

Proposal for Enhanced River Access along the Dan River -
Eden, NC to John H. Kerr Lake

November 14, 2014

The Roanoke River Basin Association (RRBA) together with local municipalities, state agencies and other stakeholders have partnered to preserve and to create the Southern Virginia Wild Blueway. These efforts along with past efforts within the Dan River Basin has resulted in over 200 miles of water trails within the NC/VA piedmont regions. The blueways provide recreational opportunities for paddlers of hand launched craft and serve as a vital economic and environmental stewardship stimulus to the region. Recent economic assessments report that the economic impact for paddling activities within the Roanoke River Basin for Virginia alone totals:

\$47,071,318 of Income (\$20,828,017 direct paddling +\$26,243,301 indirect) and 1,180 Jobs (694 direct paddling + 486 indirect) in the Roanoke River Basin.*

*Assessing Economic Impacts of Ecotourism in the Roanoke River Basin: Metrics Program Development Services – Ellerbock 2014

Today the effort to create a system of public access sites and launch facilities along the Dan River from Eden, NC to John H. Kerr Dam remains incomplete (Reference DCR 2013 Outdoors Plan-Districts 12 & 13). Long stretches of the Dan River remain inaccessible due in part to a lack of adequate public access sites. The recent coal ash spill further crippled the team's ability to attract visitor interest to the Dan River, already a challenging mission. Funding is needed to provide facilities to existing sites, acquire easements or purchase critical access sites and to offset the damaging effects of the coal ash spill.

This proposal by RRBA and DRBA seeks to engage Duke Energy in this partnership to create a legacy along this historic Dan River Blueway that will honor the river, the region, and its present and future generations.

Project Scope:

The project would create and/or enhance 8 to 15 river access sites along the Dan River and its immediately adjacent tributaries. A typical paddle trip needs an entry and exit and point for most river trips and to attract more users, an access should be located at least every 6-8 miles.

The range of sites that have been identified and mapped (see Attachment A) include:

Level A - those that need only interpretive and/or wayfinding signage (\$ 5K-10K ea.),

Level B - those that need additional facility enhancements for parking and/or river access (\$ 50K - \$75K ea.),

Level C - search areas for needed public access and facility development (\$200K-250K ea.)

required for ongoing maintenance. Representative river access projects undertaken by this team are included below:



US-1 Steel Bridge Landing - a universally accessible floating hand-launch

Location: Roanoke River/Lake Gaston
Mecklenburg County, VA

Partners: A partnership between RRBA, Mecklenburg County and Dominion

Completed: September 2014



King's Bridge Landing - a stair step river hand-launch

Location: Banister River
Halifax County, VA

Partners: A partnership between RRBA, Town of Halifax, and VDOT

Completed: Fall 2014



John H. Kerr Tailrace Park - a universally accessible river hand-launch

Location: Roanoke River/John H. Kerr Tailrace

Partners: A partnership between RRBA, USACE

Completed: May 2013

Location of the proposed restoration project:

Dan River – Eden, NC to John H. Kerr Lake

Restoration project category:

Expand river-centered opportunities for public recreation and wildlife viewing

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Proposal Title:

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Estimated cost:

\$ 2,500,000 to \$ 2,700,000 (varies depending on easement/property acquisition, number of access sites)

Anticipated natural resource or resource service benefits (“uplift”);

The partnering and development of the Dan River Blueway-Eden, NC to John H. Kerr Lake will foster environmental stewardship through enhanced recreation. Improved access enables volunteer groups could get on and off the river at more locations to conduct evaluation of the conditions of the river and its banks, for clean-up and habitat restoration, to conduct clean-up (litter/debris) and restoration activities, enhanced accessibility for safety and evacuation operations and to provide enhanced fishing and paddling access for hand-launched craft. Current access is insufficient in many locations for volunteer and community led activities. Monitoring and evaluating historic resources including river navigation, adjoining historic transportation and commercial uses along the river and Native American cultural sites would also be improved with better access.

Public awareness of the partnership and river-based projects in the affected communities will refocus the public’s attention on river resources, habitat, history of the Dan River Basin/and its tributaries and the important role it plays in all our lives.

Timing:

The process of developing, managing and promoting the use of blueways is already underway in the region. Regular stakeholder meetings are held and effective working relationships are in place among the stakeholders. Additional stakeholders will be engaged and activities will focus on the Dan River section of the blueway system. Although some targeted access areas will

require the identification of suitable sites others exist and are ready for facility enhancement. Public awareness of the team's activities and promotion of the use of the blueway will be featured on existing websites from Day 1. These sites include:

Roanoke River Basin Association www.rrba.org

RRBA – Upper Reach www.upperreach.org

Dan River Basin Association – www.danriver.org

Southern Virginia Wild Blueway - www.sovawildblueway.com

The duration of the project is estimated at 3 years. While initial publicity and awareness building will begin within the first four months, capital improvements will only be visible at the end of year one. Targeted access sites involving easement acquisition will extend into year three.

