Hiking/Running	34.41%	32	36.56%	34	11.83%	11	9.68%	9	7.53%	7	93
Playground	27.78%	10	13.89%	5	22.22%	8	22.22%	8	13.89%	5	36
Dog Walking	18.42%	7	13.16%	5	44.74%	17	5.26%	2	18.42%	7	38
Bird Trail	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	8.33%	1	50.00%	6	41.67%	5	12
Private Event	8.33%	1	8.33%	1	25.00%	3	25.00%	3	33.33%	4	12
Butterfly Garden	0.00%	0	20.00%	5	24.00%	6	24.00%	6	32.00%	8	25
Program	20.00%	4	10.00%	2	25.00%	5	20.00%	4	25.00%	5	20
Picnic/Shelter Reservation	9.09%	2	13.64%	3	31.82%	7	22.73%	5	22.73%	5	22
Solitude	14.00%	7	18.00%	9	26.00%	13	16.00%	8	26.00%	13	50
Group Camping	0.00%	0	16.67%	1	33.33%	2	33.33%	2	16.67%	1	6
Mountain Biking	70.00%	42	6.67%	4	1.67%	1	6.67%	4	15.00%	9	60
Accessible Walking Loop	4.17%	1	12.50%	3	16.67%	4	33.33%	8	33.33%	8	24
Other (please specify)											12
										Answered	122
										Skipped	2

Q2

How would you rate the following reasons for your visit to the park? (1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree)											
	1	2	3	4	5	Total					
Enjoy nature	70.34%	83	6.78%	8	10.17%	12	3.39%	4	9.32%	11	118
Reduce stress	54.24%	64	16.10%	19	16.10%	19	6.78%	8	6.78%	8	118
Have fun	64.10%	75	13.68%	16	3.42%	4	5.98%	7	12.82%	15	117
Exercise	61.34%	73	13.45%	16	9.24%	11	5.88%	7	10.08%	12	119
Quality family experience	38.83%	40	8.74%	9	19.42%	20	7.77%	8	25.24%	26	103
Other (please specify)											9
										Answered	124
										Skipped	0

Q3

If funding were available, how would you rate the following possible facility or program changes? (Rank 1-5 with 1 being the top priority)											
	1	2	3	4	5	Total					
Improve and/or expand the trail system	62.73%	69	10.91%	12	10.00%	11	7.27%	8	9.09%	10	110
Expansion of environmental education programs	16.28%	14	24.42%	21	29.07%	25	23.26%	20	6.98%	6	86
Improve existing facilities	15.05%	14	45.16%	42	25.81%	24	10.75%	10	3.23%	3	93
Develop new facilities not currently in place	11.96%	11	14.13%	13	23.91%	22	35.87%	33	14.13%	13	92
Other (please specify)											19
										Answered	120
										Skipped	4

Q4

If funding were available for construction of new (or renovation of existing) facilities, how would you rank the following potential facility improvements? (Please rank 1 - 5 with 1 being the top priority)

	1	2	3	4	5	Total					
Expand the children's playground area	25.00%	21	28.57%	24	27.38%	23	17.86%	15	1.19%	1	84
Expand the paved walking loop	15.38%	12	38.46%	30	32.05%	25	7.69%	6	6.41%	5	78
Develop new multi-use trails (hiking/cycling/equestrian)	65.38%	68	5.77%	6	9.62%	10	3.85%	4	15.38%	16	104
Add additional picnic shelter space for large events	2.78%	2	19.44%	14	25.00%	18	40.28%	29	12.50%	9	72
Other (please specify)											16
										Answered	117
										Skipped	7

Q5

Overall, how satisfied are you with the current facilities and program offerings?

Answer Choices	Responses
Very Satisfied	39.02% 48
Somewhat Satisfied	41.46% 51
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	17.89% 22
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1.63% 2
Very Dissatisfied	0.00% 0
	Answered 123
	Skipped 1

Q6

Please rank the following potential program opportunities you would like to see at the park. (Please rank 1 - 5 with 1 being top priority)

	1	2	3	4	5	Total					
Environmental Education (classes/workshops/lecture series, etc)	33.72%	29	19.77%	17	33.72%	29	9.30%	8	3.49%	3	86
Programs Promoting Physical Fitness (walking/running/cycling, etc)	43.43%	43	27.27%	27	21.21%	21	4.04%	4	4.04%	4	99
Arts and Crafts	4.11%	3	26.03%	19	17.81%	13	50.68%	37	1.37%	1	73
Special Events (concerts/5K race, etc)	29.03%	27	30.11%	28	23.66%	22	11.83%	11	5.38%	5	93
Other (please specify)											7
										Answered	113
										Skipped	11

Q7

In planning for future programming opportunities at the park, on which of the following should the park focus? (Rank 1 - 4 with 1 being the primary focus)

	1	2	3	4	Total				
Youth	40.43%	38	21.28%	20	22.34%	21	15.96%	15	94
Teens	13.04%	12	31.52%	29	30.43%	28	25.00%	23	92
Adults	49.51%	51	20.39%	21	23.30%	24	6.80%	7	103
Seniors	9.09%	8	23.86%	21	18.18%	16	48.86%	43	88
						Answered	112		
						Skipped	12		

Q8

How would you respond to the following? (1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree)									
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Weighted Average		
I would prefer the park stay primarily as it is, in terms of programs and facilities.	24.35%	28	24	33	19	11	115	2.66	
I support development of new educational information about the park (e.g. trail brochures, interpretative signage, mobile applications)	34.21%	39	30	34	7	4	114	2.18	
I support development of new facilities at the park. (e.g. Playground, shelters, trails, programming facilities.)	53.45%	62	10	22	8	14	116	2.16	
							Answered	120	
							Skipped	4	

Q9

Would you support an increase in fees to support expanding program offerings and facilities at the park?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	60.18%	68
No	39.82%	45
	Answered	113
	Skipped	11

Q10 Are there needs or gaps in our programs, facilities, or operations that are not being met currently?

