



Neuse River Blueway Plan

March 2021



Raleigh
Parks

Acknowledgments

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This plan was developed through a technical assistance grant provided by the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service.

Executive Summary

The Neuse River Blueway Plan is a comprehensive effort to improve public access to and awareness of the Neuse River as a valuable natural resource and recreational asset. This plan provides a long-term vision for the creation of a cohesive paddling trail that will connect over 2,000 acres of parks, greenway land, and open space along the 25 miles of the Neuse River that flow through the City of Raleigh and Wake County.

This plan was developed in partnership with the National Parks Service through the Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. A diverse group of project partners representing multiple jurisdictions, public and nonprofit landowners, advocacy organizations, and various other stakeholder groups provided essential guidance and expertise throughout the planning process. Community engagement through online surveys, special events, and other outreach efforts generated detailed feedback from over 600 people throughout the Triangle area. This engagement was essential to better understanding the needs and priorities of the community and directly informed the recommended improvements in this plan.



The Neuse River Blueway Plan proposes improvements to existing City of Raleigh river access points as well as the addition of six new launches to the system. Proposed river access points are distributed to maximize flexibility and accessibility, creating more options for short 1-2 hour paddling trips that are ideal for casual users and recreation programs. These launches and their proposed improvements are summarized in the chart on page 4 and the Neuse River Blueway Plan map on page 5.

Proposed locations are designated as either Primary or Secondary access points. Primary access points, established at key nodes along the river, will be developed to accommodate heavy use and will include features such as restroom access, expanded parking, and ADA-accessible launch designs where feasible. Primary access points should be capable of accommodating vehicles and trailers for the launching of power boats used by the Wildlife Resources Commission and emergency services. Secondary access points are designed for limited use, and provide alternative options for put-in and take-out points at shorter intervals between Primary access points. Secondary access points provide limited parking and launch designs intended to minimize environmental impact. As such, Secondary launches will provide very limited amenities and may not accommodate large groups, recreational programming needs, or boat trailer access.

The System Improvements chapter includes a detailed analysis of each individual launch site as well as general recommendations to address maintenance, signage, programming, public art, interactions with the Neuse River Greenway Trail, and future designation as a State or National Water Trail.







Taken together, the recommendations of this plan would create a 25-mile paddling trail that is accessible and exciting for users of all skill levels. Once established, Raleigh’s segment of the Neuse River Blueway could provide a new foundation for the coordinated development of a paddling trail that extends the full 275 miles of the Neuse River in North Carolina.

The Neuse River Blueway Plan is a holistic vision for riparian conservation and water-based recreation, which will inspire residents and visitors of the Triangle to get outdoors, connect with Raleigh’s largest river and explore the natural beauty and fun that the Neuse River has to offer.

Launch Name	Launch Designation	Existing Launch Type	Proposed Improvements
Falls Dam (pg 30)	Primary	Concrete Landing & Pre-Cast Block Steps	Short Term: Improve launch for increased safety and accessibility—evaluate site for feasibility of concrete ramp or boat slide Long Term: Develop additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Thornton Rd. (pg 34)	Primary	Beach Launch	Short Term: Develop new concrete ramp launch in partnership with Wildlife Resource Commission Long Term: Develop additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Louisburg Rd. (pg 39)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop site for additional greenway trailhead parking and river access improvements
River Bend (pg 41)	Primary	Concrete Ramp	N/A - Completed Nov. 2020
Elizabeth Dr. (pg 43)	Secondary	Natural Launch	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: Phase out this location after a new permanent river access point is established nearby at Buffalo Road Athletic Park or Alvis Farm
Buffaloe Road Athletic Park (pg 46)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop new launch and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Alvis Farm (pg 49)	Primary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop new launch and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Milburnie (pg 52)	Primary	Beach Launch	Short Term: Maintain existing natural beach launch Long Term: Evaluate potential for river access improvements and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Anderson Point (pg 54)	Primary	Gravel Ramp	Short Term: Improve existing launch and expand parking in coordination with Wildlife Resources Commission Long Term: N/A
Poole Rd. (pg 60)	Secondary	Wooden Stairs	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: N/A
Randleigh Farm (pg 63)	Primary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Evaluate potential for river access improvements and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Mial Plantation Rd. (pg 65)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: N/A

Neuse River Blueway Plan

LEGEND

-  River Access
-  Primary River Access
-  Proposed New River Access / Proposed New Amenity
-  ADA Accessible
-  Parking
-  Restrooms

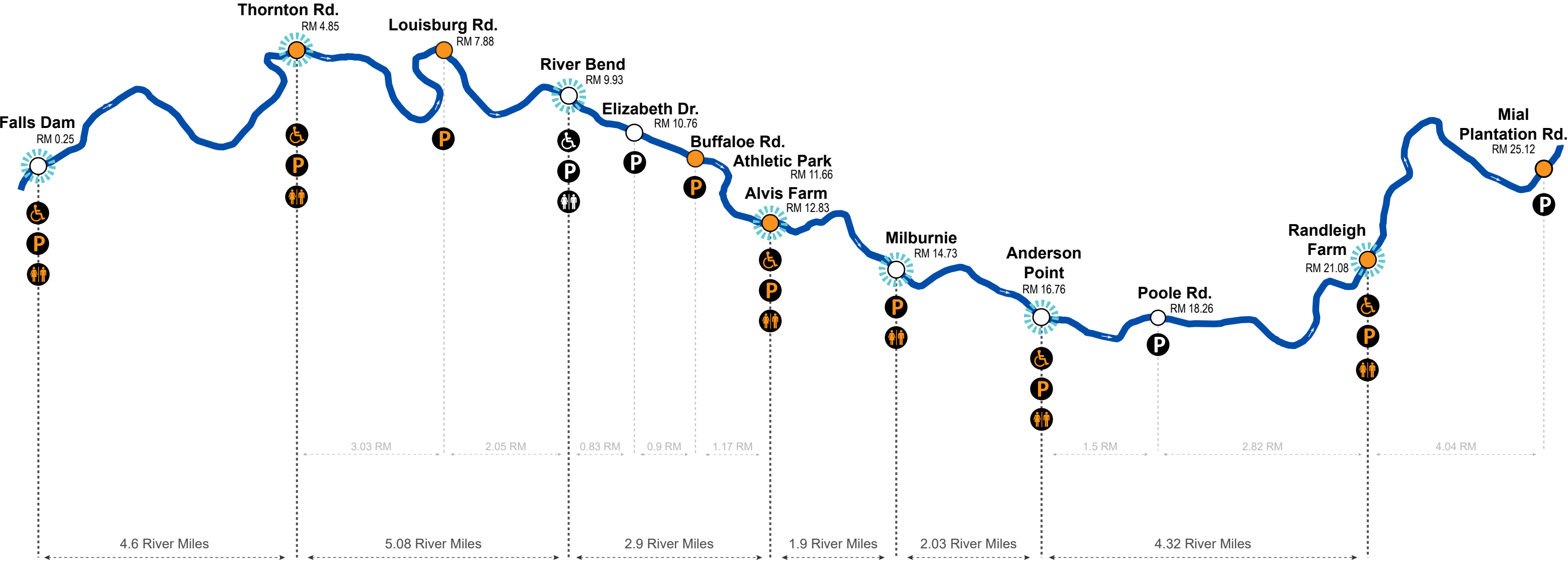


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Introduction

The Neuse River is North Carolina’s longest river and one of Raleigh’s most valuable natural resources. For many years, the Neuse River flowed virtually unnoticed through the rural fringes of Wake County. This is no longer true. The City of Raleigh’s jurisdiction extends to, and in some areas beyond, the Neuse River, and land flanking both sides of the river has seen substantial development over the past few decades. Previous planning efforts—including the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Raleigh Greenway Master Plan, and others—have served to protect the immense natural resource value of this river corridor. With the opening of the Neuse River Greenway Trail, many thousands of people now walk, run, and bike along the river’s banks each year. The Neuse River Blueway Plan will expand on the tradition of protecting and improving public access to this shared resource, helping many more people to rediscover the Neuse River and experience Raleigh’s natural environment in a whole new way.

A *blueway* is a designated water trail that is developed with launch points, amenities and points of interest for canoeists, paddle boarders, kayakers and others traveling along the river. Blueways are typically developed by state, county or local municipalities to encourage recreation, ecological education, and preservation of wildlife resources along a river system.

As a parallel to the Neuse River Greenway Trail, the Neuse River Blueway Trail will provide a cohesive and navigable paddling route that allows kayakers, canoers, and other paddlers to enjoy a variety of trips along the Neuse River. By planning for a coordinated series of boat launches and river access points, the Neuse River will become more easily accessible to paddlers from across Raleigh and throughout the region, providing multiple trip options that will cater to everyone from beginners to enthusiasts.

The Neuse River Blueway Plan is a vision to improve river access and establish the first 25 miles of the Upper Neuse River as a cohesive paddling trail. This plan provides recommendations for the City of Raleigh to improve boat launch infrastructure at City-managed sites along the Neuse River within Wake County, including the creation of six new river access points at key locations along the river system. This Blueway Plan also serves as a framework for stakeholders beyond the City of Raleigh to pursue further public access improvements and ultimately designation of the Neuse River as a State or National Water Trail.

Since the Neuse River is inter-jurisdictional in nature, development of the Neuse River Blueway Trail will require continued coordination from a diverse group of project partners representing multiple jurisdictions, public and nonprofit landowners, and various other stakeholder groups with a special interest in outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation.

The Neuse River Blueway Plan is a holistic vision for riparian conservation and water-based recreation, which will inspire residents and visitors of the Triangle to get outdoors, connect with Raleigh’s largest river and explore the natural beauty and fun that the Neuse River has to offer.

NEUSE RIVER FACTS



THE NEUSE RIVER IS 275 MILES IN LENGTH & IS THE LONGEST RIVER ENTIRELY CONTAINED IN NORTH CAROLINA.



25 MILES OF THE NEUSE RIVER FLOW THROUGH LAND MANAGED BY THE CITY OF RALEIGH—9% OF THE TOTAL LENGTH OF THE RIVER!



THE NEUSE RIVER ONCE BEGAN AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE ENO AND FLAT RIVERS, BUT NOW STARTS DOWNSTREAM OF THE FALLS LAKE RESERVOIR.



THE NEUSE RIVER CHANGES TO A SLOW-MOVING ESTUARY HABITAT BEFORE EMPTYING INTO THE PAMLICO SOUND.



THE UPPER NEUSE RIVER WATER LEVELS FLUCTUATE BETWEEN 100 CUBIC FEET PER SECOND (CFS) AND UP TO 5,000 CFS DUE TO THE THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS RELEASING WATER FROM THE FALLS LAKE RESERVOIR.



THE NEUSE RIVER WAS LISTED AS ONE OF AMERICA’S MOST ENDANGERED RIVERS® IN 2007. CURRENTLY, THE RIVER HAS EXCESSIVE NITROGEN AND PHOSPHOROUS LEVELS FROM AGRICULTURAL-WASTEWATER AND POLLUTED-STORMWATER RUNOFF.



MANY AGENCIES ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE NEUSE RIVER INCLUDING LOCAL & STATE GOVERNMENTS AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

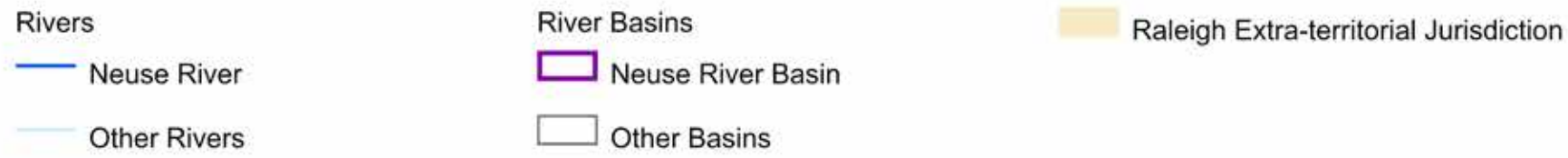
NEUSE RIVER BASIN

This expansive basin originates in Person and Orange counties, flowing from the Piedmont to the outer Coastal Plain. The river is essentially freshwater from its headwaters to New Bern, where it broadens and assumes estuarine characteristics.

The Neuse River Basin is made up of over 6,200 square miles, including both land and open water. The Neuse watershed contains 77 incorporated municipalities, including all or portions of the cities of Raleigh, Durham, Smithfield, Wilson, Goldsboro, New Bern and Havelock; it also includes an abundant number of towns including Butner, Wake Forest, Cary, Clayton and Kinston.

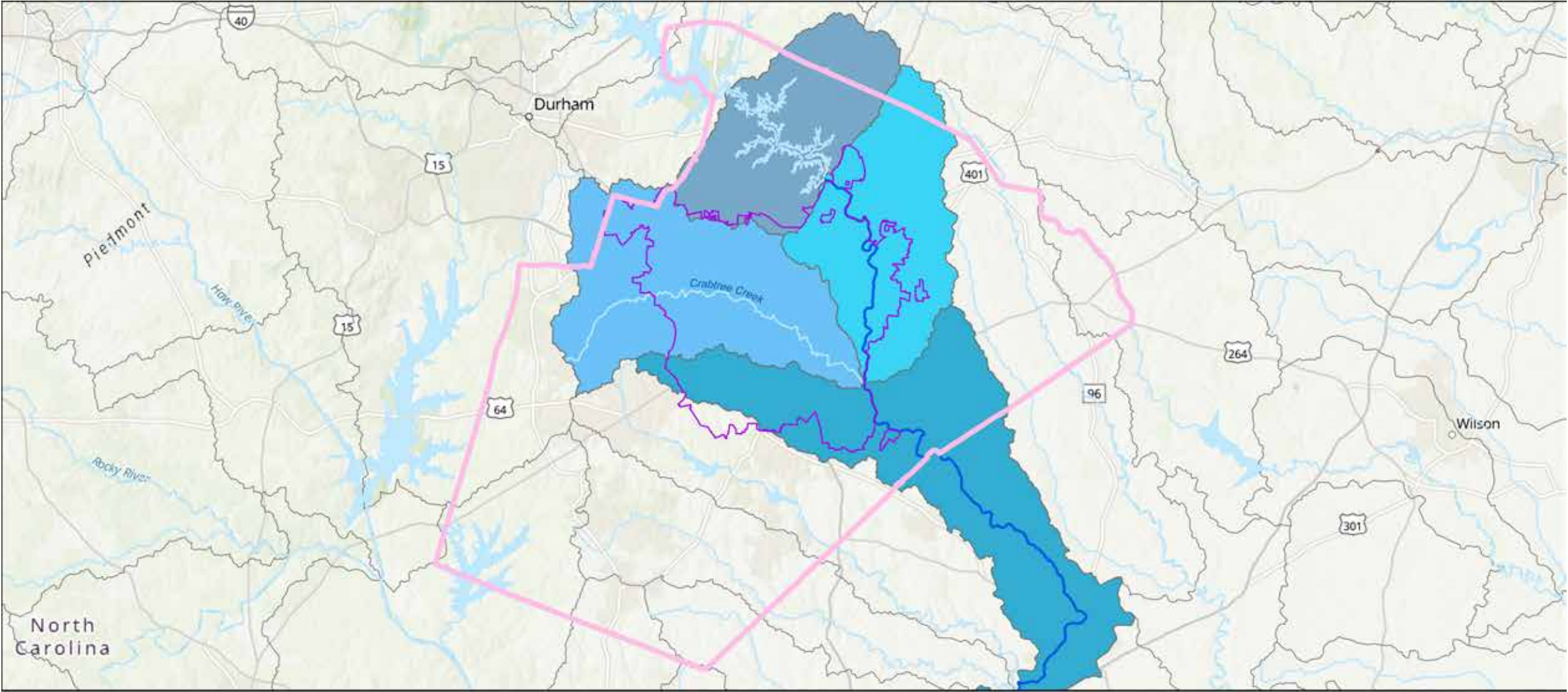


Neuse River Basin

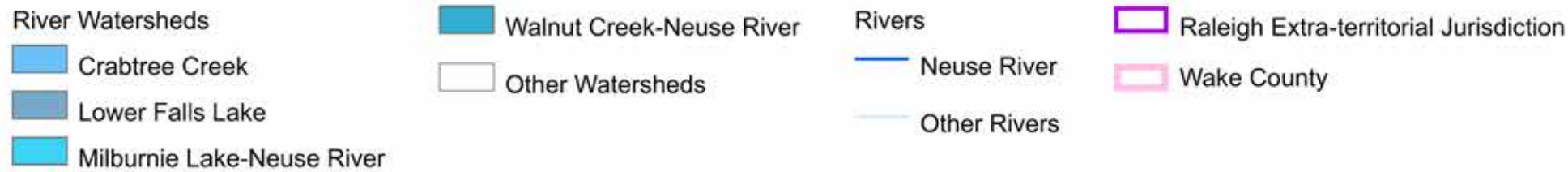


NEUSE RIVER WATERSHEDS

There are four watershed within the City of Raleigh that feed either directly or indirectly into the Neuse River. The northernmost is the Lower Falls Lake watershed, and appears only slightly within the extra-territorial jurisdiction of Raleigh. The Crabtree Creek watershed includes the majority of the city, and feeds into the Crabtree Creek which in turn flows into the Neuse River. The Milburnie Lake-Neuse River watershed covers north-east Raleigh and feeds into the Upper Neuse River. The Walnut Creek-Neuse River watershed covers southern Raleigh and continues outside of Wake County to feed into the Neuse River downstream of Raleigh.



Neuse River Watersheds in Raleigh



PLANNING PROCESS

The Neuse River Blueway Plan was supported by a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program.

The planning process was designed to follow the “Information Exchange” pathway of the City of Raleigh’s Public Participation Policy for Park Planning, with the purpose of exchanging data and opinions with citizens in order to identify key problems and alternatives, describe the consequences, and develop proposed actions. Community engagement was structured primarily around engagement at special events and collecting detailed feedback through online surveys.

Because of the inter-jurisdictional nature of the Neuse River, a diverse group of “project partners” was assembled to assist in the formation and implementation of the Neuse River Blueway Plan. While the City of Raleigh is leading the planning effort, implementation of the Neuse River Blueway Plan will ultimately rely on the commitment and cooperation of many other organizations.

These partner organizations represent multiple jurisdictions, public and nonprofit landowners, and various other stakeholder groups with a special interest in outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation along the Neuse River corridor. Representatives from each of these organizations have committed time, expertise, and resources to support the planning effort.

Throughout the planning process, these partner organizations provided valuable feedback and technical assistance in generating ideas, considering alternative designs, and establishing a final scope for this project. These partner organizations were also essential conduits for broader community engagement—their distribution lists were used to reach thousands of members, supporters, advocates, and others interested in contributing to the Neuse River Blueway Plan.

NEUSE RIVER BLUEWAY PLAN PROJECT PARTNERS	
Government - Municipal	Raleigh Wake Forest Knightdale Clayton
Government - County	Wake County Parks
Government - State	NC State Parks (Trails Division) NC Wildlife Resources Commission NC Department of Transportation
Government - Federal	National Park Service U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Non-Profit / Advocacy	Falls Whitewater Park Committee American Rivers Sound Rivers Triangle Land Conservancy Wake Nature Preserve Partnership
Paddling Community	Carolina Canoe/Kayak Club Paddle Creek (Closed in 2020) Frog Hollow YMCA Triangle

PLANNING CONTEXT

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update suggests the protection of natural resources and natural water features (Section 5.2 Policy 2.1 and 2.5). The Neuse River Blueway Plan proposes to “provide valuable stormwater and surface water management and ecological, visual, and recreational benefits”. The plan also proposes to address section 8.6 Policy 6.4: Access to Natural Resources by “promoting public awareness and knowledge of access to natural resource areas within the regional park system”.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Plan item Growth & Natural Resources Objective 1 is to “Identify opportunities to refine and enhance policies and programs that protect and improve environmental resources to include the tree canopy, open space, and plant management policies and practices.” By improving existing boat launches and adding six new launches, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department will enhance programs that protect and improve access to environmental resources.

PRCR SYSTEM PLAN

The Needs and Priorities section of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan specifically addresses the need for equitable distribution of access to safe opportunities for adventure and outdoor recreation. The plan also states that programs for river activities should be developed with safety classes included.