Partial List of Stakeholders and Partners:

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Dan River Basin Association (DRBA)

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (NCPR),

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT),

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT),

VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF),

Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission (TICR),

Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)

Dominion,

Halifax County,

Mecklenburg County,

Rockingham County,

Caswell County,

City of Danville, VA

Town of Eden, NC

Town of South Boston, VA

Links – Virginia 2013 Outdoors Plan

http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/documents/voppd12.pdf

http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/documents/voppd13.pdf

End

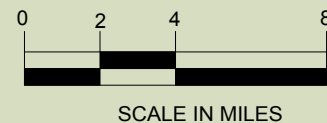
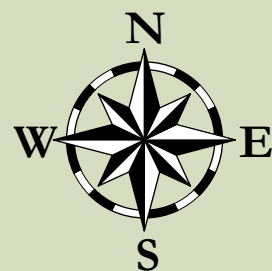
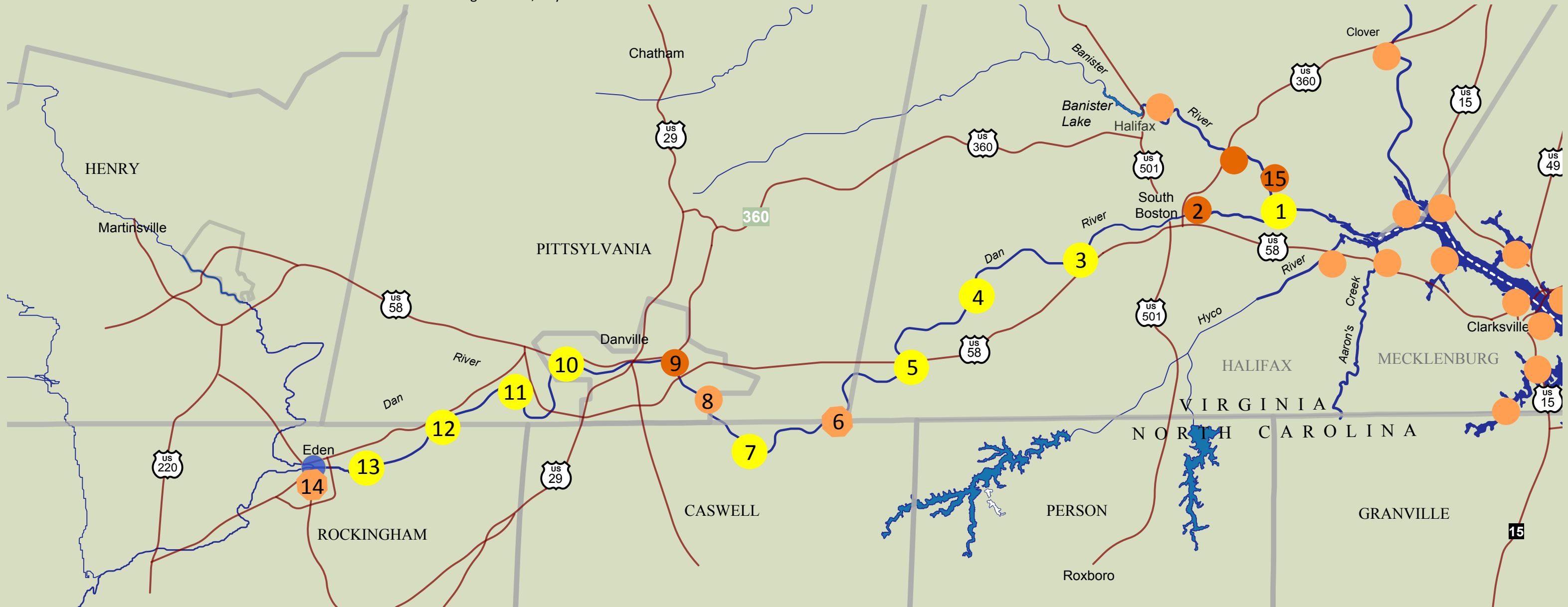
Existing and Potential Sites Identified

Attachment 'A'

Legend

- Existing Public Access with Launch Facilities
- Existing Public Access - Launch Facilities Needed
- Public Access and Launch Facilities Needed

- 1 - Dan & Banister Confluence - Level-C
- 2 - South Boston DGIF Access - Level-A/B
- 3- Rte 671, News Ferry Trail - Level C
- 4 - Rte 658, Melon Road (Paces) - Level C
- 5 - US-58 - Level C
- 6 - NC 62, NCWRC Boating Access Area - Level A
- 7 - Rte. 1526, Dix Rd. - Level C
- 8 - Angler's Park, City of Danville - Level A
- 9 - Riverside Dr./Riverwalk Trail, City of Danville - Level B
- 10 - Birnam wood or Hwy 58 - Level C
- 11 - Burford/Oak Ridge In. or Hwy 58 By-pass - Level C
- 12 - Rte. 880/Berry Hill - Level C
- 13 - S. Fieldcrest Rd./Draper Landing - Level A
- 14 - S.Van Buren Rd and Hwy 770/14 - Level A
- 15 - Rte 716, Wolf Trap Road - Level B



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Dan River River Access Map - Eden, NC to John H. Kerr Lake