- 1 a few more miles of bike trails would be awesome!
- 2 dog park would be nice
- 3 This place has everything I need.
- 4 Would love to have more information on local history.
- 5 Driveway has a lot of potholes :(
- 6 Not aware, I only trail run here.
- 7 Have warm restrooms
- 8 Hours of the park could be with sunrise/sunset, as often it is closed on the weekends with still hours of sunlight left.
- 9 Trail maps / markers could be better.
- 10 Would love to see more paved trails and a new playground!
- 11 more program opportunities for adults without children
- 12 Not enough mountain bike trails
- 13 Not sure but I would visit the park more if there was more mileage and if there was more challenging trails. It would be interesting to know how many people in Orange and Durham County utilize the park for biking vs running vs hiking, etc and engage more people who live closer. For those of us who live further away- the motivation to visit the park is to have a good, long ride, i.e. have ~15 miles instead of 8.
- 14 equestrian trails
- 15 N/a
- 16 More education and programming to get older kids outdoors - middle and high schoolers. Hiking, gardening, nature, outdoor games etc
- 17 We love Tiny Trekkers. Are there programs for my kids as they grow?
- 18 Park staff and supervisor are rarely in the park office. I believe there needs to be more oversight as to how Park staff spend their time during the day considering they are paid by the residents taxes.
- 19 I feel, to further increase Triangle wide visitation, that adding trail mileage that is available in the 'preservation' labeled property originally envisioned for equestrian use at the park's conception, that more multi-use trail mileage would not only expand the appeal to a larger regional groups to mountain bikers but also any multi-user...trail runners, hikers, walkers, dog walkers birders, youth children etc. I think the biggest asset to a park are it's trails.
- 20 Equestrian
- 21 No
- 22 Tiny Trekkers is great for the little ones, but weekend and homeschool education programs would be super welcome. Also, we really loved the mud event you had a few summers ago.

Q11 Please provide any additional comments or suggestions for the park below

1 A nice park and nature preserve in rural area of the Orange and Durham communities

2 nice park

3 This is a gem of the county. So peaceful and quiet most days and so much wildlife. I run here a lot and always see something new and interesting. It feels more like a nature preserve than a county park. Less is more sometimes.

4 I would ride the trails more but it's a 30 minute drive and the trails that are there only take about an hour to ride. If there were more trails, the park would get more visitors

5 The trail markers are confusing

6 re: #9, fees question above. Are there fees now? I WOULD contribute \$ for maintenance of current facilities and trail work , and have often thought about stopping at the office to ask about "donating" something, but never have - is there an online way to ante up? Prefer NOT expansion; although more trails would be nice, they already run over each other, given the acreage available, heh.

7 Love to see more bike trails

8 I love these trails

9 Fix and maintain what you have now before spending on new stuff. Fix the driveway and parking lot!

10 Question 15 - needs comment section. Would be MUCH more often if the rain didn't close the trails all the time.

11 I'd love more mountain bike trails!

12 Beautiful, well maintained park

13 Question 7- this really depends on the population within 5 miles of LRRP- are there a lot of seniors or more youths? Is one of these groups not being met through other programs/locations in the area? This is what I would focus on then. Obviously, it would be nice to focus on all ages of people but see where the unmet need is with the locals.

14 More mountain bike trail mileage even if it is multi-use, please.

15 It would be very nice to incorporate some horse trails. The park is in a prime location for many horse owners but currently does not offer horse trails. We have to haul reasonable distance is away I.e Umstead Park in Raleigh., to enjoy what we could be enjoying in our own backyard. i'm sure others in the equine community would even agree it would be worth paying a yearly fee to be able to ride horses and such beautiful scenery right near home.

16 I think new educational components would be great for the park.

17 Any need for Girl Scouts to do some projects there?

18 I would love to see additional trails, especially for mountain biking.

19 I travel from downtown Raleigh to use the MTB trails and skills park. The MTB trails are my only reason for visiting the area, but it allows me to also explore the area for other opportunities.

20 I'd like to see a "natural" play area like the museum of life has when you first go outside. There are lots of ideas on Pinterest.

21 Please provide more accountability on the park's supervisors time spent at the park. There have been many times when the park was not well maintained.

22 We really enjoy having birthday parties at the coveted picnic shelter. I would only add that on two occasions there was a wasps nest in the shelter. I would say just to be more diligent about checking for that because when we have parties we have many young children with us.

23 we love bringing the kids to Little River! It's got a bit of everything for them to do but still out in nature.

24 We love hiking with our dogs. I would love to see improvement in trail signage. We find it challenging to know what trail you are on at times.