CAPITAL AREA GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

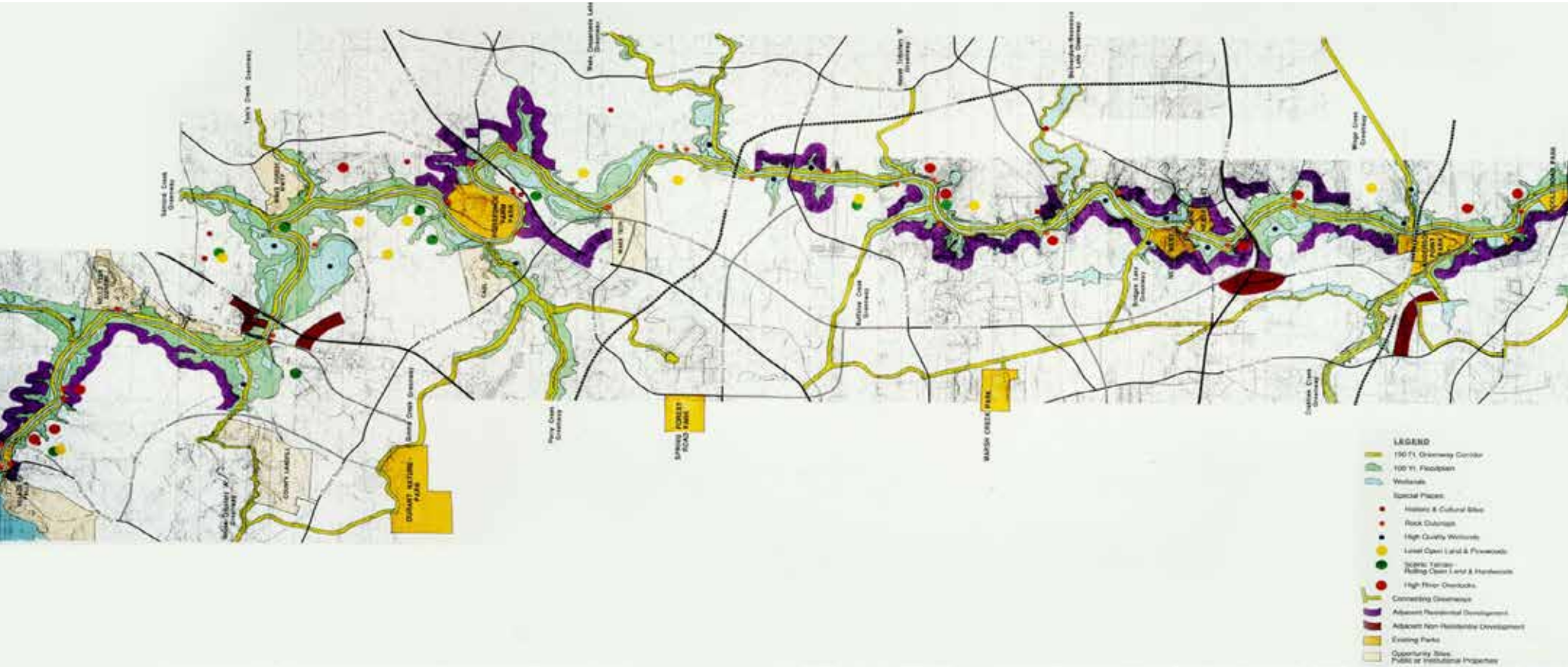
All of the launches within the Neuse River Blueway Plan share parking lots with the Neuse River Greenway Trail. The future Greenway Master plan should reference the Neuse River Blueway as far as amenities, access and improvements.

NEUSE RIVER REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN

The objective of the 1996 Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan was to develop a comprehensive recreational park master plan from Falls Dam to the Poole Road property. The plan featured detailed master plans for river front parks at Milburnie and Anderson Point. The vision of the Neuse River Regional Park Master plan was to accommodate many types of trail users including pedestrians, cyclists, paddlers and naturalists.

At the time of the plan’s adoption by City Council in 1996, the City of Raleigh owned four park properties on the Neuse River including Horseshoe Farm Park, Milburnie Park, Anderson Point Park and the Poole Road property.

The City of Raleigh has acquired five additional properties on the Neuse River since 1996. These properties include the Leonard Tract (84 acres), Thornton Road Property (132 acres), River Bend Park (25 acres), Buffalo Road Athletic Park (165 acres) and Alvis Farm (100 acres). The acquisition of these five properties on the Neuse River provides an excellent opportunity to continue the vision of the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan.



Existing Parks & Opportunity Sites, Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan, 1996.



Existing System

There are currently seven existing river access points along the Neuse River managed by the City of Raleigh. To the right is a summary chart of these access points including their addresses and launch types. On the following page is a map of these launches including the river mile distances between them.

The existing system has been built up over several decades, with each individual launch developed more-or-less in isolation. As a result, the distance between river access points is highly variable and the design of each launch varies significantly.

There are very limited opportunities for short, 1-2 hour paddle trips (approximately 3-4 miles), which are the preferred distance for most casual users and recreation programs. This creates significant accessibility issues, since some segments of the Neuse River are not navigable for most users where launches are spaced too far apart.

Some, such as the newly-developed launch at River Bend, are fully accessible for a variety of watercraft and were designed with adequate parking, boat drop-off, and restrooms within close proximity to the boat launch. Other locations present significant maintenance challenges, extremely long distances between available parking and the river access point, or other design challenges.

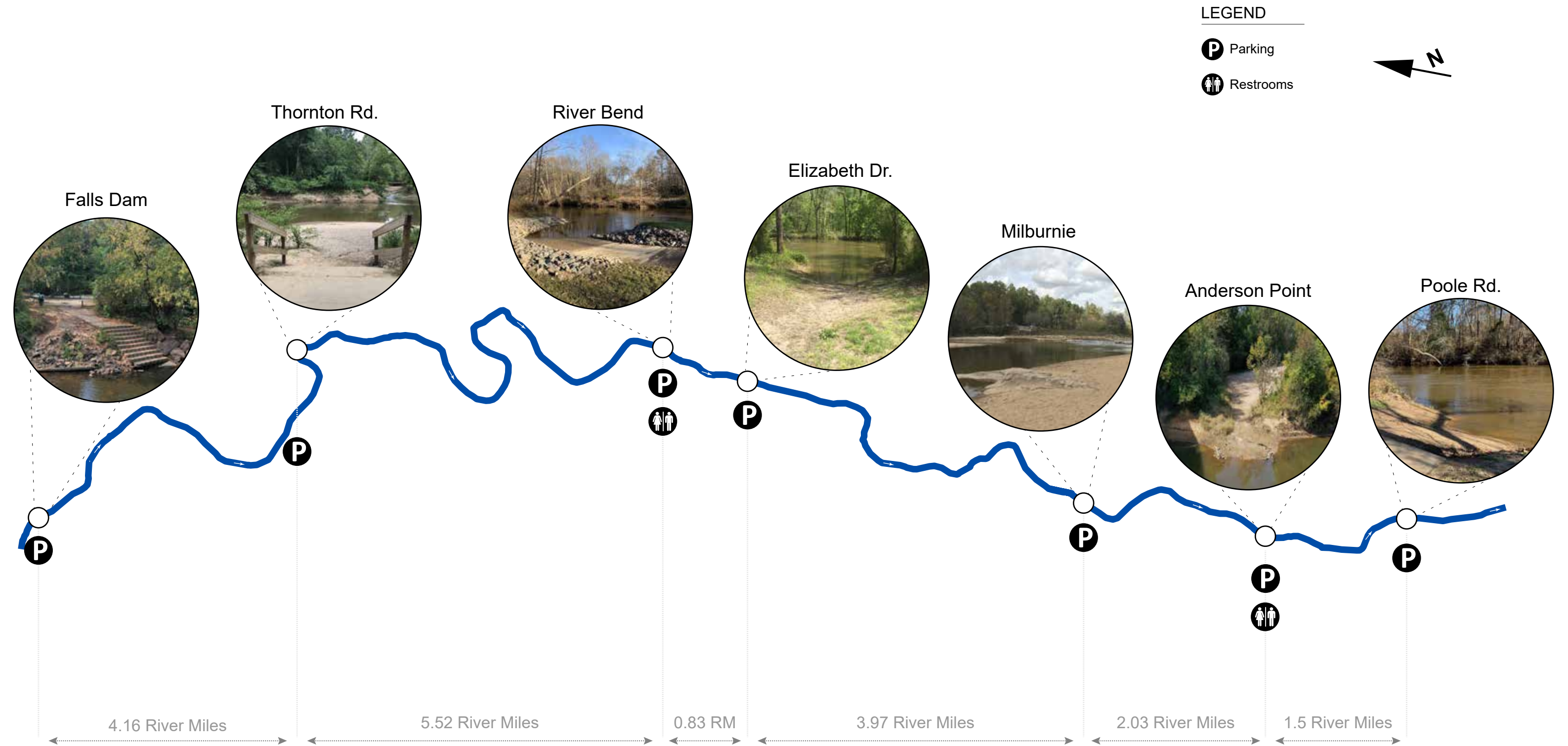
Each of these existing launches was thoroughly investigated during the planning process. Site visits and coordination with PRCR maintenance staff confirmed the existing condition of each launch, and where possible research was conducted to assemble existing permits and any prior-adopted plans for each site.

The Community Engagement chapter includes detailed results of community surveys that asked participants to share their opinion on the utility and condition of each launch, as well as what improvements would best serve the public using these river access points.

The System Improvements chapter includes recommendations for improvements at each of these existing launch locations as well as the creation of several new launch sites that will provide a cohesive paddling trail with many options for variable trip lengths along the entire stretch of the Upper Neuse River within Raleigh and Wake County.

Launch Name	Launch Address	Existing Launch Type
Falls Dam	12101 Old Falls of Neuse Rd.	Concrete Landing & Pre-Cast Block Steps
Thornton Rd.	6100 Thornton Rd.	Beach Launch
River Bend	6580 Perry Creek Rd.	Concrete Ramp (Opened Nov. 2020)
Elizabeth Dr.	4901 Elizabeth Dr.	Natural Launch
Milburnie	100 Loch Raven Pkwy	Beach Launch
Anderson Point	22 Anderson Point Dr.	Gravel Ramp
Poole Rd.	6501 Poole Rd.	Wooden Stairs

EXISTING RIVER ACCESS POINTS





Community Engagement

INITIAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PROJECT PARTNERS GROUP

A series of workshops were held as part of the project kick-off and analysis of the existing system on February 22, 2019 and June 7, 2019. The project partners group discussed current use and ideas for improvement along the proposed Neuse River Blueway, reviewed permitting issues and resources available to guide future design and development, and communicated on additional planning efforts that could coordinate with and build on the scope of the Neuse River Blueway Plan. Various municipalities, government agencies and specialized non-profit groups participated in the workshops.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Outreach at a number of special events during the planning process helped to spread awareness of the Neuse River Blueway Plan.

Special presentations were given to members of the Carolina Canoe Club and Carolina Kayak Club at Optimist Pool on March 22, 2019 as well as at the Brier Creek Community Center on August 12, 2019. At these meetings, Carolina Canoe/Kayak Club members were invited to participate in the community engagement survey and were invited to provide direct feedback on preliminary Blueway Plan recommendations.

The Triangle Land Conservancy, one of the project partner organizations engaged in this planning effort, hosted a “Wild Ideas for Getting Outside” event focused on the Neuse River on May 8, 2019. The Neuse River Blueway Plan was one of the featured projects and a registered vendor at this event, which helped secure broader awareness for the project and significantly increased participation in the community survey.

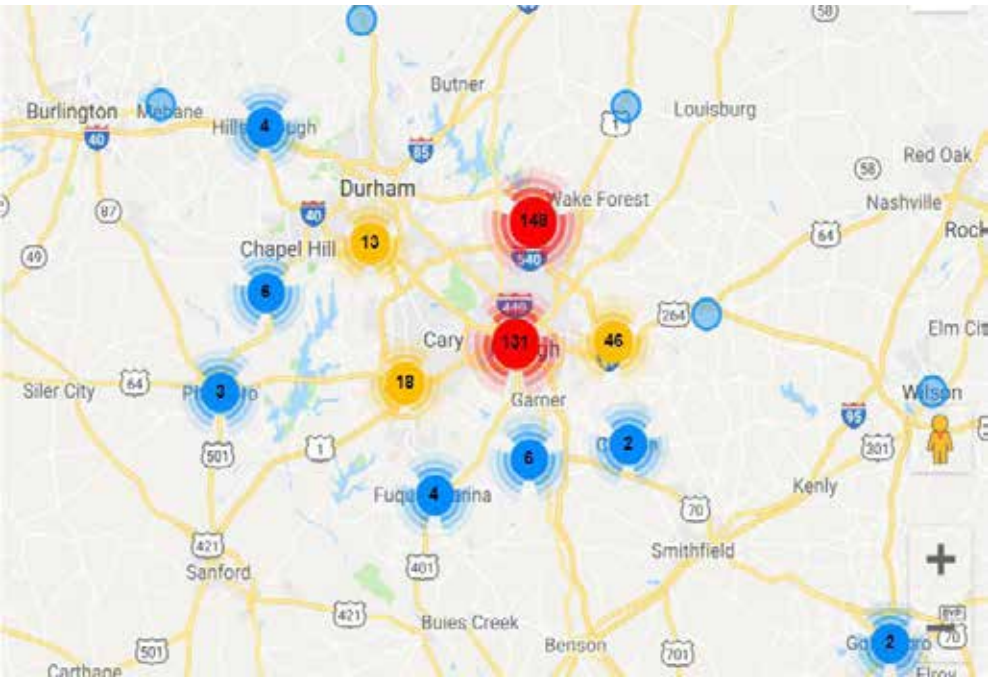
Tube the Neuse is an annual event that attracts hundreds of visitors to float down the Neuse River in inner tubes. Outreach was conducted in the lead-up to this event, and links to the community input survey were provided to event organizers. Signs promoting opportunities to get involved in the Neuse River Blueway Plan were advertised at key locations during the event.

ONLINE SURVEY

Park Planning staff created a user feedback survey to better understand current paddling activity and use of the existing launches along the Neuse River. This survey was widely distributed through Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources marketing channels, and was also circulated through the distribution lists of several project partner organizations.

The public input survey link was also posted on yard signs at each individual river access point along the Neuse River and at strategic locations along the Neuse River Greenway Trail.

The response for the three-month period that the public input survey was open was 555 participants. Results of the survey can be found on the following pages, and the full list of comments collected can be found in Appendix F on page 84.



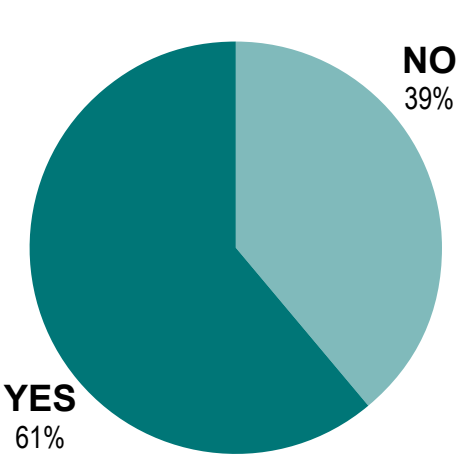
Online Survey Participants Locations

The majority of survey respondents had paddled the Neuse River before and live in either Raleigh or Wake Forest. Most paddlers are intermediate in skill level. The types of paddlecraft most people use on the Neuse River ranked by popularity are kayak, canoe, stand up paddleboard and tube.

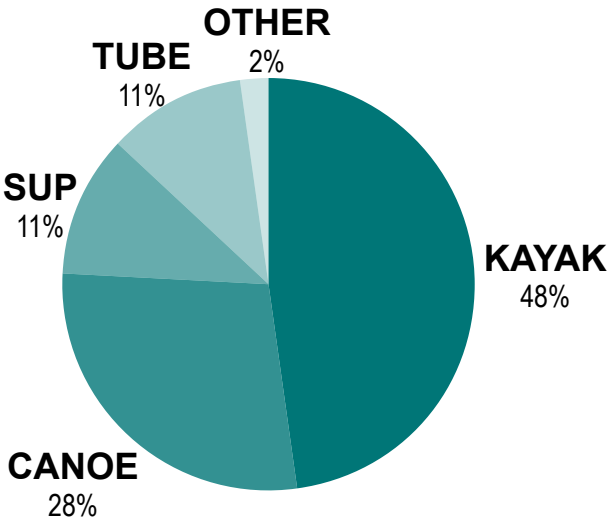
Most people said they own their equipment, but 34% said they rent from private paddling companies such as Paddle Creek. Several respondents commented that they would like to see a public access and shuttle alternative to Paddle Creek’s service.

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department currently does not provide rental equipment for recreation on the Neuse River. This data shows there is an opportunity for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural

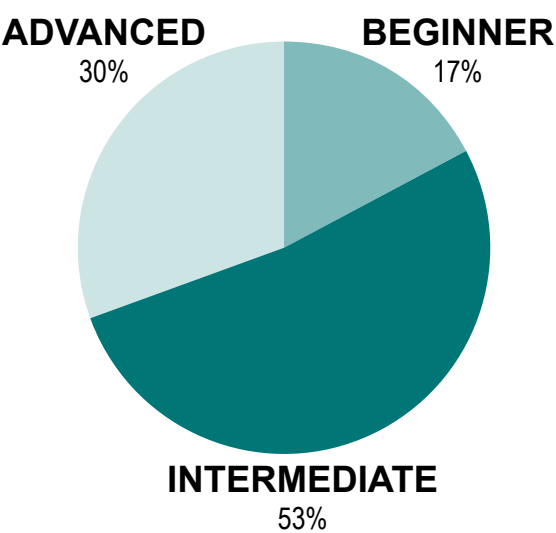
Have you ever paddled on the Neuse River?



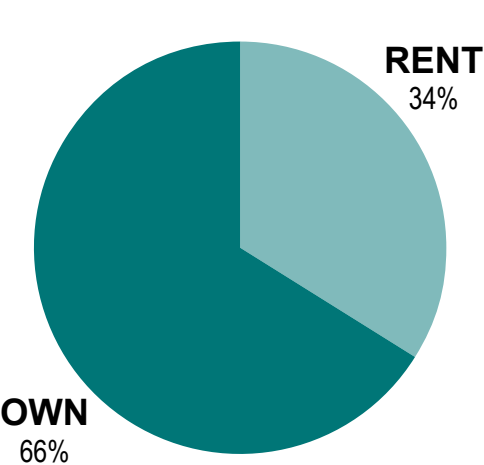
What type of paddlecraft do you use?



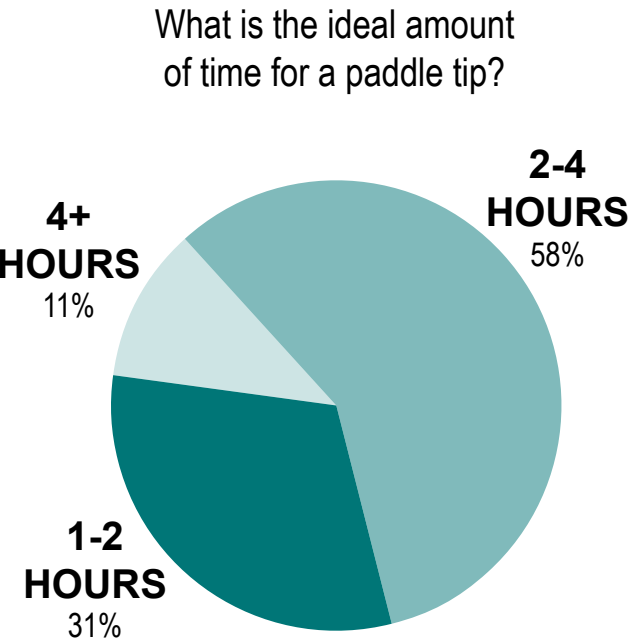
How experienced of a paddler are you?



Do you own or rent paddlecraft?



Resources Department to provide rentals and programs, especially since Paddle Creek closed in 2020. Of the options 1-2 hours (31%), 2-4 hours (58%) or 4+ hours (11%), most participants were in favor of a 2-4 hours paddle trip segment.



The feedback gathered from the community survey shows Falls Dam as the most popular put-in location and Buffalo Road as the most popular take-out location. It should be noted that the Buffalo Road launch is referred to as the Elizabeth Drive launch later in this document.