Q12

Answer Choices	Responses	
Orange	33.33%	40
Durham	50.83%	61
Other (please specify)	15.83%	19
	Answered	120
	Skipped	4

Q13

Gender		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	44.17%	53
Female	55.83%	67
	Answered	120
	Skipped	4

Q14

Age		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.83%	1
18-25	4.17%	5
26-35	16.67%	20
36-45	36.67%	44
46-55	26.67%	32
56-65	13.33%	16
65+	1.67%	2
	Answered	120
	Skipped	4

Q15

Visits to park?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
1st Time	1.71%	2
Daily	9.40%	11
Weekly	13.68%	16
Monthly	36.75%	43
Occasionally	38.46%	45
	Answered	117
	Skipped	7

Q1 Other Top Reasons to Visit the Park (Q1)

- 1 Bathrooms
- 2 Trail run!
- 3 The Planets
- 4 Star Programs
- 5 Equine Trails is number one
- 6 Volunteering to maintain the trails
- 7 Needs equestrian trails
- 8 Horseback riding
- 9 4&5: sky watching parties
- 10 Tiny Trekkers
- 11 Hiking not running
- 12 Kayak/canoe

Q2 Rate the Reason to Visit the Park

- 1 I'm usually by myself...
- 2 Enjoy the quiet
- 3 Play Dates
- 4 Quality friend experience
- 5 learn about nature
- 6 needs equestrian trails
- 7 Horseback riding f
- 8 Bring our third grad classes 4x a year to watch the seasons change
- 9 to get my teens (and myself) off of their devices for a little while.

Q3 If funding were available, how would you rate the following changes?

- 1 expand the park!
- 2 The pavement into the park is a mess!
- 3 3- Improve the driveway / parking
- 4 Some fitness stations along the paved trail.
- 5 Honestly, I love LRT Park just the way it is.
- 6 Your webpage is down so I couldn't review current facilities, but a primitive camping area would be nice.
- 7 Add equine trails. The NC Horse Council has grants available for equine trail development
- 8 more stargazing!
- 9 More mileage of mtb trails would be nice- to justify driving 40 minutes to the LRRP
- 10 Needs equestrian trails
- 11 Horse trail access
- 12 Improve butterfly garden, more education regarding birds, butterflies, bees etc -nature and wildlife in the park
- 13 The trails at Little River are good but a bit short to justify the distance some have to travel to get there. If we had about double the distance, it would be pretty amazing and I'd be willing to help build it (as I did some features on the original trails).
- 14 I would like to have horse accessible trails as was in the original plan. Horseback riding
- 15 Improve and expand the playground and make it closer to the shelter so parents can watch their children from the shelter during parties. Our family renta the shelter for parties often in the spring and summer which creates revenue
- 16 It's wonderful just the way it is!
- 17 More playground equipment
- 18 Larger playground with swings!
- 19 Add on to the playground! Swings, more climbing structures, etc.

Q4 If funding was available for construction.

- 1 Expand the hiking trails
- 2 I leave alone
- 3 keep the bicycles off the walking trails. they go so fast us older folks worry we'll be run over by those kids
- 4 the bathrooms could use some updating
- 5 Improve Driveway / parking
- 6 Conservation of Little River programs
- 7 Dance Floor
- 8 Primitive camping site
- 9 please don't add more picnic shelters, the park is busy enough on the weekends
- 10 Develop Horse trails
- 11 Enhance parking
- 12 Consider wheelchair swing, accessibility
- 13 More mountain bike trails would bring the park closer to a critical mass where it would be more of a destination.
- 14 Equestrian trails!
- 15 add a natural play area in the shade
- 16 Don't change a thing.

Q6 Rank the potential program opportunities.

- 1 love the sky watching nights!
- 2 More Evening Programs
- 3 Hours that better align with daylight vs set times.
- 4 Equine Trails
- 5 equestrian trails
- 6 Horseback riding
- 7 more community events

Q12 County of Residence

- 1 Person
- 2 Person
- 3 Wake
- 4 Wake
- 5 Wake
- 6 Wake
- 7 Cary NC
- 8 Wake
- 9 Wake
- 10 Johnston
- 11 Franklin
- 12 Wake
- 13 Johnston
- 14 Wake
- 15 Alamance
- 16 Wake
- 17 Wake
- 18 Wake
- 19 Wake

LLRP Needs Assessment Survey Comparison

Comparison of similar questions from 2012 survey to the 2019 survey

2012 – 193 respondents 2019 – 124 respondents

Top five reasons for visiting the park?

Comparison of number one reason people visit

2012	Total	2019	Total
Mountain Biking	99	Mountain Biking	42
Trail Hiking/Running	27	Trail Hiking/Running	32
Walking	18	Playground	10

How would you rate the following reason to visit the park?

Comparison of top rated reason (Strongly Agree)

2012	Total	2019	Total
Have Fun	97	Enjoy Nature	83
Exercise	92	Have Fun	75
Enjoy Nature	89	Exercise	73

If funding were available, how would you rate the following possible facility or program change?

Comparison of top rated answers

2012	Total	2019	Total
Improve and/or expand trail system	144	Improve and/or expand trail system	69
Improve existing facilities	11	Improve existing facilities	14
Expand environmental education programs	10	Expand environmental education programs	14

If funding were available for construction or new (or renovation of existing) facilities, how would you rank the following?

Comparison of top rated answers

2012	Total	2019	Total
Develop new multi-use trails	95	Develop new multi-use trails	68
Expand childrens playground	22	Expand childrens playground	21
Expand paved walking loop	15	Expand paved walking loop	12

Please rank the following potential program opportunities.