Where do you typically put in?

Falls Dam Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 1.20	69%
Buffaloe Road Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 1.81	24%
Milburnie Dam	Avg. Rank: 1.83	27%
Paddle Creek Canoe Launch (US 1)	Avg. Rank: 2.12	21%
Anderson Point Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 2.37	15%
Poole Road	Avg. Rank: 2.88	9%

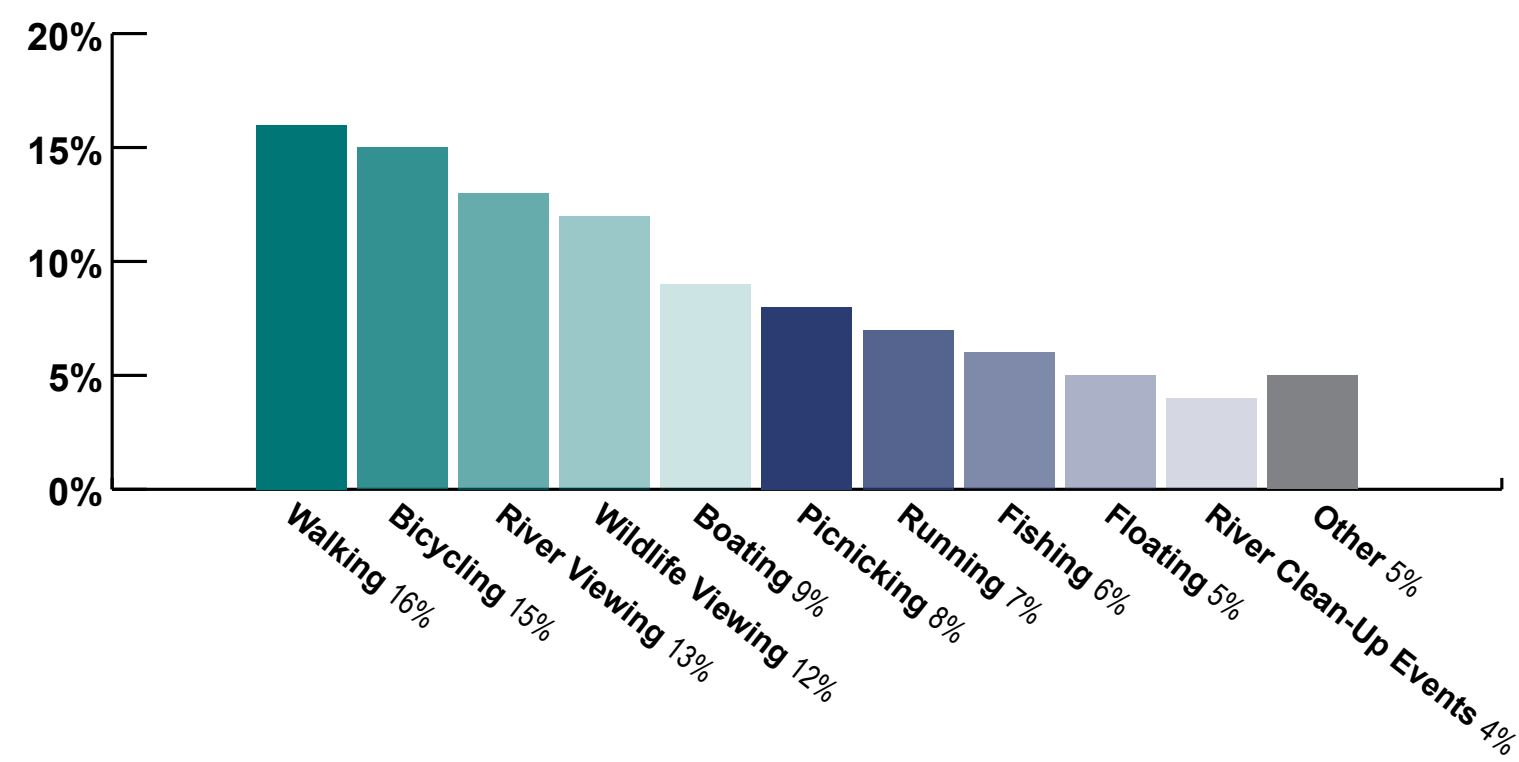
Where do you typically take out?

Buffaloe Road Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 1.42	32%
Poole Road	Avg. Rank: 1.45	29%
Paddle Creek Canoe Launch (US 1)	Avg. Rank: 1.54	34%
Falls Dam Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 1.64	19%
Milburnie Dam	Avg. Rank: 1.82	20%
Anderson Point Canoe Launch	Avg. Rank: 1.98	17%

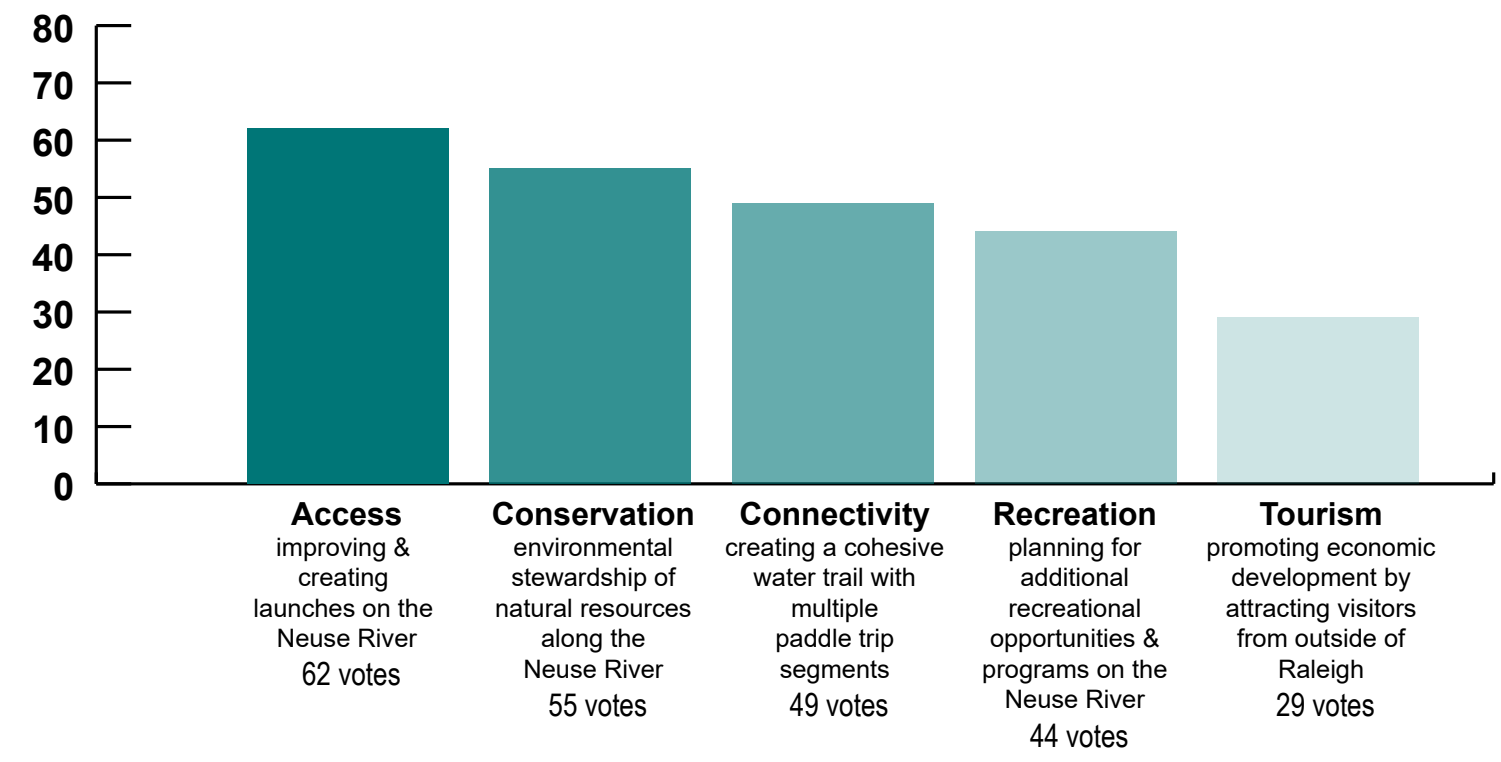
The Neuse River provides a variety of experiences to users in the community. In ranking order, responses to other activities that respondents participated in on the Neuse River were Walking (16%), Bicycling (15%), River Viewing (13%), Boating (9%), Picnicking (8%), Running (7%), Fishing (6%), Floating (5%), River Clean-Up Events (4%) and Other (5%). One activity that was not listed, but came through under the comments section was camping.

Five major themes identified during the planning process of the Neuse River Blueway Plan in order of importance are Access (63%), Conservation (54.9%), Connectivity (49.6%), Recreation (44.4%) and Tourism (27.8%).

What type of activities do you participate in or near the Neuse River?



Which of these do you find to be the most important for the Neuse River Blueway Plan?



EXISTING ACCESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In October 2020, an online survey was conducted to assess the public’s use of the six existing river access points along the Neuse River in Raleigh. The River Bend access was not included in the survey since it wasn’t open to the public yet. This survey had 98 participants and collected 93 comments. The chart below shows the results of the question that asked users to assign a grade to these access points.

The survey asked for users to comment & explain these grades, and also asked them to submit suggestions for improvements. Below and on the following pages are a summary of issues identified and the public’s suggested proposed improvements. The full list of comments collected can be found in Appendix F on page 84.

How would you grade the existing river access points along the Neuse River?

	A	B	C	D	F
Falls Lake	33% A	40% B	19% C	7% D	1% F
Thornton Rd.	9% A	26% B	29% C	29% D	6% F
Elizabeth Dr.	6% A	22% B	43% C	22% D	6% F
Milburnie	10% A	30% B	42% C	10% D	7% F
Anderson Point	14% A	31% B	28% C	20% D	7% F
Poole Rd.	11% A	19% B	37% C	24% D	9% F

83 respondents

SYSTEM-WIDE

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Debris in river	Boat & bike locks for shuttling
Muddy & Slippery launches	An effective way to slow down or divert bikers at greenway intersections
Steep & Narrow launches	Restrooms
Limited parking	Signage along river
Access points aren’t user friendly	Increased parking/ designated drop-off parking spot
Trash	Hoses for cleaning boats
Not enough access points	Improvements to allow access to large rafts/ drift boats
Erosion	More access points

FALLS DAM

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Boats get scratched on stairs	Add wood to stairs
Other users blocking steps	Bigger access point
Too steep	
Difficult to cross greenway bike traffic	

MILBURNIE

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Too far to carry boat from parking lot on western bank	New access around Milburnie Falls on western bank
Feels unsafe	Increased police patrols
Not enough parking	More parking
Entrance/Exit only suitable for one-way traffic	Better directional signage

THORNTON RD.

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Too far to carry boat from parking lot	Parking closer to access point
Not enough parking	More parking
Rough terrain	

ANDERSON POINT

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Debris blocking the river	Increased maintenance
Slippery	Signage on river
Difficult to cross greenway bike traffic	Signage from parking lot to drop-off
Other users block access point	
Trash	

ELIZABETH DR.

ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Needs a restroom	Add restroom
Not enough parking	Direct greenway users to park at different trailhead
No steps	
Narrow & slippery	
Difficult to cross greenway bike traffic	

POOLE RD.

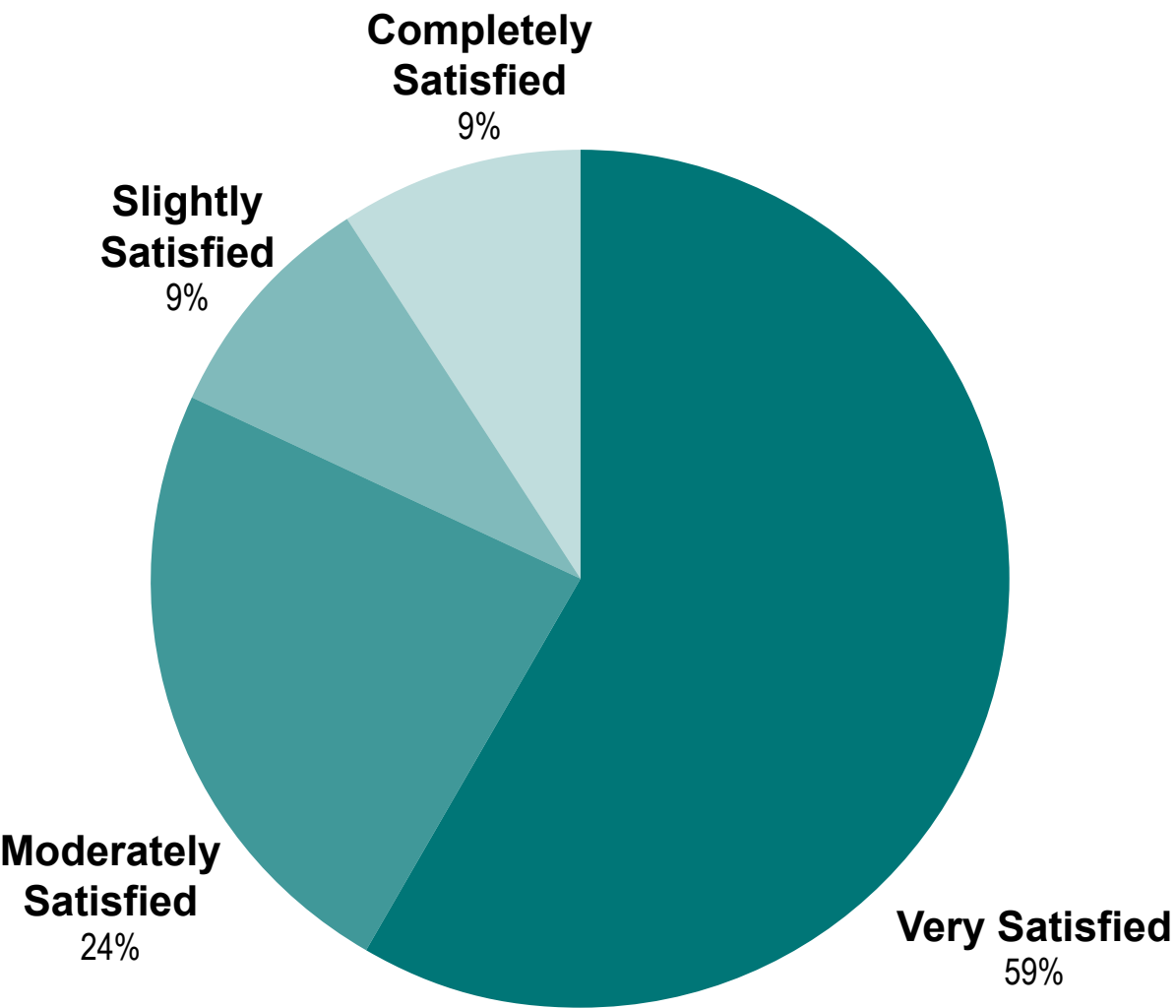
ISSUES	PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Too far to carry boat from parking lot	Add designated drop-off parking spot
Feels unsafe	
Muddy & Slippery	
Not enough parking	
Steep	

DRAFT DOCUMENT REVIEW & PRIORITIES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

From December 7th to December 28th, the draft Neuse River Blueway Plan was uploaded to the project website for public review and comment and an online survey was conducted with two goals in mind. The first goal was to get feedback on the draft document and gauge how satisfied people were with the content. The second goal was to ask people to rank the short-term priorities outlined in the system improvements chapter. This survey had 44 participants and collected 44 comments.

The results of the ranked priorities can be found on page 69 in the Next Steps chapter. The other survey results can be found below and all comments can be found in Appendix F on page 84.

Overall are you satisfied with the Draft Neuse River Blueway Plan?





System Improvements

The Neuse River Blueway Plan establishes a long-range vision for the upper Neuse River as a cohesive paddling trail. This chapter provides an overview of the recommended improvements necessary in order to achieve this vision.

Proposed improvements across all locations are summarized in the chart on page 26 and on the Neuse River Blueway Plan Map on page 27. These improvements were derived from feedback received during multiple rounds of community engagement, advice from subject matter experts at various project partner organizations, and a planning-level evaluation of each individual site.

Beginning on page 30, this chapter provides a more detailed analysis of each individual launch site, including existing conditions and proposed improvements. The exact nature and location of river access improvements should be further evaluated through detailed feasibility analysis and site design during future implementation of this plan.

The feedback gathered through community engagement also helped to identify systemwide improvements that will help to establish the Neuse River Blueway as a cohesive paddling trail and a true regional destination. These systemwide considerations are detailed on pages 28 – 29.

The scope of this planning document is focused primarily on the upper 25 miles of the Neuse River and river access points under jurisdiction of the City of Raleigh. However, the full vision of the Neuse River Blueway extends beyond political boundaries and provides an opportunity to coordinate with additional river access points downstream managed by partner jurisdictions such as the Town of Clayton, the Town of Smithfield, Johnston County, and others. More information on the Neuse River Blueway outside of Raleigh is included in Appendix D, beginning on page 79. While not included in this document, it is recommended that in the future the City of Raleigh research the feasibility of extending the Neuse River Blueway to include the Crabtree Creek or Walnut Creek.

DISTRIBUTION OF LAUNCHES

A successful blueway trail should provide river access points distributed strategically to provide users with multiple options for trip duration. Although paddling speed depends heavily on the Neuse River’s highly variable flow rate, a distance of approximately 3–5 miles equates to a 1–2 hour paddling trip on most days. This shorter trip duration is ideal for novice paddlers and recreation programs, and so the Neuse River Blueway Plan recommends providing river access points at intervals of approximately 5 miles or less, where feasible. Distributing launches in this way provides users with many convenient options for where to put in and take out watercraft, and allows for longer trips by linking together multiple shorter segments of the blueway trail. Ultimately, this design will make the river more easily accessible for people throughout the City of Raleigh and the surrounding region.

Today, the City of Raleigh maintains boat launches at six river access points: Falls Dam, Thornton Road, River Bend Park, Elizabeth Drive, Milburnie, Anderson Point, and Poole Road.

New river access points are proposed to be developed at six additional locations in order to complete the blueway trail: Thornton Rd., Louisburg Rd., Buffaloe Rd. Athletic Park, Alvis Farm, Randleigh Farm, and Mial Plantation Rd. These new river access points are highlighted in orange on the accompanying chart and are represented with an orange dot on Neuse River Blueway Plan map.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACCESS POINTS

There are a total of ten river access points proposed along the first 25 miles of the Neuse River Blueway Trail. “Primary” access points are planned to accommodate the majority of paddling activity, and will generally have larger parking lots, more formal boat launch designs, and other amenities to improve user experience. Secondary access points, primarily located at greenway trailhead parking lots along the river, provide alternative access opportunities but are not designed for intensive use.

Primary access points are designated in light blue on the accompanying chart and are represented with a light blue halo on the Neuse River Blueway Plan map.

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES

Additional facilities beyond boat launch improvements themselves—such as public restrooms, expanded parking, and ADA-friendly infrastructure—are proposed at designated primary access points. These facilities will make paddling the Neuse River a more accessible experience for a broader cross-section of the population, ultimately expanding this recreational opportunity to a greater number of people.

However, locating these amenities is a difficult challenge at many sites along the Neuse River corridor. Restroom facilities must be constructed outside of the river’s sizable floodplain, which may extend hundreds of feet inland, far away from potential boat launch locations; site topography and bank conditions may make it impossible or financially infeasible to develop fully ADA-accessible launch designs at some locations; and there is a delicate balance between dedicating enough space for adequate parking while limiting tree removal and impervious surface area in ecologically sensitive locations.

Where feasible, providing these enhanced facilities at primary access points is necessary to make the paddling experience accessible to as many people as possible. Co-located with trailheads along the Neuse River Greenway Trail and other park site improvements, these facilities will meet the demand of general park and greenway users in addition to blueway paddlers. In most cases, development of these enhanced facilities should be considered in coordination with future master planning and large-scale development of each individual site.



Neuse River

Launch Name	Launch Designation	Existing Launch Type	Proposed Improvements
Falls Dam (pg 30)	Primary	Concrete Landing & Pre-Cast Block Steps	Short Term: Improve launch for increased safety and accessibility—evaluate site for feasibility of concrete ramp or boat slide Long Term: Develop additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Thornton Rd. (pg 34)	Primary	Beach Launch	Short Term: Develop new concrete ramp launch in partnership with Wildlife Resource Commission Long Term: Develop additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Louisburg Rd. (pg 39)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop site for additional greenway trailhead parking and river access improvements
River Bend (pg 41)	Primary	Concrete Ramp	N/A - Completed Nov. 2020
Elizabeth Dr. (pg 43)	Secondary	Natural Launch	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: Phase out this location after a new permanent river access point is established nearby at Buffaloe Road Athletic Park or Alvis Farm
Buffaloe Road Athletic Park (pg 46)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop new launch and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Alvis Farm (pg 49)	Primary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Develop new launch and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Milburnie (pg 52)	Primary	Beach Launch	Short Term: Maintain existing natural beach launch Long Term: Evaluate potential for river access improvements and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Anderson Point (pg 54)	Primary	Gravel Ramp	Short Term: Improve existing launch and expand parking in coordination with Wildlife Resources Commission Long Term: N/A
Poole Rd. (pg 60)	Secondary	Wooden Stairs	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: N/A
Randleigh Farm (pg 63)	Primary	Undeveloped	Short Term: N/A Long Term: Evaluate potential for river access improvements and additional facilities in coordination with future master planning and site development
Mial Plantation Rd. (pg 65)	Secondary	Undeveloped	Short Term: Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction Long Term: N/A

Neuse River Blueway Plan

LEGEND

River Access

Primary River Access

Proposed New River Access /
Proposed New Amenity

ADA Accessible

Parking

Restrooms

The map illustrates the Neuse River Blueway route, marked by a blue line. Key locations and their River Mile (RM) markers are as follows:

- Falls Dam (RM 0.25)
- Thornton Rd. (RM 4.85)
- Louisburg Rd. (RM 7.88)
- River Bend (RM 9.93)
- Elizabeth Dr. (RM 10.76)
- Buffaloe Rd. (RM 11.66)
- Athletic Park (RM 12.83)
- Alvis Farm (RM 12.83)
- Milburnie (RM 14.73)
- Anderson Point (RM 16.76)
- Poole Rd. (RM 18.26)
- Randleigh Farm (RM 21.08)
- Mial Plantation Rd. (RM 25.12)

Distances between locations are indicated by dashed lines:

- 4.6 River Miles (from Falls Dam to Thornton Rd.)
- 3.03 RM (between Thornton Rd. and Louisburg Rd.)
- 2.05 RM (between Louisburg Rd. and River Bend)
- 0.83 RM (between River Bend and Elizabeth Dr.)
- 0.9 RM (between Elizabeth Dr. and Buffaloe Rd.)
- 1.17 RM (between Buffaloe Rd. and Athletic Park)
- 1.9 River Miles (between Athletic Park and Milburnie)
- 2.03 River Miles (between Milburnie and Anderson Point)
- 1.5 RM (between Anderson Point and Poole Rd.)
- 2.82 RM (between Poole Rd. and Randleigh Farm)
- 4.04 RM (between Randleigh Farm and Mial Plantation Rd.)
- 4.32 River Miles (between Anderson Point and Randleigh Farm)
- 5.08 River Miles (between Thornton Rd. and River Bend)
- 2.9 River Miles (between River Bend and Athletic Park)

Amenities and access points are marked with icons: River Access (white circle), Primary River Access (blue sunburst), Proposed New River Access / Proposed New Amenity (orange circle), ADA Accessible (wheelchair icon), Parking (P icon), and Restrooms (restroom icon).

27

SYSTEM-WIDE IMPROVEMENTS

MAINTENANCE

Like any outdoor adventure-style recreational activity, paddling or floating on the Neuse River is an inherently risky endeavor.

The provision and maintenance of river access points does not constitute any express or implied guarantee of safety. Access points along the Neuse River are subject to frequent flooding and siltation, and as a result of these natural occurrences access points along the river bank may become inundated, muddy, slippery, blocked by debris, or otherwise dangerous. When feasible, the City of Raleigh will periodically perform maintenance activity such as removing siltation from constructed launches at primary access points, but most secondary or natural access points may become difficult or impossible to use for extended periods of time following flood events.

Safety while on the Neuse River itself is also the responsibility of individual paddlers. River hazards such as log jams can create dangerous or even potentially fatal conditions. Paddlers should exercise special caution when approaching obstructions such as downed trees, boulders, or log jams which can pin boats and people under water. Removing log jams and other obstructions is not within the City of Raleigh’s jurisdiction or responsibility. Typically, log jams are removed by NCDOT or CSX Transportation Railroad, when the obstructions present a danger to the structural integrity of the bridges managed by those entities.

Additional information regarding water quality concerns and emergency river access for swiftwater rescue operations is included in Appendix E on page 83.

PRIMARY RIVER ACCESS POINTS

There were many different comments during the community engagement periods about a wide variety of amenities that users wished to see at the river access launches. These amenities included: restrooms, changing areas, expanded parking, picnic areas, concessions, boat cleaning station with hoses, camping spots, drop-off locations, boat locks, and bike locks. While it is unfeasible to include these amenities at every launch, this plan recommends the establishment of primary river access points which will provide a selection of these amenities. The designation of these primary river access points can be found on the map on page 27.

SIGNAGE

One of the proposed improvements mentioned by citizens during the community engagement surveys was to add various types of signage to the Blueway system. They mentioned wayfinding signage along the river so paddlers can know how far the next access point is, signage at take-outs, and signage for general location if paddlers need to call for emergency help. Other signage mentioned was safety signage at the launch locations to help inform paddlers of precautions to take while on the river. And lastly, there were concerns raised about how boaters interact with greenway users, specifically cyclists, while they transport their boats from parking lots to launches. This plan recommends adding signage along the greenway at launch locations, to raise awareness for greenway users that they are approaching a portage crossing and should be prepared to stop. With a recent grant from the United States Coast Guard, American Whitewater is launching a project to develop an open-source toolbox for river safety signage. Signage along the Neuse River Blueway should utilize this toolbox during design.



Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area - River Safety Signage



Signage along Neuse River Greenway



Calusa Blueway - Mile Marker Signage

PUBLIC ART

The incorporation of public art should be considered while designing new primary river access points. Examples of opportunities include small murals or mosaics near the ramps or sewer-ups and artistically designed boat or bike racks.

This plan also recommends adding public art on some of the vehicular or greenway bridges that span the Neuse River, to improve the user experience while paddling. The public art could also supplement the need for wayfinding signage along the river.



Example of art on bridge



Example of mural on bridge

THE NEUSE RIVER GREENWAY TRAIL

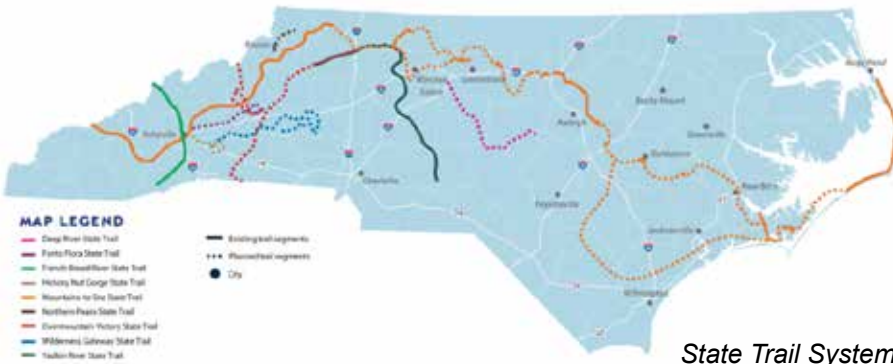
The Neuse River Greenway Trail brings many users to the area, and there is an opportunity for the Neuse River Blueway to serve the cycling, pedestrian, and paddling community together. This plan recommends building unity between the different users by hosting City of Raleigh events along the Neuse River to highlight the different experiences the river provides.



Neuse River Greenway Trail

STATE WATER TRAIL

The improvements recommended in this plan will increase the navigability and accessibility of the upper 25 miles of the Neuse River. Further access improvements downstream could position the Neuse River for designation as a State or National Water Trail.



State Trail System

PROGRAMMING

Thirty-four percent of the participants from the initial online survey indicated that they rent their paddle crafts instead of owning them. Especially with the closure of the privately-owned Paddle Creek, there is a need for boat rentals on the Neuse River. This plan recommends that the City of Raleigh look at adding this as a service they provide, along with guided tours of the river and river clean-up days. Another potential programming option to provide rental paddle crafts is to implement paddle share lockers along the river. More information about paddle share can be found at www.paddleshare.org



2018 Neuse River Whitewater Trip led by COR Adventure Programs



Mississippi River Paddle Share Locker

FALLS DAM

Falls Dam is the northernmost launch access on the Neuse River. The City of Raleigh leases this property from the Army Corps of Engineers and has developed a boat launch through an outgrant agreement. The City used funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to secure the lease. As part of the law requirement for LWCF, the land may not be used for any other purpose other than outdoor recreation.

The Falls Dam is one of the City’s oldest and most popular access points on the Neuse River for residents of Raleigh. The launch consists of a concrete landing and pre-cast block steps. There is no handrail and the launch is not ADA accessible.

There are 29 car parking spaces (including one handicap) and 9 trailer parking spaces in the parking lot. The Neuse River Greenway trail begins at this site and there is a demand for parking as a result of

multiple user types.

Falls Dam is located at the beginning of the Neuse River Blueway. It should be recognized as a primary launch location and should be able to accommodate more patrons than it currently serves. An increase in parking is recommended on the adjacent undeveloped park property known as the Leonard Tract. The Leonard Tract does not currently have a master plan but it’s planning and development should be prioritized.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has expressed a strong interest in seeing additional restroom facilities developed at this location, to reduce the burden on the existing restroom facilities west of the Falls of Neuse Road bridge. Additionally, USACE has previously recommended the construction of a wooden boat slide alongside the existing concrete steps, in order to ease river access and reduce potential damage to kayaks and canoes.



Existing Boat Launch



Existing Boat Launch Parking

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: CONCRETE LANDING & PRE-CAST BLOCK STEPS

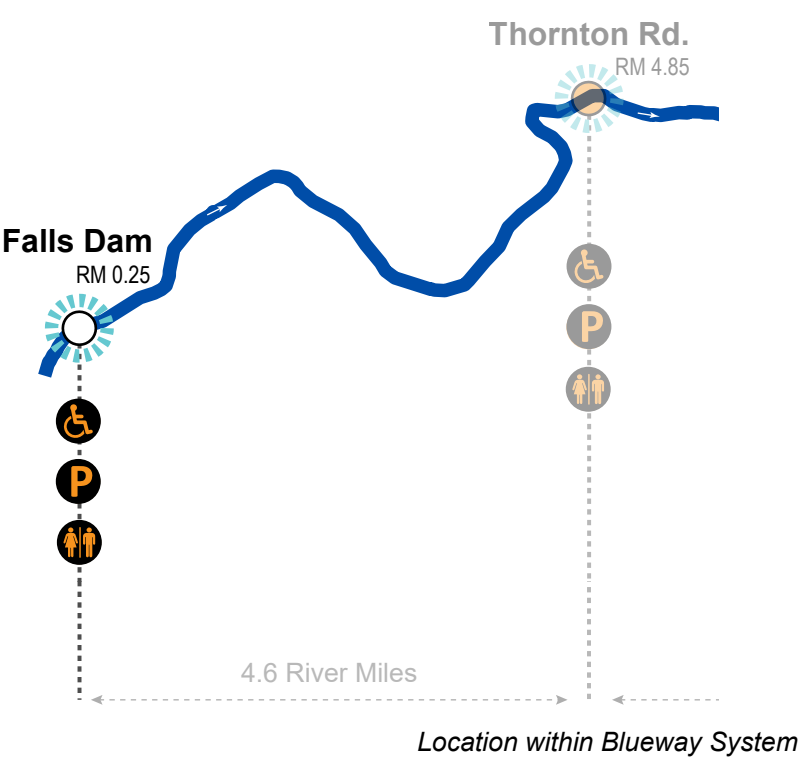
EXISTING PARKING: 39 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LAUNCH DAMAGES BOATS & LIMITED PARKING

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

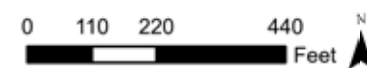
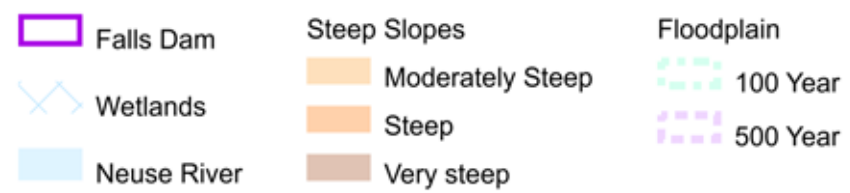
SHORT TERM: IMPROVE LAUNCH FOR INCREASED SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY—EVALUATE SITE FOR FEASIBILITY OF CONCRETE RAMP OR BOAT SLIDE

LONG TERM: DEVELOP ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

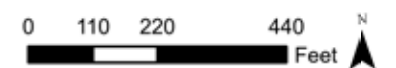




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure





Concrete Ramp Launch Example



Wooden Boat Slide Example



Proposed Improvements

- Falls Dam
- Proposed Launch Improvements
- Existing Site Circulation



FALLS PARK ON THE NEUSE RIVER
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS FALLS WHITEWATER PARK)

The development of a whitewater park in the Neuse River below Falls Dam has been in consideration since construction began on Falls Dam in 1978. A feasibility study completed in March 2011 resulted in a conceptual plan for the proposed whitewater park to be developed within a span of approximately 600 feet of the Neuse River, beginning in the southern channel of the river immediately east of the Falls of Neuse Road bridge.

Access improvements proposed in the Falls Park on the Neuse River conceptual plan include a new put-in just upstream of the Falls of Neuse Road bridge and a take-out at the downstream-most pool at the end of the whitewater improvements. Additional river access at various points along the whitewater course, together with a hardened area at the waters edge along the southern bank, would allow for broader access by the general public in addition to whitewater paddlers. The conceptual plan also proposed additional restroom facilities, parking, and improvements to accessibility and circulation.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed in July 2012 between the City of Raleigh and the Falls Whitewater Park Committee (FWPC), which memorialized an agreement “to work together to plan for the construction of a whitewater park on the Neuse River downstream of Falls Lake, including a portion of the area currently managed by the City as the Falls Dam Access on the Neuse River Canoe Trail... Planning for the park will include assessment of opportunities to incorporate existing and proposed features such as picnic shelters, comfort stations, trails, and adjacent wooded areas.”

These improvements may be considered or further evaluated in the context of a master plan and development of the Leonard Tract Property (alternatively referred to as Falls Park), but are considered outside of the scope of the present Neuse River Blueway Plan. At this time, sufficient funding is not available to pursue further design, environmental assessment & permitting, or construction of the proposed whitewater features and associated park improvements. The 2012 Memorandum of Understanding also states that, “The FWPC is the designated fiscal agent for the project, meaning that the FWPC has agreed to be responsible for fundraising and solicitation of other resources including grants, in-kind contributions, and corporate donations necessary for construction of the Park. The FWPC makes no guarantees of any kind as to how much money it will be able to raise for the Park. Moreover, FWPC, as a new non-profit entity, has no source of funds of its own that it can provide for the construction of the Park. FWPC agrees to investigate multiple avenues of raising funds and to seek, at its own expense, 501(c)(3) status. This agreement does not preclude the opportunity for the City to also seek funding for the Park.”



THORNTON ROAD

Thornton Road Property is an undeveloped park acquired by the City of Raleigh in 1996. This location is extremely important to the Neuse River Blueway system because it is the closest public river access point downstream of the Falls Dam launch. Because the Falls Dam launch is likely the most heavily used river access point, it is essential to provide a take-out location within a reasonable distance of this put-in.

Historically, there was a take-out available at the Capital Boulevard bridge over the Neuse River, approximately one quarter-mile upstream of the Thornton Road Property. Although heavily used, this take-out location was on private land leased by Paddle Creek, a kayak tour and rental company. As of November 2020, Paddle Creek is no longer operating at this location. A public access point in this vicinity is essential to providing shorter paddling trips along this section of the Neuse River, which are ideal for casual or novice paddlers.

The existing gravel parking area at Thornton Road currently accommodates approximately 60 vehicles. An asphalt trail provides a connection from the parking lot and the Neuse River Greenway Trail to a natural beach boat launch.

However, the distance from the parking lot to the beach boat launch is approximately one half-mile. This is an unfeasible portage distance for most paddlers to walk carrying their watercraft, although experienced paddlers with lighter boats do use this natural beach as a river access point.

A launch closer to the existing parking with a drop-off option is recommended so this site can be used by a wider range of boaters. Thornton Road is recommended to be developed as a primary access point, and future master planning of this site should consider additional amenities such as restroom access in order to support heavy use of this site for river access.



Existing Beach Boat Launch



Existing Parking



SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: BEACH LAUNCH

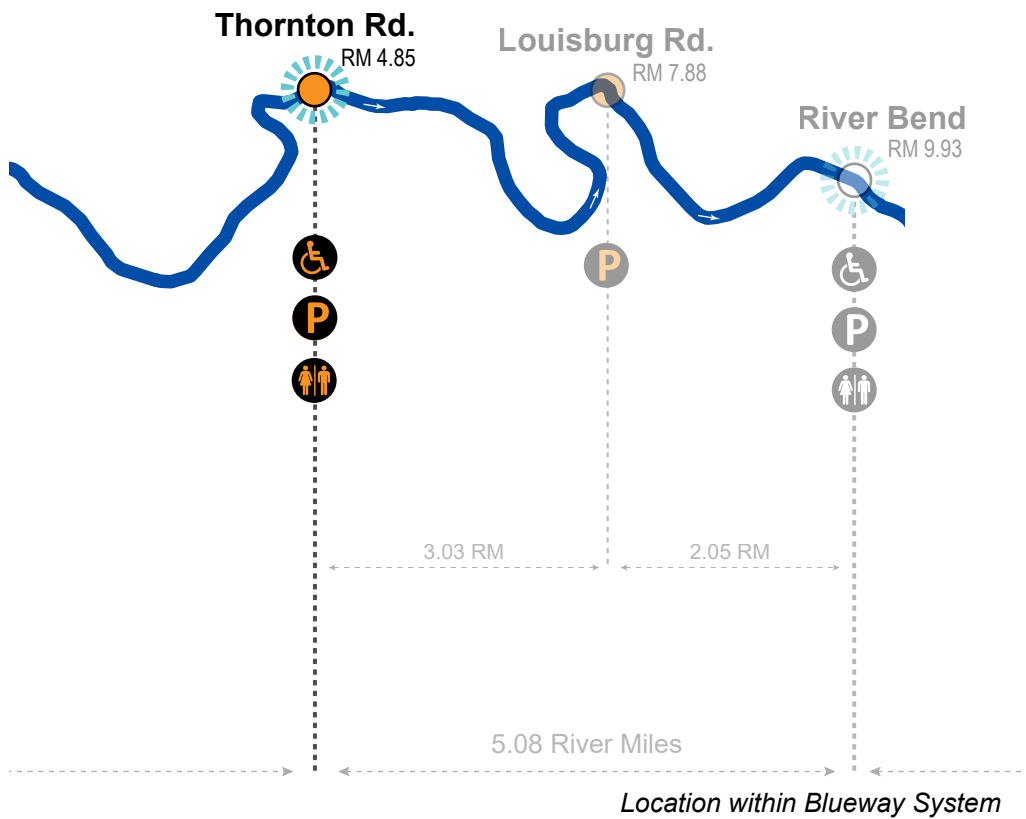
EXISTING PARKING: 60 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: UNFEASIBLE PORTAGE DISTANCE