Comparison of top ranked answer

2012	Total	2019	Total
Program promoting physical fitness	98	Programs promoting physical fitness	43
Environmental Education	29	Environmental Education	29
Special Events	27	Special Events	27

In planning for future programming opportunities at the park, on which of the following should the park focus?

2012	Total	2019	Total
Adults	78	Adults	51
Youth	63	Youth	38
Teens	25	Teens	12

How would you respond to the following?

Comparison of reasons 1-5 with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree

2012	Highest Rank 1-5	Highest Rank 1-5	Total
I would prefer the park stay primarily as it is, in terms of programs and facilities	1(28) 2(27) 3(63) 4(25) 5(23)	I would prefer the park stay primarily as it is, in terms of programs and facilities	1(28) 2(24) 3(33) 4(19) 5(11)
I support development of new educational information about the park (e.g. trail brochures,	1(35) 2(41) 3(50) 4(24) 5(24)	I support development of new educational information about the park (e.g. trail brochures,	1(39) 2(30) 3(34) 4(7) 5(4)
N/A		I support development of new facilities at the park (e.g. Playground, shelters, trails,	1(62) 2(10) 3(22) 4(8) 5(14)

Would you support an increase in fees to support expanding program offerings and facilities?

Combined the Two Questions in 2019			
2012	Total	2019	Total
Yes (programming)	120	Yes	68
No (programming)	60	No	45
Yes (facilities)	150		
No (facilities)	29		

County of Residence

2012	Total	2019	Total
Durham	53%	Durham	50.83%
Orange	46%	Orange	33.33%
Other	1%	Other	15.83%

Gender

2012	Total	2019	Total
Male	70.5%	Male	44.17%
Female	29.5%	Female	55.83%

Age*Comparison of top 3*

2012	Total	2019	Total
36-45	34.6%	36-45	36.67%
46-55	23.4%	46-55	26.67%
26-35	22%	26-35	16.67%

Visits to Park*Comparison of top 3*

2012	Total	2019	Total
Occasionally	37.0%	Occasionally	38.46%
Weekly	28.3%	Monthly	36.75%
Monthly	25%	Weekly	13.68%

Appendix F: List of Programs Offered at Little River Regional Park & Natural Area, 2005-2019

<p>Tiny Trekkers (ages 0-5 years)</p> <p>Getting Wild Birds for Beginners Hungry Hummingbirds Terrific Turkeys Whoooo Is It? Fur, Feathers, Skins & Scales Leaping Lizards Amazing Insects Buzzy Bees Crawling Critters Things with Wings Caterpillar Crawl Tiny Tadpoles Wiggling Worms Dirty Hands, Muddy Feet Celebrate Earth Day Tot Hike Animal Tracks Trees: From Roots to Leaves What's the Weather? Winter crafts</p>	<p>Discovery Club (ages 6-13 years)</p> <p>Birdhouse Building Fossil Find Dig In! Ladybug Release Black Light Bugs Haunted Hike Map and Compass 101 Winter Tree ID New Year's Day Birding Earth Day Full Moon Hike What's Below? Tracks & Scat Herp Hunt Bat Box Building Paper Making Arbor Day at Little River Summer Tree ID Geology Rocks! Leaf Pressing</p>
<p>Citizen Science (ages 13 years +)</p> <p>Christmas Bird Count Great Backyard Bird Count Lost Ladybug Project Big Sweep Moth ID Monarch Watch</p>	<p>Special Programs and Events (all ages)</p> <p>Little River Trail Run (600+ runners; 14 years) TORC Mountain Bike Races Statewide Star Party (partner with NC Science Festival) Bluegrass Festival CLAWS (wildlife rehabilitators) National Trails Day Star Gazing with Morehead Planetarium Haunted Hike Boy & Girl Scout Service Learning projects Volunteer Workdays New Hope Elementary/Target grant field trip Summer Camps – 4-H, Orange County Parks & Recreation, YMCA LEGO Block Party Mud Day</p>

Appendix G: Little River Regional Park & Natural Area – Plant and Wildlife Species Inventory (2016)