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

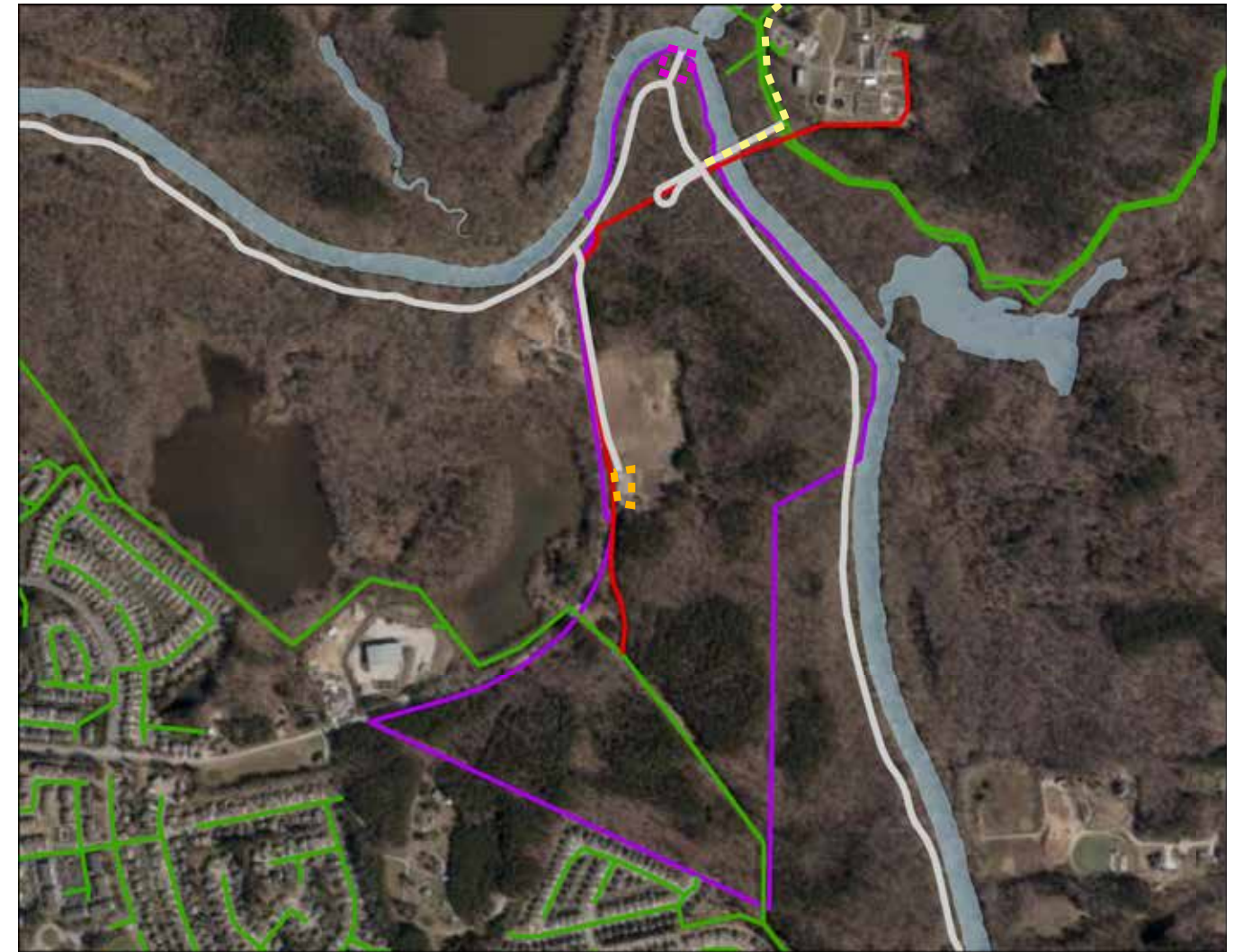
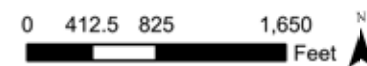
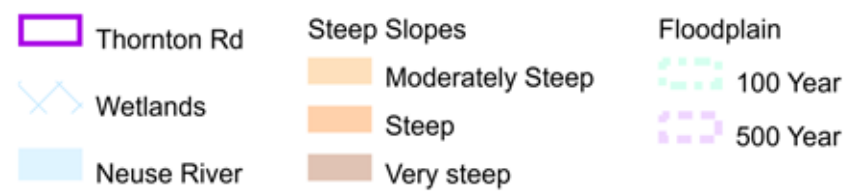
SHORT TERM: DEVELOP NEW CONCRETE RAMP LAUNCH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WILDLIFE RESOURCE COMMISSION

LONG TERM: DEVELOP ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

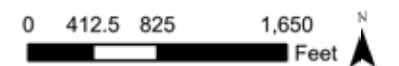




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities

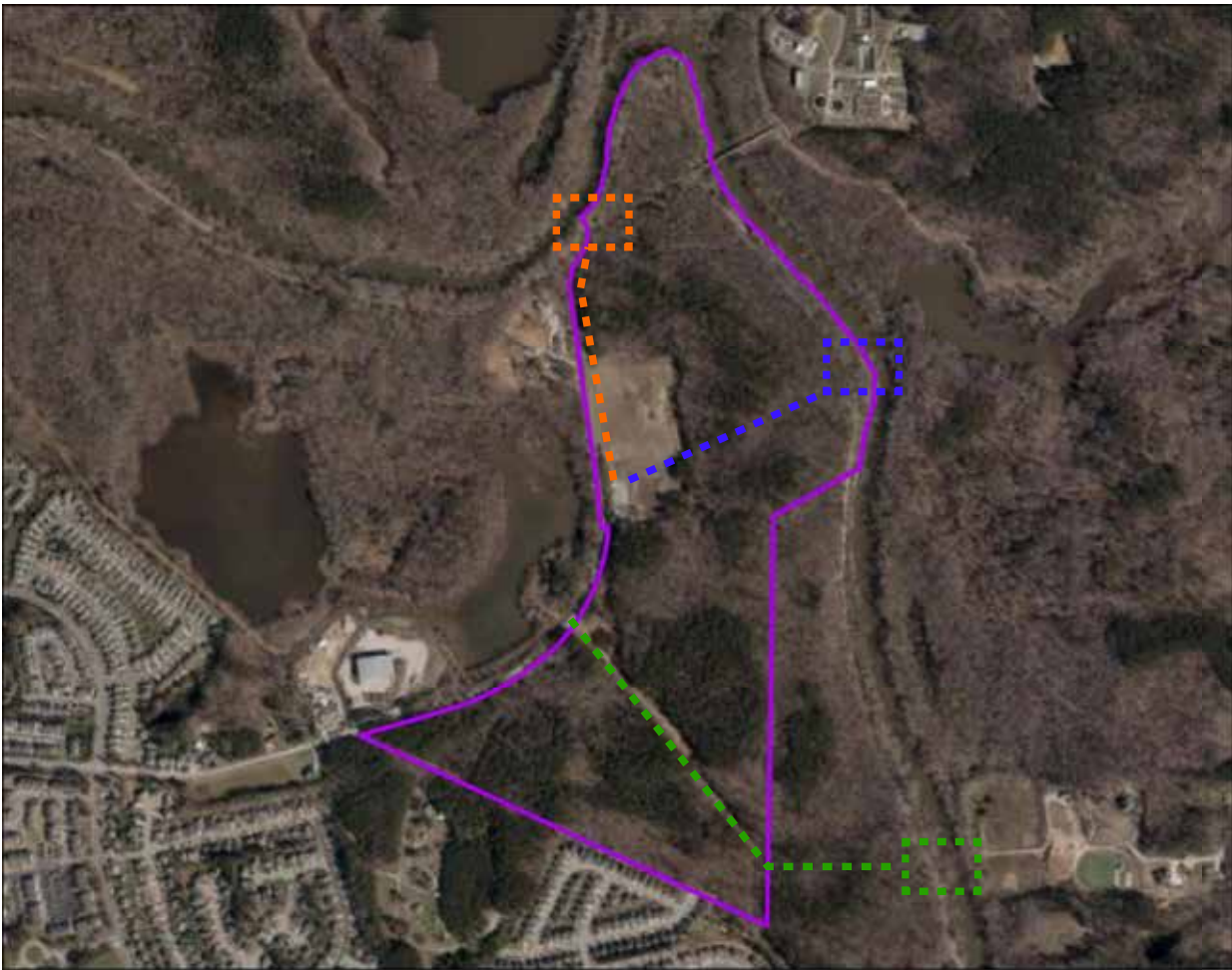


Existing Conditions - Infrastructure



Several alternative locations for this boat launch were evaluated at a City of Raleigh Development Services Sketch Plan Review in November 2019. Of the three locations pictured below, Option B was chosen as the preferred alternative. The river bank at this location is less steep relative to other areas considered on this property. This location can be accessed from the existing gravel lot with minimal disturbance to natural features on the site, and minimal interference from the existing sewer infrastructure in this location. The new launch may include a trailer turnaround area, accessible parking located at the launch site, and development of a concrete boat launch suitable for use by the Wildlife Resources Commission.

Raleigh Park, Recreation and Cultural Resources has established a partnership with Wildlife Resources Commission for implementation of an improved boat launch at Thornton Road. The benefit of this project for Wildlife Resources Commission is that the location of the boat launch on the river will provide ideal access for their fish monitoring program and provide an ADA accessible launch for boaters. WRC recently designed and constructed a similar type of boat launch on the Neuse River in Smithfield, NC, pictured below.



Potential Launch Options

	Thornton Rd
	Option A
	Option B
	Option C

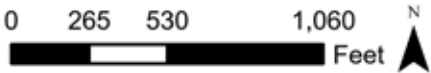


WRC boat launch on the Neuse River, Smithfield, NC



Proposed Improvements

- Thornton Rd
- Proposed New Launch
- Proposed Additional Site Circulation



LONG-TERM POTENTIAL RIVER ACCESS DEVELOPMENT

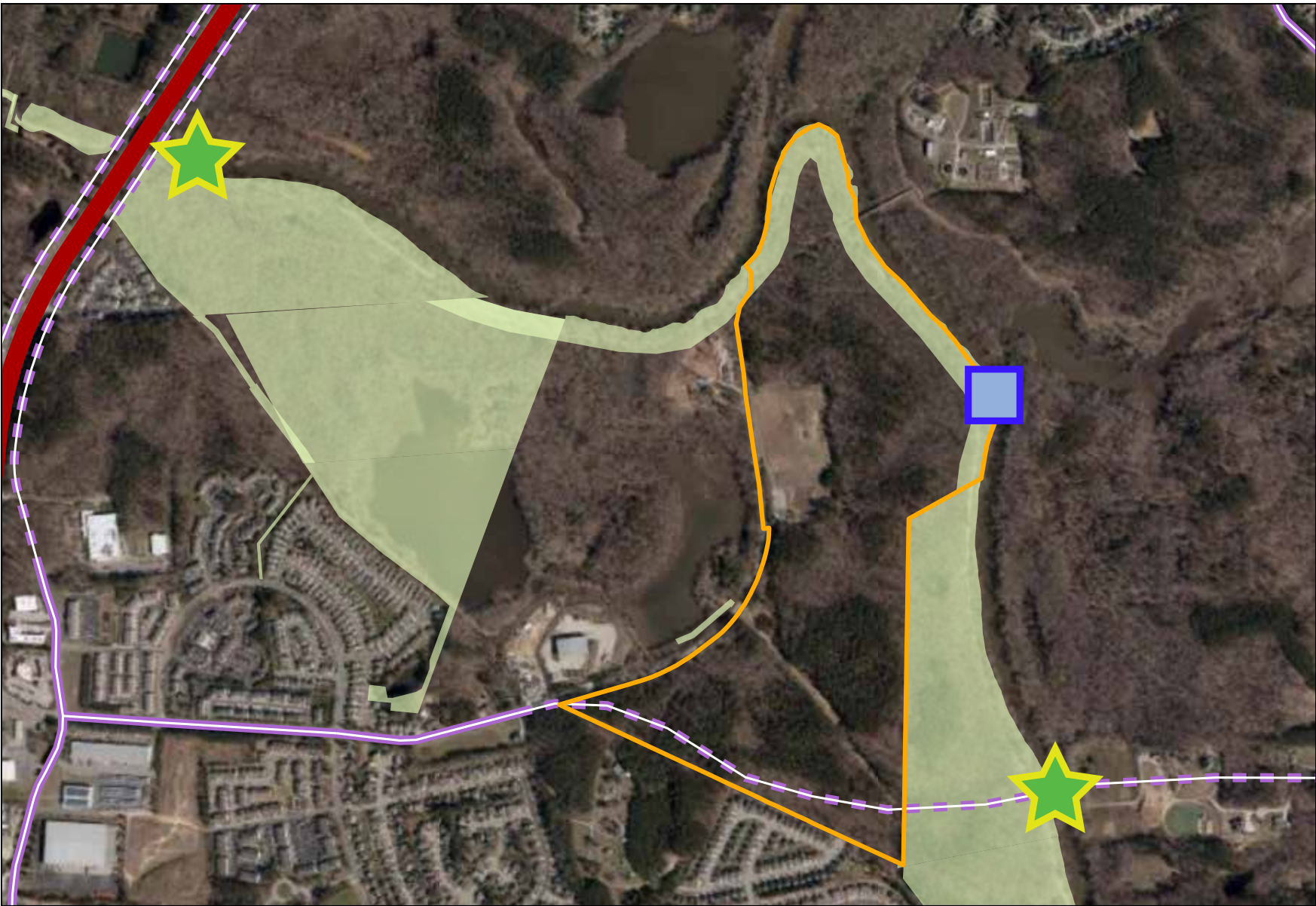
There are two opportunities for river access development near the Thornton Rd. Property but would have to be considered as long-term projects. These projects have the potential to increase access in the area and provide for shorter trips along the Upper Neuse River.

The first opportunity is within the City of Raleigh greenway properties along the southeast border of the Thornton Rd. property. The site recommended for a river access launch overlaps with the future planned development of a two-lane avenue that will traverse the Neuse River. Once the alignment is finalized, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department should work with the Transportation Department to assess feasibility of a river access launch adjacent to the bridge.

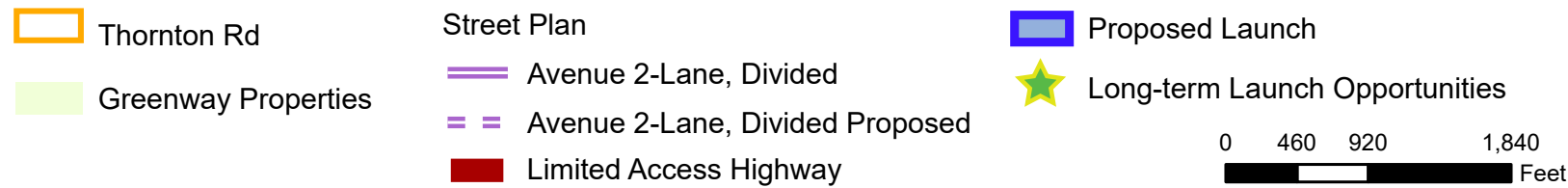
The second opportunity is on the City of Raleigh greenway properties adjacent to the US-1 bridge over the Neuse River. NCDOT has a planned project to convert US-1 to a freeway which would include construction of a new bridge, and the construction of parallel access roads to facilitate this conversion. The southeastern access road would be located within the greenway properties and could potentially facilitate a river access point. The City of Raleigh should work with NCDOT and assess the feasibility of this potential access as the project moves forward.

These new access points would provide the following distances for shorter trips along the Neuse River.

Access Point	River Mile	Distance from Previous Launch
Falls Dam	0.25	-
US-1 Bridge	3.4	3.15 miles
Thornton Rd. Property	4.85	1.45 miles
Thornton Rd. Bridge	5.36	0.51 miles
Louisburg Rd. Property	7.88	2.52 miles



Proposed Improvements



LOUISBURG RD. PROPERTY

During the community engagement phase of the Neuse River Blueway Plan process, several participants expressed a desire for a river access point to be developed at Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve. The original master plan for Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve included a canoe/kayak launch to be located adjacent to a proposed greenway trail bridge along the site’s eastern riverbank.

Subsequent construction of the Neuse River Greenway Trail located this greenway bridge adjacent to the Louisburg Road bridge, approximately 0.4 miles downstream. Construction of a canoe/kayak launch at this location is not feasible. Additional opportunities were evaluated for providing direct river access at Horseshoe Farm, but due to the potential for construction to disrupt the sensitive riparian ecology of the Nature Preserve, several alternatives were identified.

The Louisburg Rd. property was chosen for it’s proximity to the Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve, and it’s already semi-disturbed state. The Louisburg Rd. property was acquired by PRCR in 2000 to facilitate construction of the the Neuse River Greenway Trail. This site is recommended to be developed as a secondary launch location in coordination with development of a greenway trailhead parking area. The Louisburg Road site consists of two adjacent parcels. There is currently a small clearing in the smaller parcel, immediately off of Louisburg Road, that is used by PRCR maintenance staff for greenway trail access. Since this parcel is less than two acres, not in the floodplain, and is already disturbed, it is a great candidate for location of a small parking lot. Exact boat launch location and design should be determined during a subsequent planning process. More information on planning for specific launch types can be found in Appendix C on page 78.



Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve Master Plan

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: UNDEVELOPED

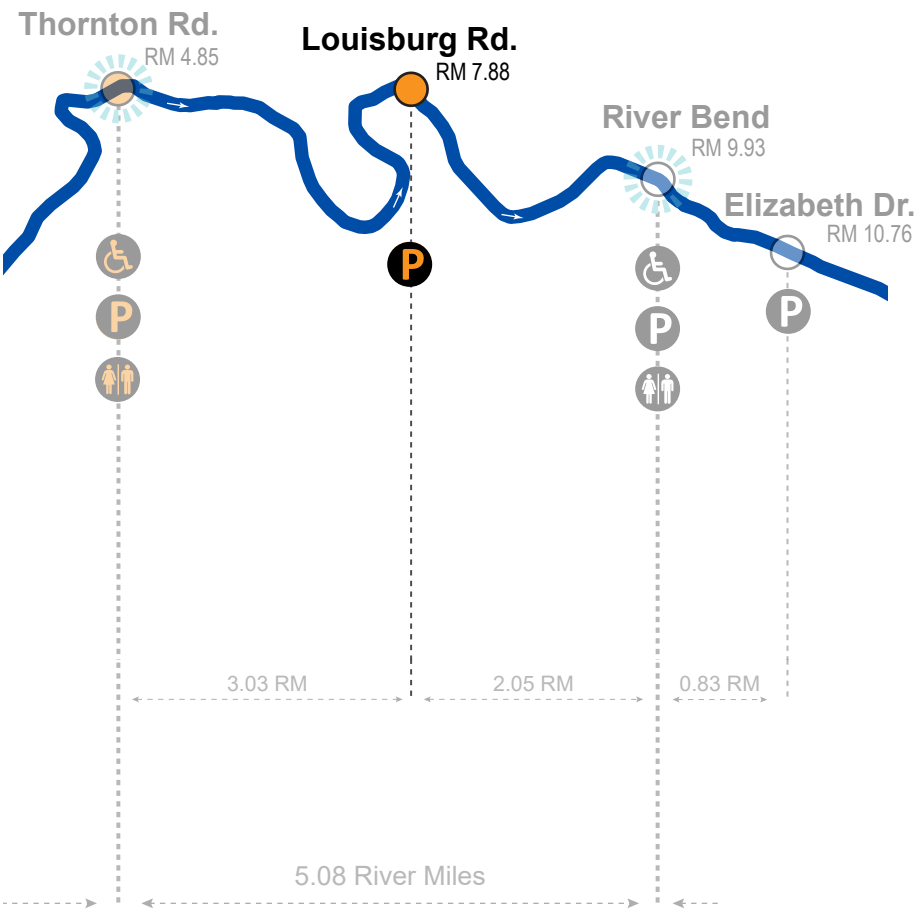
EXISTING PARKING: UNDEVELOPED

SITE CONCERNS: N/A

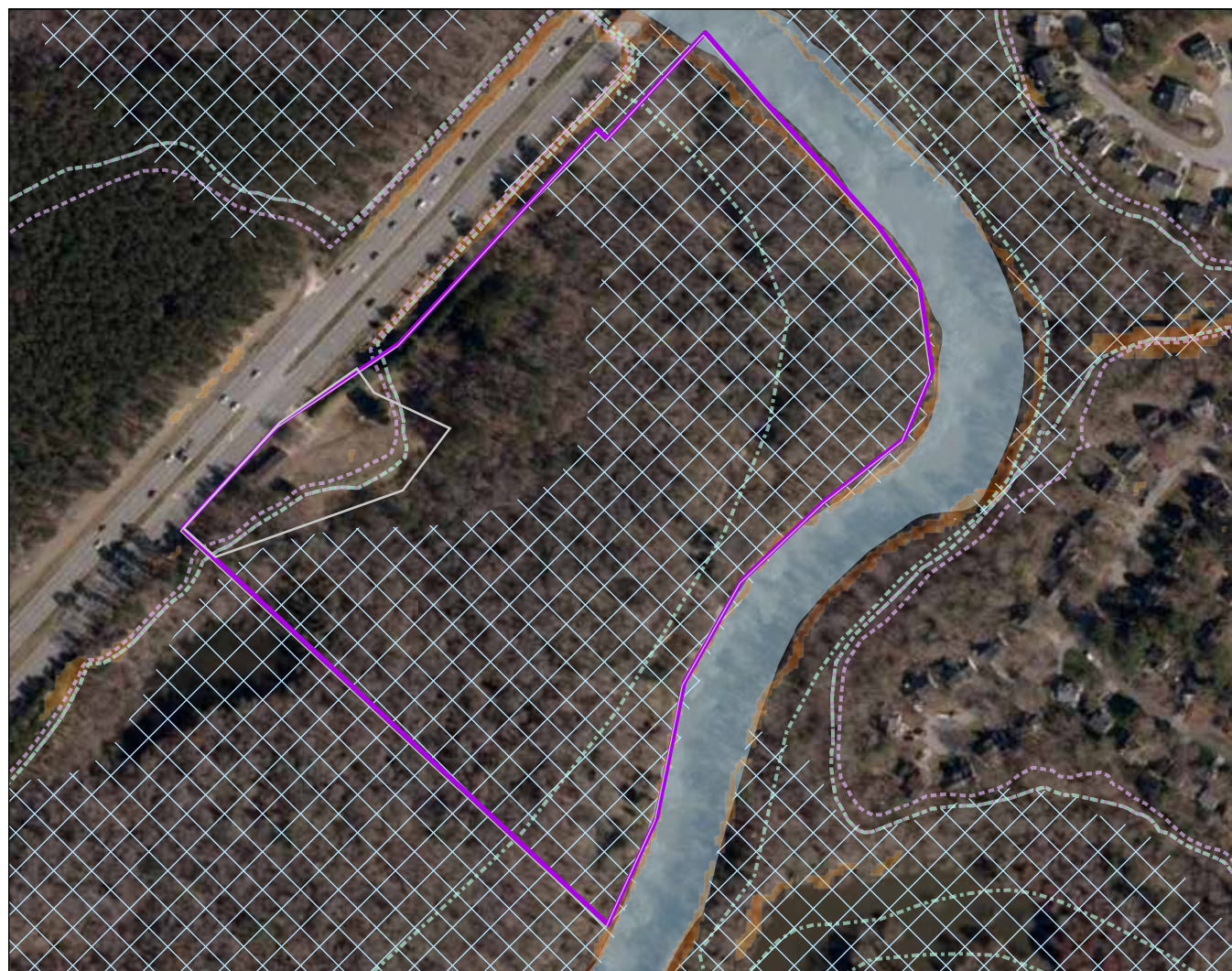
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

SHORT TERM: N/A

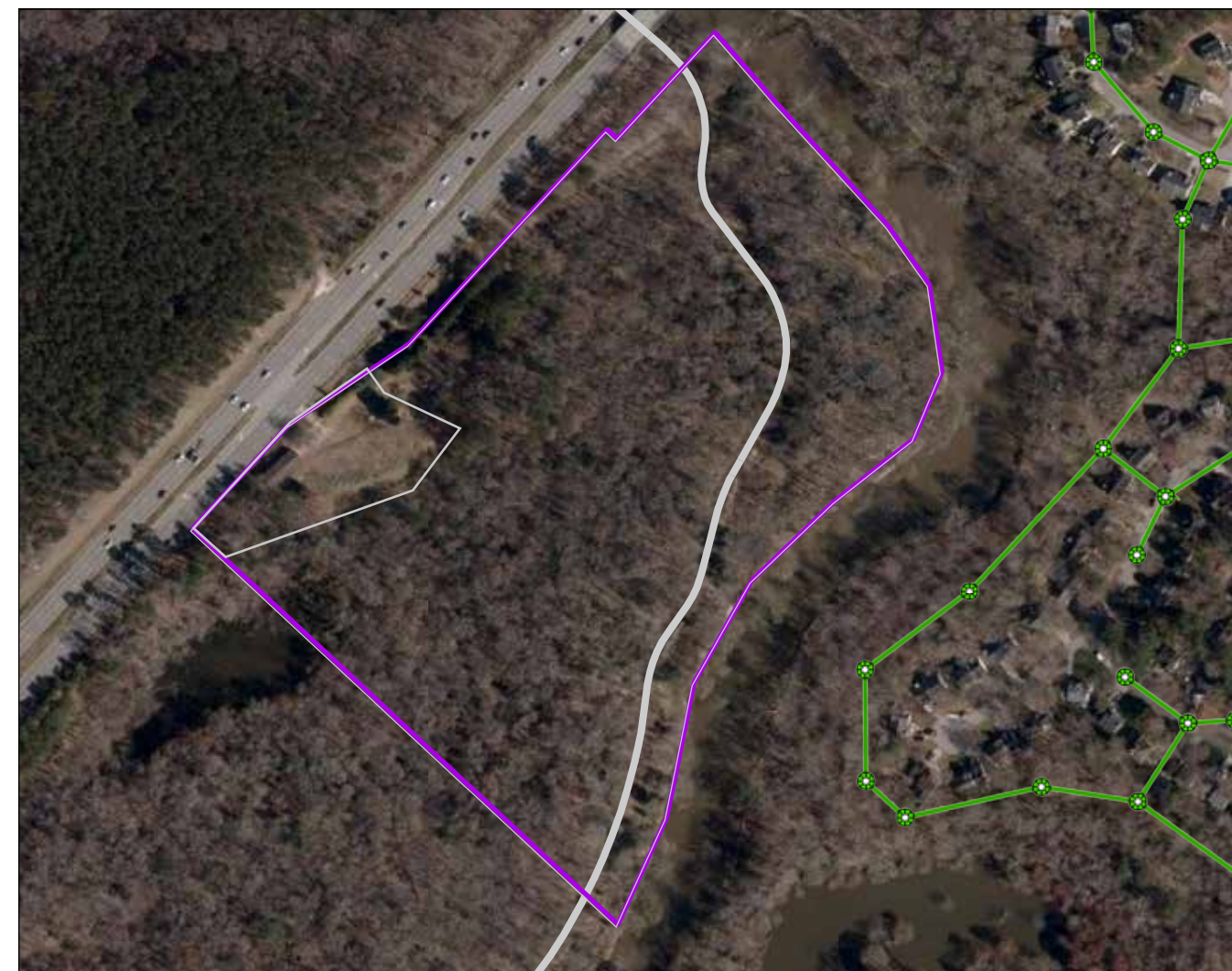
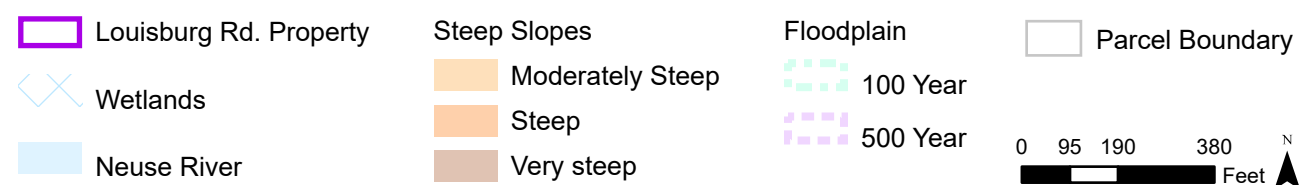
LONG TERM: DEVELOP SITE FOR ADDITIONAL GREENWAY TRAILHEAD PARKING AND RIVER ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS



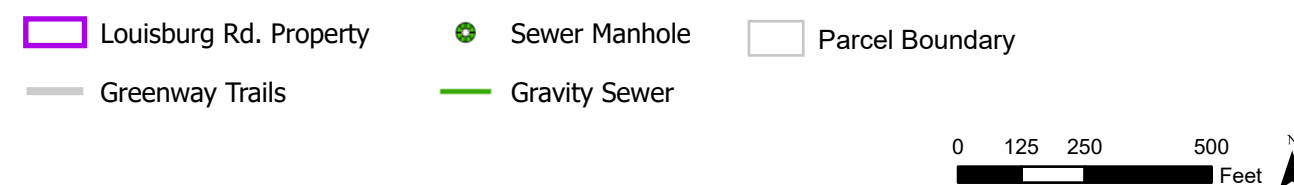
Location within Blueway System



Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure



RIVER BEND PARK

River Bend Park, formerly known as the Perry Creek Road Property, was acquired by the City of Raleigh in 2012. Acquisition and development of the property was included in the 2014 Parks Bond. The master plan for River Bend Park was adopted by City Council in 2016. Priority items for implementation of Phase 1 Development include a comfort station, parking lot with 67 spaces, a boat launch and a play area.

The park completed construct in November 2020. This plan does not include proposed improvements since the launch was just opened.

The River Bend Park is a primary river access point and includes a drop-off, ADA accessible launch, and a comfort station with changing rooms. The boat launch at River Bend is approximately 350 feet away from the drop-off area. Site topography allowed for a restroom to be built fairly close to the launch and Neuse River Greenway Trail. This is not possible at many other locations due to floodplain restrictions. The launch design at River Bend Park includes a 10’ asphalt trail leading to the 12’ wide concrete launch. The launch is armored with 18-30” diameter boulders on each side in effort to limit the impacts of erosion. The maximum slope leading to the kayak launch is 15%. Permits for River Bend Park included coordination with NCDEQ, USACE and City of Raleigh Development Services.

- SITE SUMMARY
- EXISTING LAUNCH: CONCRETE RAMP
- EXISTING PARKING: 67 SPACES
- SITE CONCERNS: NONE - COMPLETED NOV. 2020
- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:
- NONE - COMPLETED NOV. 2020



Existing Boat Launch- taken after a flooding event



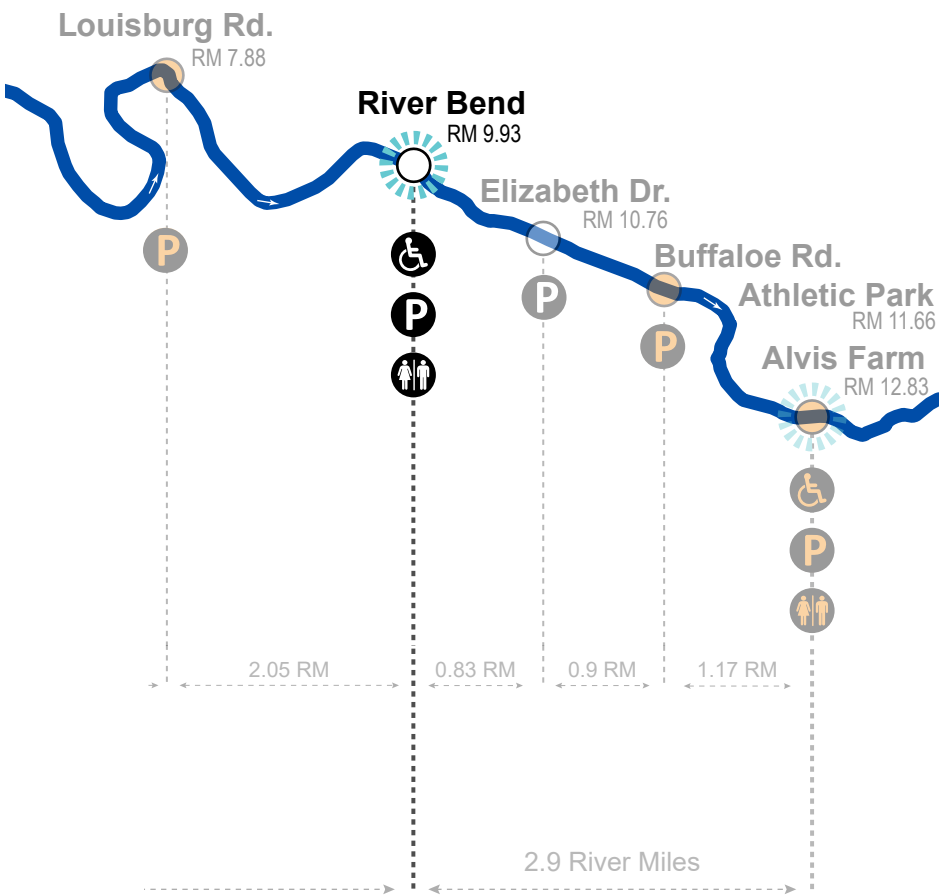
Existing Boat Launch- taken at relatively high river levels of 1520 cfs



Park Master Plan - Boat Launch Detail



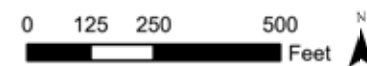
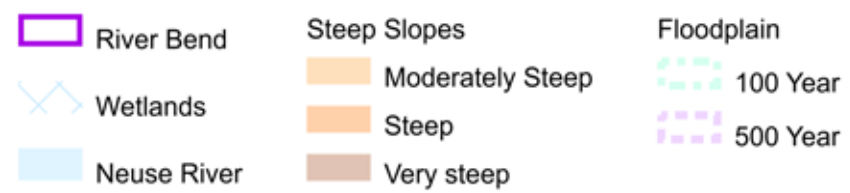
Existing Comfort Station & Changing Rooms



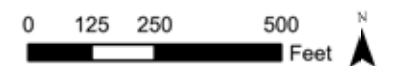
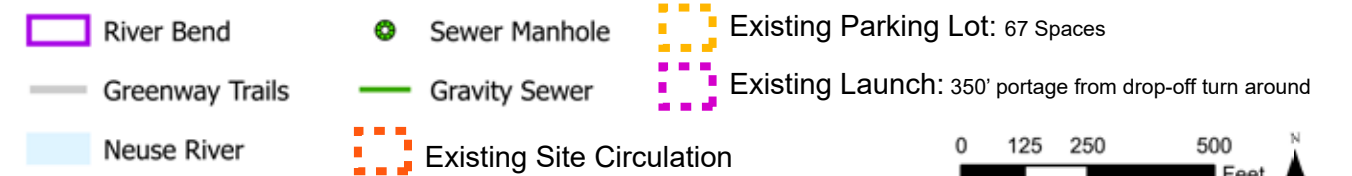
Location within Blueway System



Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure



ELIZABETH DRIVE

The Elizabeth Drive Canoe Launch is located on a 1-acre greenway easement parcel south of the Buffalo Road and Neuse River intersection. The property was acquired in 1988 and developed with LWCF funds in 1998. There are 7 parking spaces in the lot and this launch access has one of the shortest portages throughout the system, with users only having to carry paddlecraft for 175 feet before reaching the Neuse River. The launch is located 1/2 mile north of Buffalo Road Athletic Park.

Many users find the current launch too muddy and slippery. It is suggested that improvements be made to the launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction.

Expanded parking at Elizabeth Dr. is not feasible due to the limited size of the property. Without being able to expand parking on this site, the next best solution is to develop nearby launches to help divert the heavy usage along this section of the river. The recent development of River Bend Park just 0.8 river miles upstream should replace Elizabeth Drive as the preferred river access point along this section. In the future, the Elizabeth Drive site may become obsolete as a river access point, once formal launches are developed downstream at Buffalo Road Athletic Park and/or Alvis Farm. At that time, the Elizabeth Drive river access point may be phased out and the riverbank returned to its natural state.



Existing Boat Launch



Existing Boat Launch Parking

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: NATURAL LAUNCH

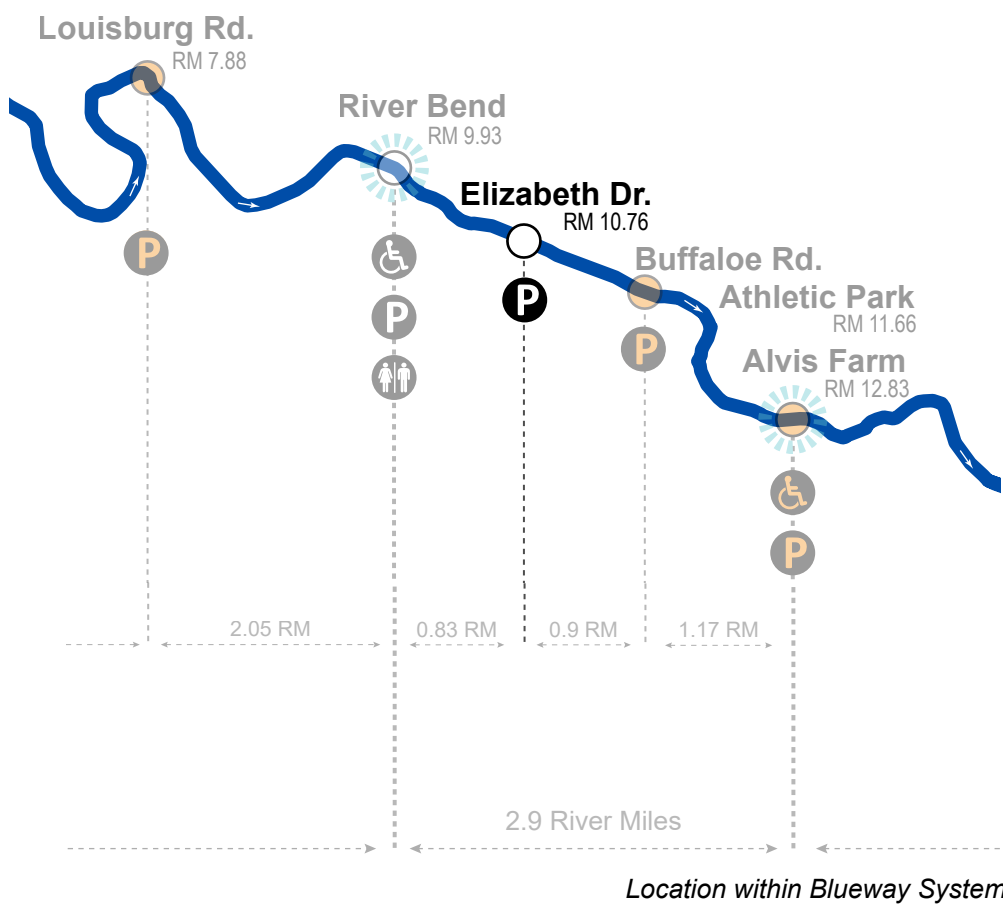
EXISTING PARKING: 7 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LIMITED PARKING & MUDDY LAUNCH

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

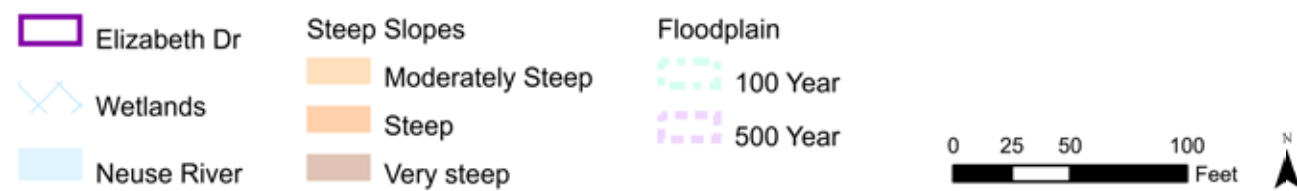
SHORT TERM: IMPROVEMENTS AT LAUNCH TO DECREASE EROSION & SEDIMENTATION AND TO IMPROVE TRACTION

LONG TERM: PHASE OUT THIS LOCATION AFTER A NEW PERMANENT RIVER ACCESS POINT IS ESTABLISHED NEARBY AT BUFFALOE ROAD ATHLETIC PARK OR ALVIS FARM

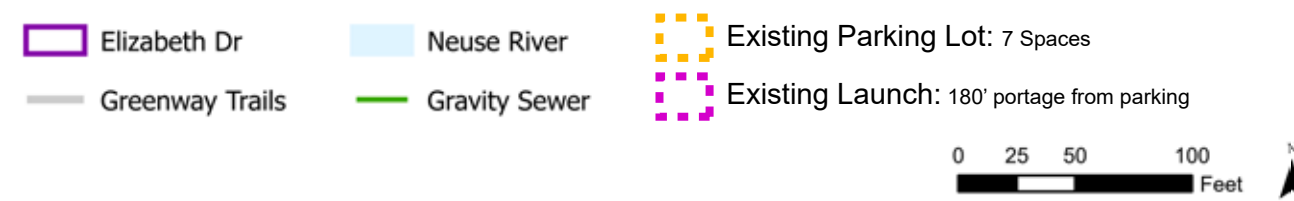




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



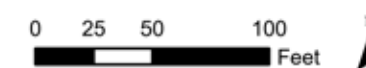
Existing Conditions - Infrastructure





Proposed Improvements

- Elizabeth Dr
- Launch Improvements
- Existing Site Circulation



BUFFALOE ROAD ATHLETIC PARK

The City of Raleigh acquired the land for Buffalo Road Athletic Park in 2001, following the 1995 Parks Bond Referendum that included a “Comprehensive Athletic Facility”. In the original master plan that was approved by City Council in 2000, future river access is included. Phase 1 of the park was developed in 2001 and included athletic fields, a track, parking and a maintenance facility. Future development will include softball fields, a play area, a greenway trail, multi-purpose fields, a dog park and river access. In 2008, the Buffalo Road Athletic Park Master Plan was amended to also include an aquatic center and a competition pool. Buffalo Road Aquatic Center was built in 2003 and the Dog Park in 2018.