Plants			
Running Cedar	Wood Rush	Southern Red Oak	Willow Oak
Meadow Spikemoss	Wild Onion	Turkey Oak	Northern Red Oak
Merlin's Grass, Quillwort	Trout Lily	Black Jack Oak	Shumard's Oak
Grape Fern	Day Lily	Swamp Chestnut Oak	Post Oak
Dissected Grape Fern	Star-of-Bethlehem	Hackberry	Black oak
Southern Adder's Tongue	Solomon's Seal	Winged Elm	Virgin's Bower
Lady Fern	False Solomon's Seal	American Elm	Hepatica
Sensitive Fern	Greenbrier	Slippery elm	Small-flowered Buttercup
Christmas Fern	Greenbrier	Red Mulberry	Hispid Buttercup
Broad Beech Fern	Catesby's Trillium	False Nettle	Hooked Crowfoot
Ebony Spleenwort	Bellwort	Clearweed	Windflower
Resurrection Fern	Mountain Bellwort	Mistletoe	Yellowroot
Loblolly Pine	Mealy Bellwort	Birthwort	Mayapple
Virginia Pine	Wild Yam	Deciduous Ginger	Moonseed
Red Cedar	Yellow Star Grass	Wild Ginger	Tulip Poplar
Water Plantain	Atamasco Lily	Wild Ginger	Paw-Paw
Creeping Water Plantain	Dwarf Crested Iris	Tear-thumb	Spicebush
Duck Potato	Dwarf Iris	Knotweed	Sassy-tree
Cane	Blue-eyed Grass	Dock	Bloodroot
Japanese Bamboo Grass	Rattlesnake Plantain	Pokeweed	Yellow Corydalis
River Oats	Crane-fly Orchid	Spring Beauty	Toothwort
Sedges	Black Willow	Common Chickweed	Hairy Cress
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	Silky Willow	Giant Chickweed	Pennsylvania Cress
Arrow-leaf	Pignut Hickory	Thimbleweed	Alumroot
Rush	Sweet Pignut Hickory	Black Cohosh	Wild Hydrangea
Wood Rush	Shagbark Hickory	Flowering Dogwood	Virginia Willow
Ironwood	Mockernut Hickory	Pipsissewa	Early Saxifrage
Hop Hornbeam	Black Walnut	Prince's Pine	Foamflower
Beech	Tag Alder	Sourwood	Witch Hazel
White Oak	River Birch	Shinleaf	Sweet Gum
Scarlet Oak	Bladdernut	Wild Azalea	Princess Tree
Eastern Sycamore	Box Elder	Black Highbush Blueberry	Beechdrops
Agrimony	Red Maple	Squaw Huckleberry	Water Willow
Service Berry	Southern Sugar Maple	Late Low Blueberry	Bedstraw
Hawthorn	Buckeye	Fronged Loosestrife	Bedstraw
Indian Strawberry	Jewelweed	Water Pimpernel	Hairy Bedstraw
Wild Strawberry	Virginia Creeper	Persimmon	Bedstraw
White Avens	Possum Grape	Fringe Tree	Bluets
Virginia Avens	Muscadine	White Ash	Summer Bluets
Cinquefoil	St. Andrew's Cross	Red Ash	Partridge Berry
Chickasaw Plum	Shrubby St. John's Wort	Privet	Japanese Honeysuckle
Black Cherry	Spotted St. John's Wort	Sampson's Snakeroot	Coral Honeysuckle
Wild Rose	St. Andrew's Wort	Pennywort	Elderberry
Multiflora Rose	LeConte's Violet	Rose Pink	Maple-leaf Viburnum
Blackberry	Southern Wood Violet	Blue Star	Black Haw

Plants – con't			
Raspberry	Palmate-leaf Violet	Indian Hemp	Wild Raisin
Red Chokeberry	Meadow Violet	White Milkweed	Rusty Black Haw
Partridge Pea	Saggitate-leaf Violet	Common Morning Glory	Corn Salad
Small Partridge Pea	Meadow Beauty	Manroot	Venus' Looking Glass
Redbud	Enchanter's Nightshade	Creeping Phlox	Cardinal Flower
Tick Trefoil	Winged Rattlebox	Nettle-leaf Vervain	Indian Tobacco
Beggar's Lice	Common Evening Primrose	Ground Ivy	Downy Lobelia
Panicled Beggar's Lice	Sundrops	Deadnettle	Yarrow
Bush Clover	Devil's Walking Stick	Bugleweed	Common Ragweed
Black Locust	Angelica	Self-heal	Giant Ragweed
Beach Pea	Wild Chervil	Hoery Mountain Mint	Frost Aster
Pencil Flower	Water Hemlock	Lyre-leaf Sage	Starved Aster
Early Vetch	Honewort	Hairy Skullcap	Groundsel Tree
Wood Vetch	Lovage	Large-flowered Skullcap	Spanish Needles
Wisteria	Black Snakewort	Hoarse Nettle	Tickseed
Flax	Sanicle	Round-leaf Thoroughwort	Bull Thistle
Wood Sorrel	Golden Alexander	Late Thoroughwort	Pasture Thistle
Purple Wood Sorrel	Golden Alexander	Low Sneezeweed	Field Daisy
Crane's-bill	Tupelo, Black Gum	Fall Sneezeweed	Green-and-Gold
Wild Geranium	Silky Cornel	Ox-Eye	Whorled Coreopsis
Purple Milkwort	Tall Goldenrod	Maryland Golden Aster	Three-leaved Coreopsis
Green Milkwort	Silverod	Hairy Hawkweed	Ragwort
3-seeded Mercury	Wreath Goldenrod	Hawkweed	Leafy Silphium
Flowering Spurge	Giant Goldenrod	False Dandelion	Silphium
Deciduous Holly	Flat-topped Goldenrod	Dwarf Dandelion	
American Holly	Goldenrod	Climbing Hempweed	
Leafy Elephant Foot	Early Goldenrod	Wild Quinine	
Elephant Foot	Rough Goldenrod	Camphorweed	
Horseweed	Dandelion	Gall-of-the-Earth	
Dog Fennel	Wingstem	Late Black-eyed Susan	
Joe Pye Weed	Wingstem	Black-eyed Susan	
Boneset	Ironweed	Green-eyed coneflower	

Insects			
American Cockroach	Deer Fly	Green June Beetle	Pennsylvania Leather-wing
American Horse Fly	Dogbane Leaf Beetle	Green Stinkbug	Praying Mantis
American Hover Fly	Dogday Harvestfly	Horsehair Worm	Red-tailed Bumble Bee
Black Carpenter Ant	Drone Fly	House Cricket	Rosy Apple Aphid
Black Horse Fly	Eastern Dobsonfly	House Fly	Stinkbugs
Black-and-yellow Mud Dauber	Eastern Eyed Click Beetle	Japanese Beetle	Tumblebugs
Brown Lacewing	Elephant Stag Beetle	Leaf-footed Bugs	White Tail
Carolina Locust	Field Cricket	May Beetle	Widow Skimmer
Carolina Mantid	Flesh Fly	Meadow Spittlebug	Yellow Jacket
Chinese Mantid	Giant Hornet	Meadow Spittlebug	
Common Earwigs	Giant Root Borer	Milkweed Bugs	
Cow Killer	Golden Mayfly	Paper Wasp	
Crane-fly	Grapevine Beetle	Patent-leather Beetle	