Development of a river access point at Buffalo Road Athletic Park, as anticipated in the adopted master plan, would provide an alternative to use of the Elizabeth Drive location. Due to the limited availability of parking and other site constraints at the Elizabeth Drive location, a river access point at Buffalo Road Athletic Park would offer many advantages to paddlers and programming opportunities for the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department.

For example, Buffalo Road Athletic Park could be considered for the development of overnight camping facilities, due to site’s accessibility to emergency and fire services.

The Neuse River Blueway Plan recommends development of a “Primary River Access” launch type and amenities at either Buffalo Road Athletic Park or the nearby Alvis Farm Property. Primary access points, established at key nodes along the river, should be designed for heavy use and will include features such as restroom access, expanded parking, and ADA-accessible launch designs where feasible. Primary access points should be capable of accommodating vehicles and trailers for the launching of power boats used by the Wildlife Resources Commission and emergency services. At this time, it is recommended that Alvis Farm is developed with the full complement of Primary River Access features, due to its location relative to other Primary access points and the opportunity to design and construct the launch in coordination with new master plan development. Buffalo Road Athletic Park is designated in the Blueway Plan as a Secondary access point. However, future planning and other considerations may lead to Buffalo Road Athletic Park as a candidate for Primary Access designation and development.



SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: UNDEVELOPED

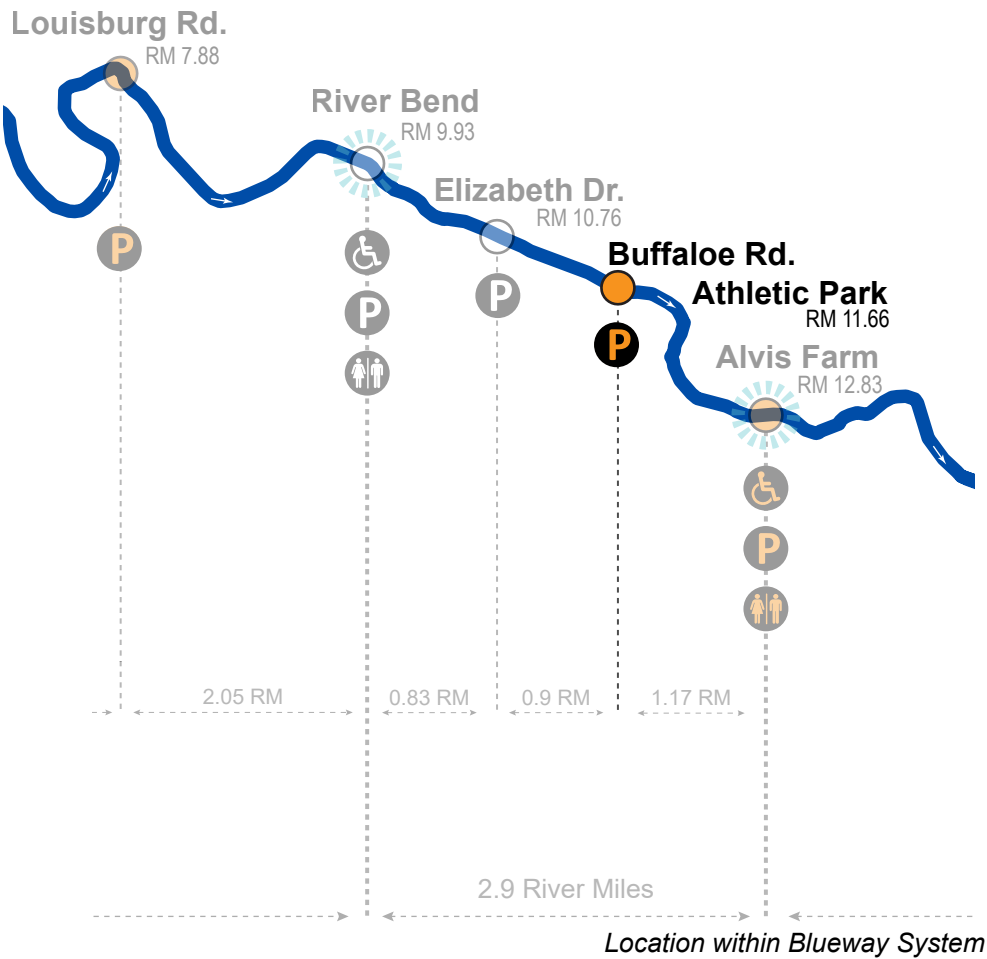
EXISTING PARKING: UNDEVELOPED

SITE CONCERNS: N/A

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

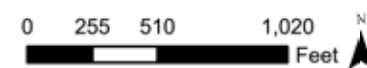
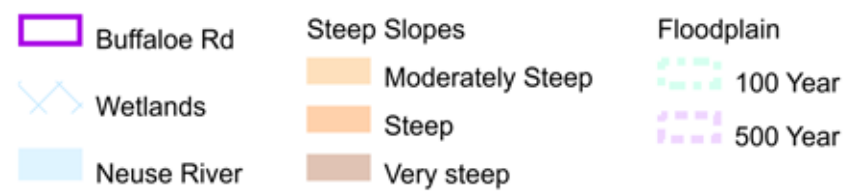
SHORT TERM: N/A

LONG TERM: DEVELOP NEW LAUNCH AND ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

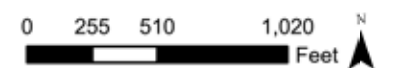
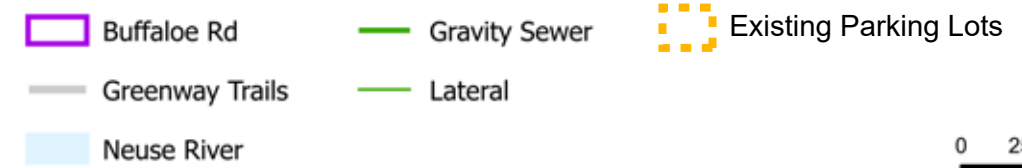




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities







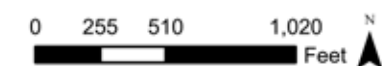
Existing Conditions - Infrastructure





Proposed Improvements

-  Buffalo Rd
-  Proposed Launch Location
-  Proposed Parking Location
-  Proposed Site Circulation



ALVIS FARM

Alvis Farm is a 100-acre undeveloped park property made up of several contiguous parcels a half-mile south of Buffalo Road Athletic Park on the Neuse River. The property is undeveloped except for an existing Greenway Trail that runs north-south along the river. This future park property has not yet been master planned, and so there is no current guidance for the development of facilities at this site. The 2007 System Integration Plan will assist City of Raleigh staff in interim management, site analysis, and future planning and development. The Neuse River Blueway Plan recommends that Alvis Farm should be planned and developed as a Primary river access point and should plan in the future to provide additional amenities to support that use. These amenities could include parking, ADA accessibility, a comfort station, a boat drop-off, and camping. Primary access points should be designed to accommodate vehicles and trailers for the launching of power boats used by the Wildlife Resources Commission and emergency services. The feasibility of these amenities should be assessed through the site’s master plan, and community engagement during that process should confirm support for the recommended improvements in the Neuse River Blueway Plan.



Existing Greenway Trail

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: UNDEVELOPED

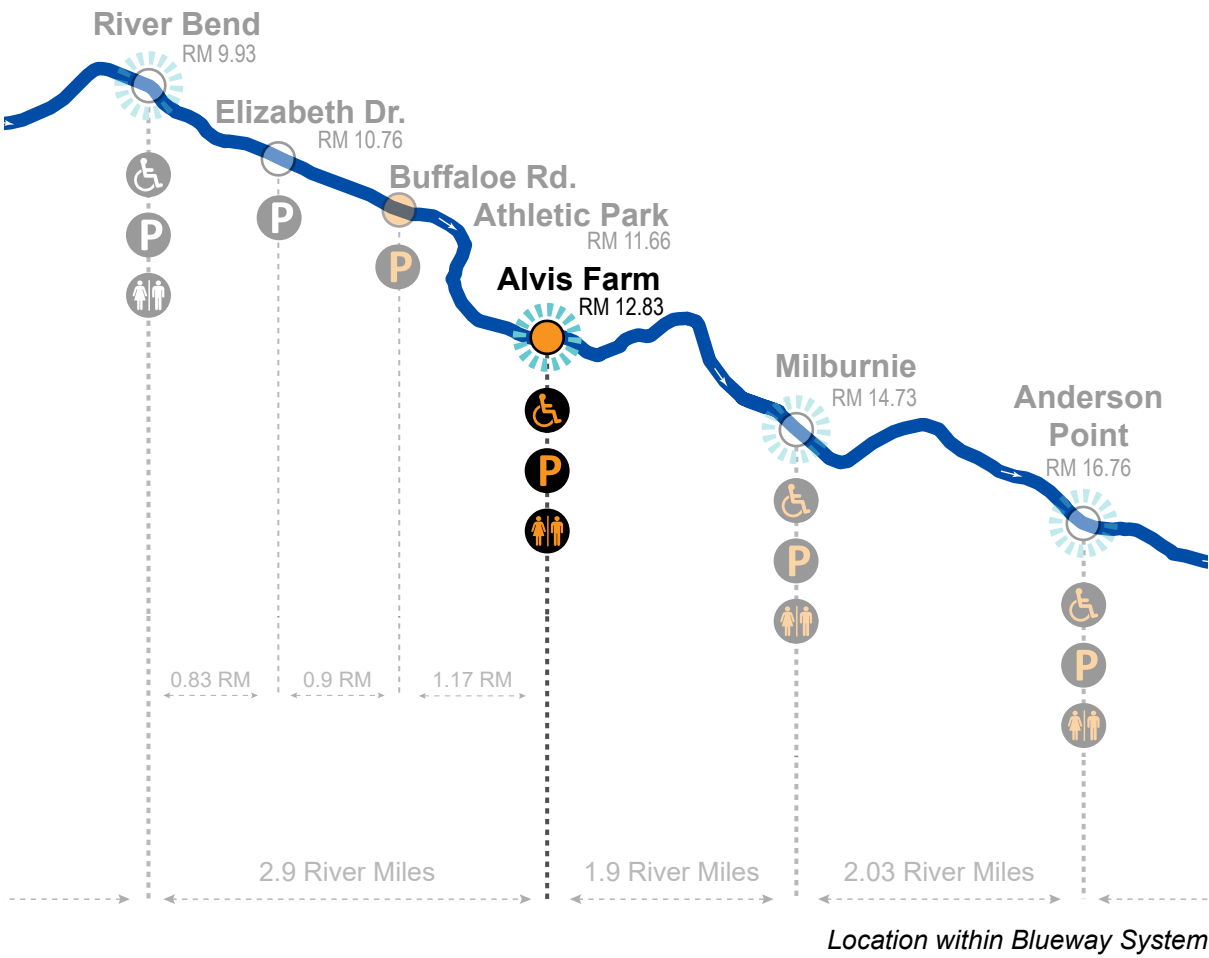
EXISTING PARKING: UNDEVELOPED

SITE CONCERNS: N/A

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

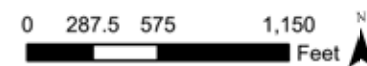
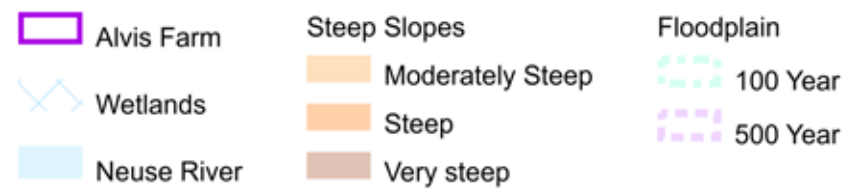
SHORT TERM: N/A

LONG TERM: DEVELOP NEW LAUNCH AND ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

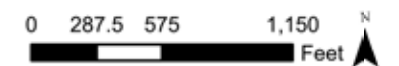
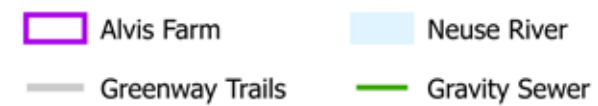




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure



More information on planning for specific launch types can be found in Appendix C on page 78.



Proposed Boat Launch Location



Proposed Improvements

- Alvis Farm
- Proposed Launch
- Proposed Site Circulation



MILBURNIE PARK

The three parcels that make up Milburnie Park (86 acres formerly known as Neuse River Park East and West) were acquired by the City of Raleigh in 1992, 1993 and 2001. In the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan adopted in 1996, objectives of the plan at that time included detailed development of a master plan for Milburnie Park with the goal of providing unique outdoor recreation and greenway access. The master plan is mainly focused on river recreation but also traditional recreation with sport fields and a gymnasium.

On the western parcel, there is an asphalt parking lot that serves the Neuse River Greenway Trail with 20 parking spaces. The distance from the parking lot to the river is approximately one-third of a mile, and is therefore not as popular of a launch site. On the eastern parcel, a sand parking lot with 8 trailer spaces is only 180 feet from the river. The driveway to this parking lot is very narrow and many users find it dangerous to drive on. There is a large sandy beach area on the eastern parcel, referred to as “Raleigh Beach”.

Before the Milburnie Dam was removed in 2017, paddlers would have to portage around it. With it’s removal, paddlers can now enjoy this section of the Neuse River uninterrupted.

Previous planning efforts have identified this site as a desirable location for improved river access. Future development of this site will require an updated master plan, however the inclusion of river access improvements should be incorporated into any future planning activities. Milburnie Park should be prioritized to be planned and developed.



Existing Western Beach Boat Launch



Existing Eastern Beach Boat Launch - “Raleigh Beach”

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: BEACH LAUNCH

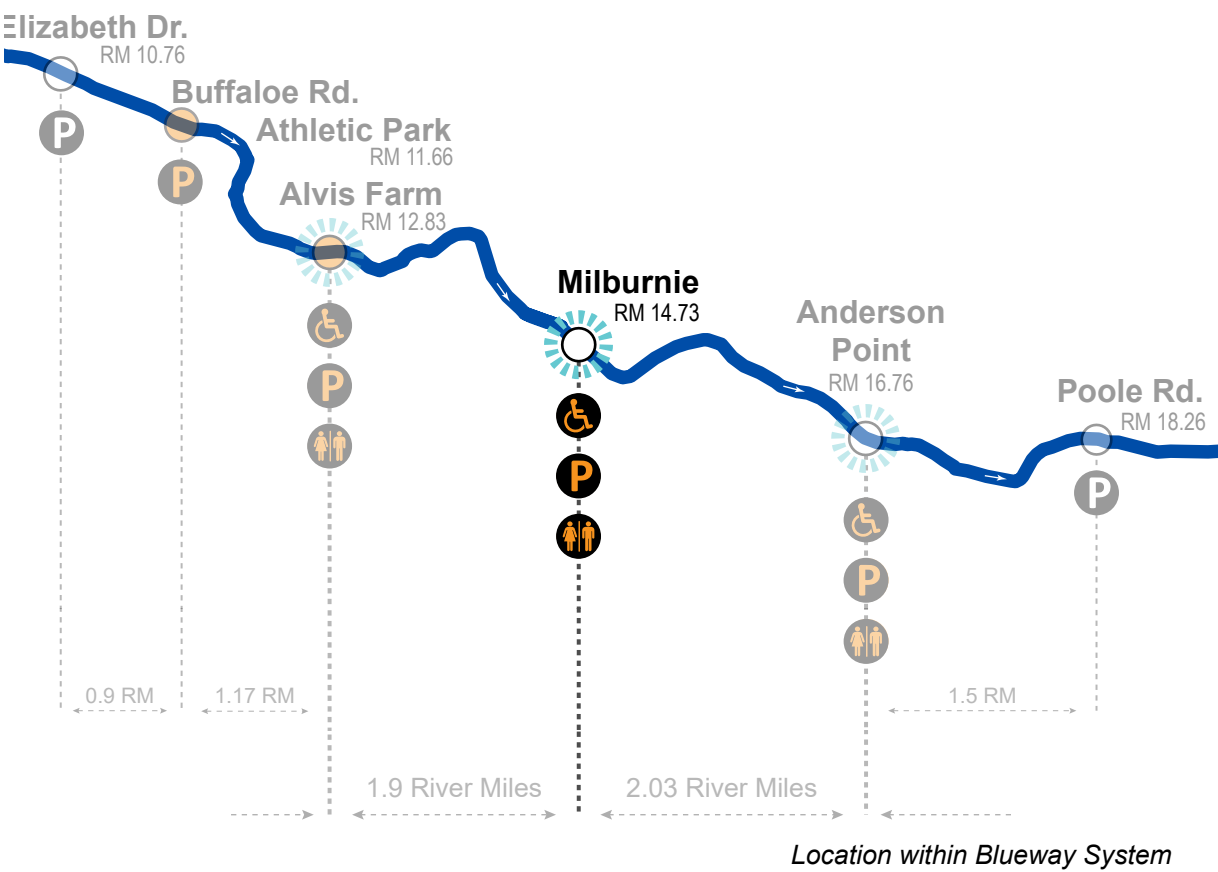
EXISTING PARKING: 8 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LIMITED PARKING & DANGEROUS DRIVEWAY ACCESS

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

SHORT TERM: MAINTAIN EXISTING NATURAL BEACH LAUNCH

LONG TERM: EVALUATE POTENTIAL FOR RIVER ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT



NEUSE RIVER REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN BACKGROUND

Included in the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan was a Master Plan specifically for Milburnie Park. Within this plan, a canoe dock is proposed between Bridgers Lake and the river above the dam as a safe take out point. The plan also recommends a boathouse for boat storage and City-owned equipment designated as rentals, riverside markers and potential for bicycle rentals. The extensive wetland system found mostly north of the dam provides an opportunity for wildlife viewing and environmental education.

As part of the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan, a boardwalk and lakeside shelter were proposed for pedestrian access and general enjoyment of the lake. Interpretive signage elements and an overlook terrace were recommended for Milburnie Dam to tell the history of the dam operating as a hydroelectric facility and to provide scenic views.

This Master Plan will need to be revisited before any development of the park occurs.



ANDERSON POINT PARK

Anderson Point Park is made up of three parcels on the west bank of the Neuse River. One parcel to the north is divided from the two southern parcels by I-87 and the existing railroad. There is a power easement north of the existing boat launch for the transmission line that encompasses a width of 100 feet. The City of Raleigh purchased Anderson Point from the Anderson Family in 1988 with plans to develop the property as a park. Anderson Point Park is bordered by Crabtree Creek to the west and the Neuse River and Mingo Creek to the east. The park offers opportunities for recreation, play and wildlife viewing as part of the vision of the Neuse River Regional Master Plan.