Birds			
Cooper's Hawk	Wild Turkey	Red-breasted Nuthatch	American Redstart
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Lincoln's Sparrow ?	Great crested Flycatcher	Barred Owl
Red-Winged Blackbird	Swamp Sparrow ?	Eastern Screech Owl	Eastern Meadowlark
Wood Duck	Northern Mockingbird	Bald Eagle	European Starling
Ruby-Throated Hummingbird	Black and White Warbler	Osprey	Tree Swallow
Great Blue Heron	Brown-Headed Cowbird	Common Grackle	Carolina Wren
Cedar Waxwing	Tufted Titmouse	Ruby-Crowned Kinglet	Brown Thrasher
Canada Goose	Carolina Chickadee	Golden-Crowned Kinglet	House Wren
Red-Tailed Hawk	Fox Sparrow	Eastern Phoebe	Winter Wren
Red-Shouldered Hawk	Indigo Bunting	American Woodcock	American Robin
Northern Cardinal	Downy Woodpecker	Eastern Bluebird	Eastern Kingbird
American Goldfinch	Hairy Woodpecker	White-breasted Nuthatch	Warbling Vireo
House Finch	Rufous-Sided Towhee	Brown-headed Nuthatch	White-Eyed Vireo
Purple Finch	Scarlet Tanager	Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	Red-Eyed Vireo
Turkey Vulture	Summer Tanager	Chipping Sparrow	Solitary Vireo
Veery	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Field Sparrow	Hooded Warbler
Hermit Thrush	Blue Grosbeak	Northern Rough-Winged Swallow	Mourning Dove
Brown Creeper	Barn Swallow		White-Throated Sparrow
Chimney Swift	Northern Oriole	Pileated Woodpecker	Black-Throated Blue Warbler
Kildeer	Dark-Eyed Junco	Gray Catbird	Yellow-Rumped Warbler
Common Nighthawk	Yellow-Breasted Chat	Least Flycatchers	Prarie Warbler
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Swainson's Warbler	Acadian Flycatcher	Yellow-Throated Warbler
Black-billed Cuckoo	Red-Bellied Woodpecker	American Kestrel	Pine Warbler
Northern Flicker (yellow-shafted)	Red-headed Woodpecker	Common Yellow Throat	Fish Crow
Black Vulture	Blue Jay	Common Raven	Fish Crow
American Crow			

Amphibians & Reptiles	Arachnids	Mammals	Butterflies, Caterpillars & Moths
American Toad		American Beaver	Acraea Moth
Black Racer	American House Spider	Brown Bat	Agreeable Tiger Moth
Broadhead Skink	Arrow-shaped Micrathena	Coyote	American Dagger Moth
Common (Eastern) Kingsnake	Black Widow Spider	Eastern Chipmunk	American Lady
Copperhead	Black-and-yellow Argiope	Eastern Cottontail	Bagworm
Corn Snake	Brown Daddy-long-legs	Gray Fox	Big Poplar Sphinx
Eastern Box Turtle	Carolina Wolf Spider	Gray Squirrel	Black spotted Hawkmoth
Eastern Fence Lizard	Daring Jumping Spider	Meadow Vole	Blinded Sphinx
Eastern Garter Snake	Dimorphic Jumping Spider	Muskrat	Common Buckeye
Eastern Narrowmouth Toad	Eastern Daddy-long-legs	Raccoon	Dogbane Moth
Eastern Newt	Grass Spiders	Red Fox	Drexel's Datana
Five-lined Skink	Green Lyssomanes	River Otter	Eastern Black Swallowtail
Fowler's Toad	Metaphid Jumping Spiders	Striped Skunk	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Gray Treefrogs	Spinyback Orb Weavers	Virginia Opossum	Fall Webworm
Green Treefrog		White-tailed Deer	Great Spangled Fritillary
Marbled Salamander		Woodchuck	Hebrew Moth

Amphibians & Reptiles – con't			Butterflies, Caterpillars & Moths – con't
Northern Cricket Frog			Hummingbird Clearwing
Painted Turtle			Imperial Moth
Ringneck Snake			Io Moth
River Cooter			Little Wood Satyr
Rough Green Snake			Long-tailed Skipper
Snapping Turtle			Luna Moth
Southeastern Five-lined Skink			Monarch
Southern Cricket Frog			Mourning Cloak
Southern Leopard Frog			Orange Striped Oakworm
Spotted Salamander			Ornate Tiger Moth
Spring Peeper			Painted Lady
Upland Chorus Frog			Pandorus Sphinx
Green Frog			Polyphemus Moth
Red-bellied Snakes			Puss Caterpillar
			Regal Moth - Hicorky
			Horned Devil
			Rosy Maple Moth
			Spicebush Swallowtail
			Spiny Oak Slug
			Spotted Apatelodes
			Tersa Sphinx
			Viceroy
			White marked Tussock Moth
			Woolly Bear
			Yellow Bear
			Yellow Necked Caterpillar
			Silvery Checkerspot
			Yellow based Tussock Moth

APPENDIX H. Detailed Description of Park Improvements

Laws Farmhouse. The entry feature to the Park, the Laws family farmhouse is a historic preservation project, separate from the park operations, which may receive future funds from Orange County. Due to its location within the property, and the resulting impact on Park visitors, it is included here. The Laws house was originally built in the period between the 1860s-1880s and consisted of the back portion of the existing structure, including the stone chimney. The portion of the house closest to Guess Road, and situated parallel with the road, including the large front porch, was added around the turn of the century. The house was inhabited through the 1960s, and subsequently abandoned. It was inherited with the property in a state of neglect and disrepair.

Parks management originally investigated the potential to restore the Laws House, and integrate it into the park infrastructure, either in its current location or relocated elsewhere within the Park. When it was determined that use of the structure as a park office or information center, cultural/historical museum, or caretaker residence was not feasible due to prohibitive cost or loss of historical significance if relocated, discussion turned to the demolition of the structure. In the Summer 2004, with the Park opening impending, it was eventually determined that, as part of a larger effort to retain the rural character of Orange County, and as an example of a quickly disappearing era of vernacular architecture, the Laws house should be stabilized and aesthetically restored until its fate is decided. As the restoration of the Laws house was not in the interest of Durham County, due to its location in Orange County, Durham County shifted its portion of the budget allocated for deconstruction to the stabilization project and will make no further contributions to the restoration.

The contents of the house were removed in 2004 with significant artifacts retained by Orange County DEAPR. Professional historic building restorers, Pete and Robin Hendricks, repaired the ailing front porch, removed rotten siding, sanded and refinished the wooden siding, replaced the rusted roofing, and sealed off access to the house.

The house was then used for storage of building materials salvaged from other structures within the park. It has also served as a habitat for many different species of animals including dogs, cats, ground hogs and gray foxes. Stabilization of the structure should be reassessed due to erosion of the ground around the house. It will also need to be repainted in the near future.

Hiker Shelter (former Tobacco Pack House). This structure was relocated by Pete and Robin Hendricks, from adjacent to the Laws House to the main junction of hiking trails. It stands on four stone footings, and the siding was restored with reclaimed wood in 2010. An additional window opposite the entrance has yet to be installed. The pack house serves as a shelter for Park users during inclement weather and is well suited for the installation of interpretive displays.

Wood Storage Tobacco Barn. Located in proximity to the Caretaker Residence, this is the only historic building on the property that has not been restored. It is a traditional tobacco drying barn, constructed of white oak logs, with several layers of horizontal beams used to dry harvested tobacco leaves. The bottom tier of drying beams was removed in October 2004 to allow for the storage of lumber, fencing, roofing materials, and bundled tobacco sticks, for use in the Park. The awning most likely sheltered the fuel tank that supplied gas burners that served as the drying method for the tobacco.

Maintenance Shed (former Tobacco Drying Barn). This historic building remains in its original location, next to the Park Office. The maintenance shed was constructed from white oak logs with layers of tobacco drying beams on the interior, and as with the other barn, natural gas burners were supplied by a gas tank that was sheltered by the easterly facing awning. At some time since the last use of the building, a portion of the roof had blown back, exposing the north wall of the structure to weather and rot. Pete and Robin Hendricks replaced the rotten portion of the wall with swinging barn doors, an upper storage door, and reclaimed siding, as well as restoring the awning. The barn floor and area under the awning are poured cement; as a matching area on the west side of the structure was covered with an additional awning and enclosed storage area in 2007. The lower tier of drying beams was removed to facilitate access and movement in the barn. The tobacco barn was re-chinked in 2007.

Corn Crib/Visitor Information Center. This structure was relocated by Pete and Robin Hendricks, from next to the stand of Chinese Privet by the Guess Road entrance gate, to the trail-head next to the parking lot. Here it was stabilized and set on six stone footings. The Corn Crib serves as a visitor information center with maps, brochures, donor recognition signs and logos. A small window into the crib, located on the interior of the sheltered area will serve as a view into a display of farm implements and historical artifacts, held inside the “crib.” An additional “window” will need to be cut to serve smaller visitors. [Future Work: A seventh stone footing may be needed at the center of the donor recognition wall if sagging increases.]

Caretaker Residence. This is the only private residence in the Park, and the only structure not originally built on site. The Caretaker Residence is a 1960s modular home previously located on at 611 Yorkshire Drive (south of Chapel Hill), which was damaged by the flooding of Price Creek in 1996. It was moved to the park in the Summer of 2003, and has subsequently been rewired, re-plumbed, re-sided, and re-floored, as well as receiving two new back porches, a new refrigerator and a new oven and stovetop. The Caretaker Residence is occupied by a caretaker who pays a modest rent and is responsible for closing the park on weekends as well as covering for other staff and being available after the park closes for campers or emergencies.

Park Office. Built in 2004, the Park Office was designed to fit with the overall rustic style of the park, with cedar siding and red, tin roofing. It contains a visitor reception desk, sitting area with park information, educational materials, wildlife displays, an office for park staff, a staff work room/kitchen, and staff only restroom. In addition to serving as a staff office and visitor information area, the Park Office is used for programming during cold or inclement weather. The water cut-off to the building is located in a buried tube, next to the HVAC fan, on the maintenance shed end of the building. A first aid kit is on the reception desk, and two fire extinguishers, one near the staff restroom entrance, and one directly inside the kitchen/break area, are in the building.

Public Restrooms. This newly built structure is of similar architectural style as the Park Office, with separate male and female facilities, and supply room with door in the rear. The men’s room has a single ADA-compliant commode, a waterless urinal, sink and spigot. The women’s room has two commodes, one of which is ADA compliant a sink and spigot. Two water fountains are located on the front side of the structure, between the entrances to the men’s and women’s restrooms. Motion sensor lights and Solartube were added in 2006. The motion sensor lights failed in 2012 and were replaced with toggle light switches. Fire extinguishers for the shelters are mounted on the front of the building on either side of the water fountains as per instructions from

the Orange County Fire Marshall. Water cut-off to the building is located in a buried tube directly outside the chase entrance, and the fire extinguisher and circuit panel are located inside the supply room.

Large Meadow Picnic Shelter. This open-sided structure currently holds 12 picnic tables, two of which are wheelchair accessible, and is located in the vicinity of the public restrooms and playground, all of which are connected by a paved path. It also has a handicapped accessible, double-sided grill, outdoor electrical outlets, lights, field hydrant which was replaced in 2013, and trash and recycling receptacles. [Future Work: add two ceiling fans.]

Small Forest Picnic Shelter. Identical to the large meadow picnic shelter with smaller proportions, this open-sided structure is located just inside the paved loop trail, and currently holds 8 picnic tables two of which are wheelchair accessible. It also has a handicapped accessible, double-sided grill, outdoor electrical outlets, lighting, field hydrant which was replaced in 2013, and trash and recycling receptacles. [Future Work: add a ceiling fan.]

Playground. This accessible structure is recommended for 5- to 12-year-olds. It contains three slides, two overhead components, a sliding pole, and a safety surface of engineered wood fiber. The double wave slide was replaced in the spring of 2013 due to cracking along the contact point with the structure. Safety surfacing will need weekly attention in the busy seasons, and yearly replenishment. Total replacement of the surfacing is recommended every 7-10 years. Drainage was improved but not solved, and may need additional attention in the future, particularly in the Northeast corner. Slides tend to get very hot in the summer sun, and trees planted to provide shade are many years away from serving this purpose. [The playground may require some form of shade netting in the interim.]

Well Pump. The well pump house is a new structure built by park staff from reclaimed building supplies in 2007. It is located down the park driveway from the Caretaker Residence. A new well was drilled because of recurring contamination issues in the old well. The old well pump-house was also built from reclaimed building supplies by the Hendricks to provide insulation for the well pump and water tank. It is located next to the paved interpretive loop trail, in the vicinity of the small forest picnic shelter. The wellhead was capped after the new well was installed.

Group Campground. A group camp area was added in 2006 as an Eagle Scout project. It is located 100 feet from the end of the paved interpretive loop trail heading towards the pack house. The site consists of a wood chip trail, 4 tent pads, 2 fire rings, a field hydrant and lantern hooks at each tent pad. Tent pads consist of pads bordered by landscape ties and filled with stone dust. The fire rings are metal rings with cooking grills set on fireproof bricks. One grill has two benches mounted near it. There are three picnic tables.

Parking Areas. Access to the parking is from a long meandering drive culminating in a teardrop shaped circulation pattern with drop off along the outer edge and designated parking for 40 spaces in the interior. Three ADA van accessible parking spaces are also located within the parking area. Exiting the teardrop is an additional elongated space for a bus or a trailer. Additional parking is available by parking vehicles on the mowed areas along the driveway and in the “islands” separating the parking rows. Staff directs visitors to these areas when the main lot has reached capacity. The driveway and parking area were covered in a chip and seal surface treatment when the park was built. Chip and seal has a life expectancy of 7-10 years. It is being

maintained by using pea gravel to fill any ruts and pot holes that develop. [Future Work: Resurfacing of the driveway and parking area is recommended to maintain a good visitor first impression.]

Pollinator Garden. In Spring 2005 the area between the public restrooms and the Large Meadow Shelter was developed into a pollinator garden. The fenced garden is approximately 30 feet by 60 feet. A small planted area behind the garden is used for hands-on programs. Several compost bins are also located behind the garden. The garden consists of mainly native plantings which attract a variety of pollinators at different stages of their life cycle. An arbor and bench were built in the center of the garden as part of an Eagle Scout project and the wooden entrance gates were built and donated by a volunteer.

Mountain Bike Trail Areas. Mountain biking trails were built in progressive loops of increasing technicality and range from moderate to difficult. No novice bike trails exist for beginning bikers or young children.

The mountain bike trails were designed and constructed by the Durham-Orange Mountain Bike Organization (DOMBO) with volunteer labor. In 2012, DOMBO reorganized as Triangle Off Road Cyclists (TORC). TORC currently maintains sections of the mountain bike trails.

Mountain Bike Skills Course. A skills course is under construction at the Park by TORC that would enable mountain bike users to hone and refine their biking abilities and skill levels. This area is undergoing a risk assessment and safety evaluation at the present time and is not yet open to users.

Accessible Loop Trail. This paved, quarter mile trail loops through the woods next to the small picnic shelter and is one of the most heavily used facilities in the park. It is in need of major renovations as tree roots have been damaging the asphalt steadily for many years. As part of this renovation, plans should be made to expand the paved trail with a loop potentially around the perimeter of the large meadow. This would greatly expand length of the trail and provide a new amenity within the existing developed area.