There is a parking lot on the northern parcel near the boat launch that serves the Neuse River Greenway Trail and contains 72 parking spaces. There is potential to expand parking to the east of the existing parking lot and create an additional 21 car spaces and 8 trailer spaces. The Public Utilities Department has a major sewer line that runs directly under the existing boat launch.

PRCR has partnered with Wildlife Resources Commission to develop a preliminary design for the boat launch improvements at Anderson Point. The existing gravel boat launch is susceptible to erosion and sedimentation. The proposed improvements to the boat launch include a concrete ramp and one handicapped parking spot. The concrete ramp material choice was made due to reduced maintenance. The project timeline, site plan, and launch details are on pages 57-58 and the full plan set can be found in Appendix B on page 72.



Boat Launch & Parking Location within Anderson Point



Existing Boat Launch Parking



Existing Boat Launch & Drop-off

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: GRAVEL RAMP LAUNCH

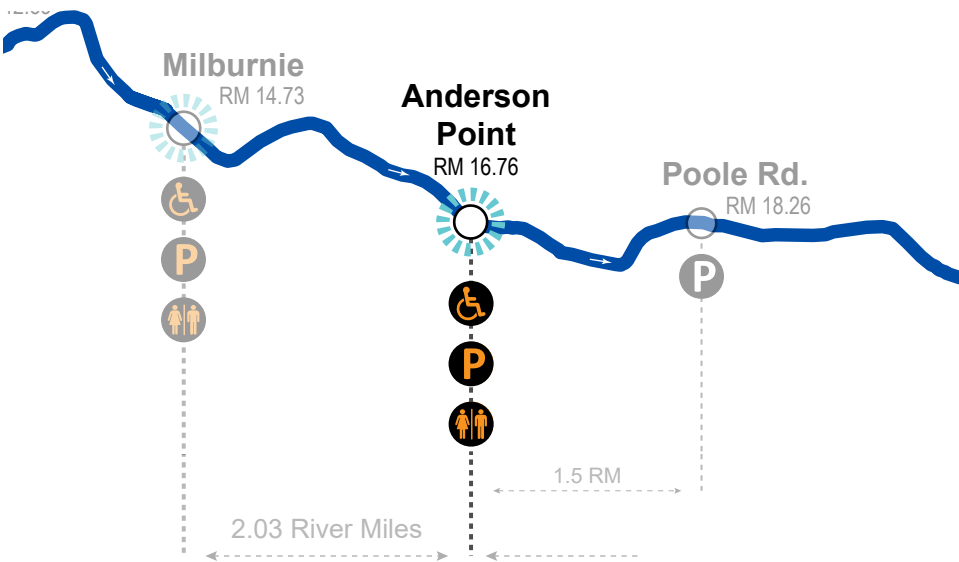
EXISTING PARKING: 72 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LIMITED PARKING & LAUNCH EROSION ISSUES

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

SHORT TERM: IMPROVE EXISTING LAUNCH AND EXPAND PARKING IN COORDINATION WITH WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

LONG TERM: N/A



Location within Blueway System

NEUSE RIVER REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN BACKGROUND

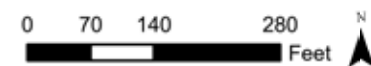
Included in the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan was a Master Plan specifically for Anderson Point Park. This plan recommends an overlook, picnic shelter, rental office, and restrooms next to the existing launch location.





Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------|
| Anderson Point | Moderately Steep | 100 Year |
| Wetlands | Steep | 500 Year |
| Neuse River | Very steep | |



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--|
| Anderson Point | Sewer Manhole | Existing Parking Lot: 72 Spaces |
| Greenway Trails | Gravity Sewer | Existing Launch: includes drop-off turn around |
| Neuse River | Lateral | |



PROJECT TIMELINE

The City of Raleigh Public Utilities Department is currently working on the West Neuse Interceptor Improvements Project at Anderson Point Park, and construction of a new boat launch should be put on hold until the project is complete. To the right is the site plan developed by the Wildlife Resources Commission, and on the following page is a close-up of the launch improvements. More details of this design can be found in Appendix B on page 72. Below is a tentative timeline for the sewer project and the boat launch project.

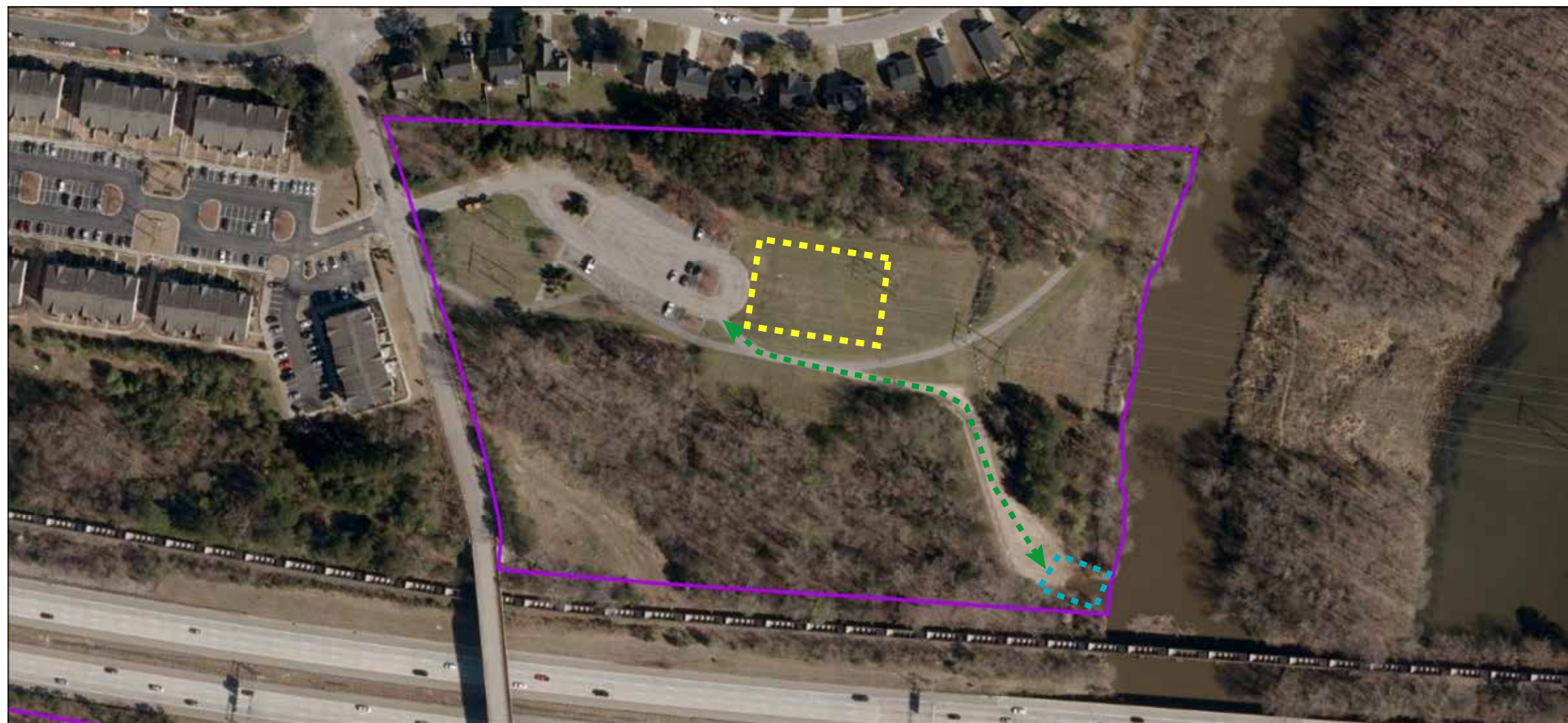
Project	Project Item	Tentative Timeline
West Neuse Interceptor Improvements	Permitting	Winter - Summer 2021
West Neuse Interceptor Improvements	Construction	Summer 2021 - Summer 2023
Anderson Point Boat Launch Improvements	Final Construction Documents	Spring 2023 - Fall 2023
Anderson Point Boat Launch Improvements	Bidding & Permitting	Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
Anderson Point Boat Launch Improvements	Construction	Spring 2024 - Spring 2026







Preliminary Site Plan at Anderson Point
by Wildlife Resources Commission.

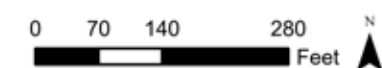


Preliminary Design for Boat Launch Improvements at Anderson Point
by Wildlife Resources Commission.



Proposed Improvements

-  Anderson Point
-  Existing Site Circulation
-  Proposed Additional Parking Location
-  Launch Improvements



POOLE ROAD

The Poole Road launch sits on a 4.83 acre greenway easement on the Neuse River north of Poole Road near the intersection of Barwell Road. The City acquired the property in 1972 and built the parking area for the Neuse River Greenway Trail and a boat launch in 2012. Poole Road is the southernmost existing access point located within Raleigh’s jurisdiction.



Existing Boat Launch

The parking area has 8 car spaces and 7 trailer spaces. Most users find there is not enough parking at this location. The property itself is limited in size so expanded parking is not likely on site. The expanded parking at Anderson Point Park, and the development of the Randleigh Farm property should help to divert some of the heavy usage at this site. The existing canoe launch at Poole Road is made of wooden timbers. The wooden timbers become slippery when inundated with water and sediment accumulates on the stairs as well. It’s recommended that improvements be made to the launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction.



Existing Boat Launch Parking

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: WOODEN STAIRS LAUNCH

EXISTING PARKING: 15 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LIMITED PARKING & LAUNCH EROSION ISSUES

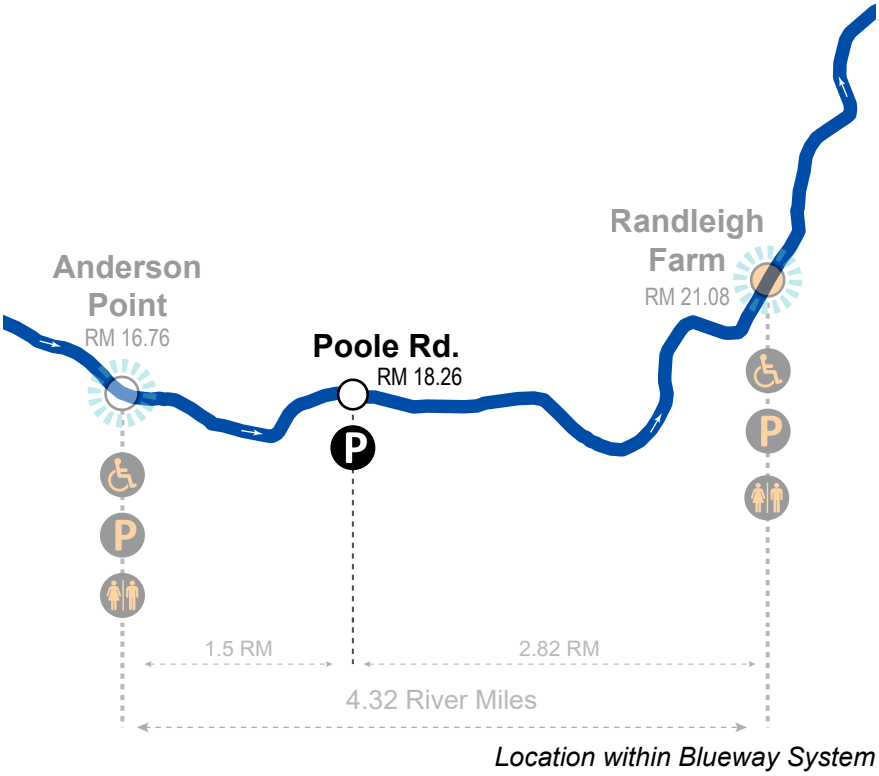
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

SHORT TERM: IMPROVEMENTS AT LAUNCH TO DECREASE EROSION & SEDIMENTATION AND TO IMPROVE TRACTION

LONG TERM: N/A

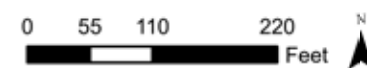
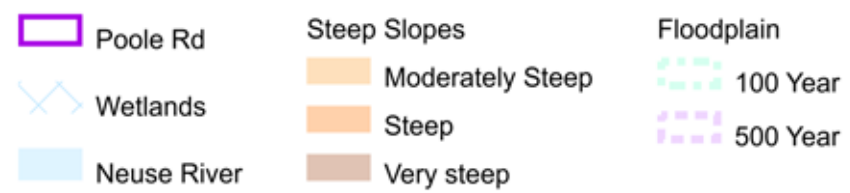


Existing Boat Launch

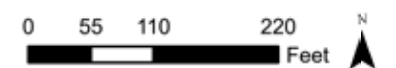




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure





Proposed Improvements

-  Poole Rd
-  Proposed Launch Improvements
-  Existing Site Circulation



RANDLEIGH FARM

The City of Raleigh entered an inter-local agreement with Wake County for acquisition of the Randleigh Farm Property in 2005. The 415-acre site is owned by North Carolina State University. The goals for use of the site at the time of the agreement were to include a corridor for I-540, open space floodplain protection of the Neuse River, bio-solids application, Raleigh public park, public school facility and a Raleigh operations center.

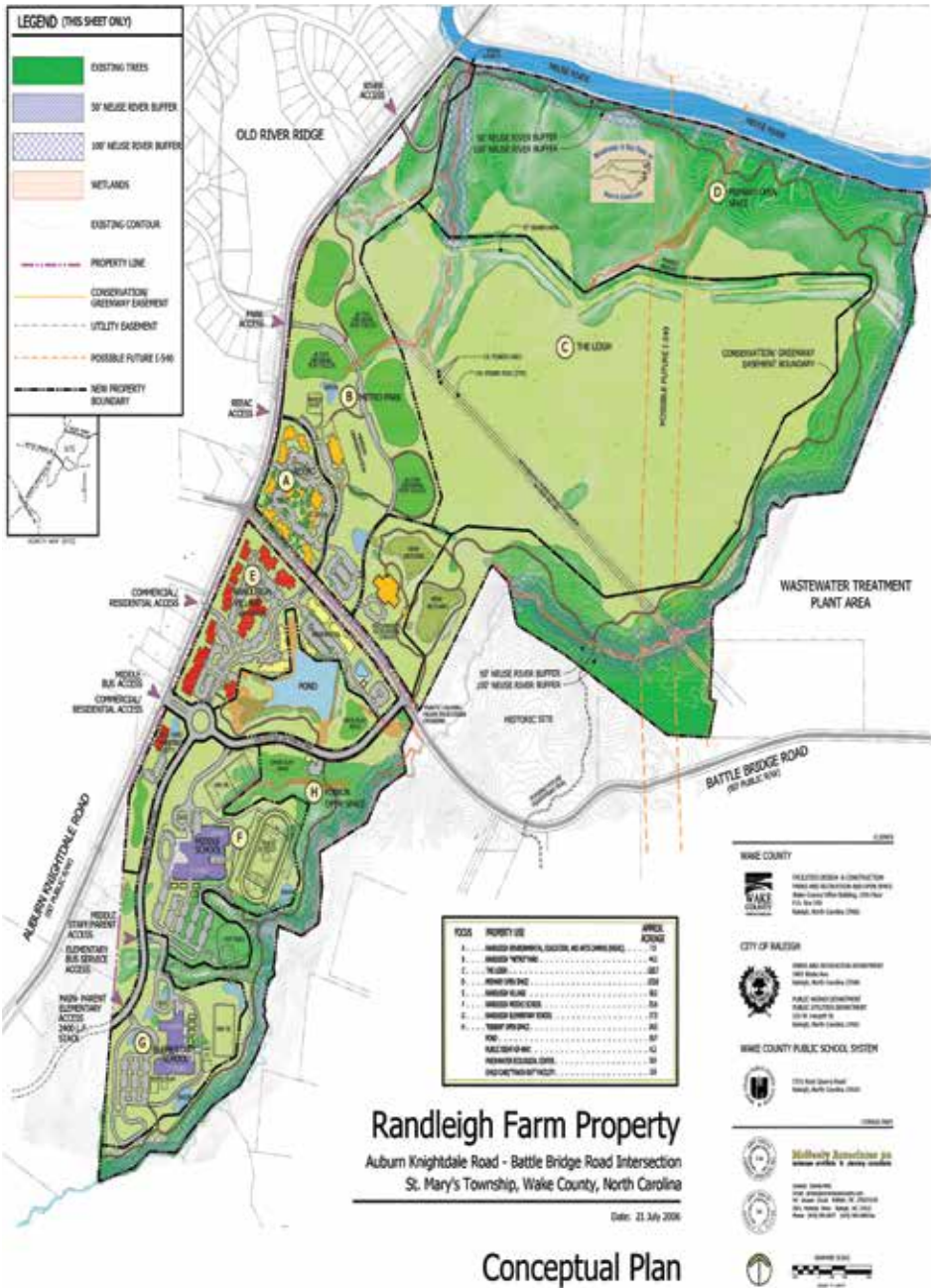
There is an existing greenway trail and parking lot with 17 spaces on site currently. A conceptual plan for the site was developed in 2006. A river access point and parking area are identified in the plan on the northern part of the site near Auburn Knightdale Road.

Future planning and development of this site should consider the inclusion of a boat launch similar in the design to the other primary access points in the system. In the future, camping could be provided as an amenity at this site. Boat launch location should be determined



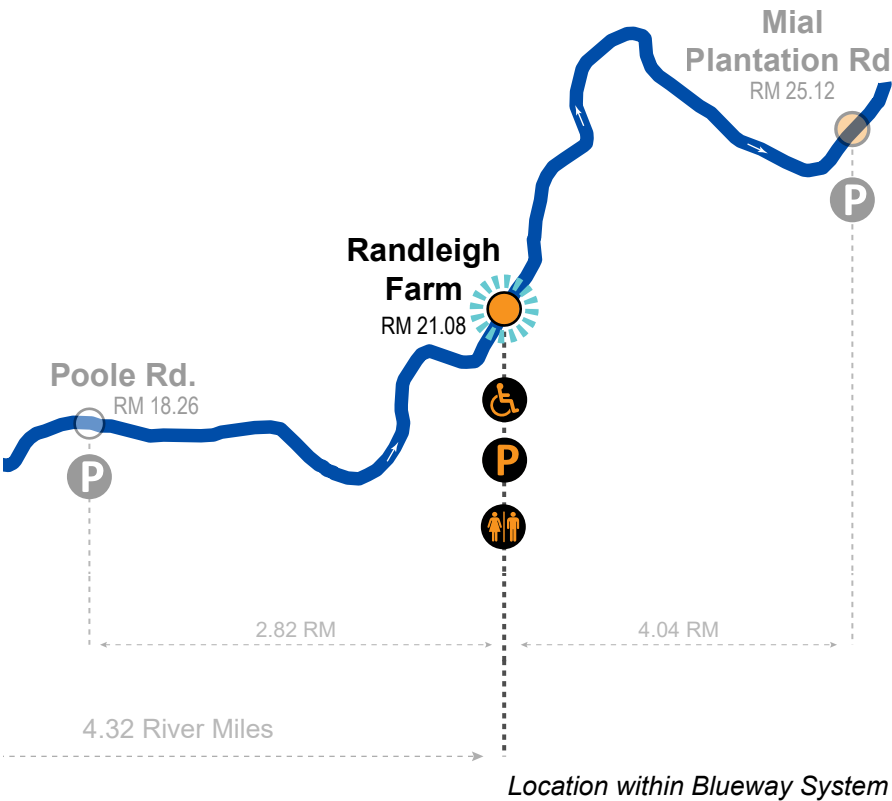
Existing Greenway Parking

during the planning process. More information on planning for specific launch types can be found in Appendix C on page 78.



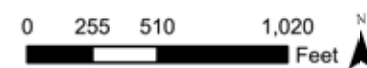
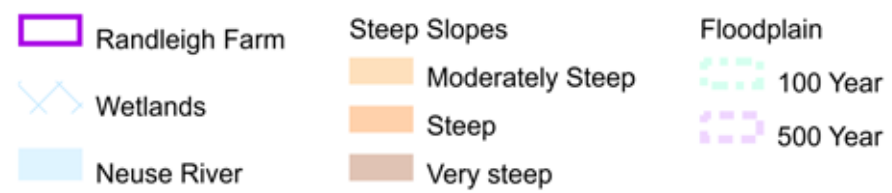
SITE SUMMARY
EXISTING LAUNCH: UNDEVELOPED
EXISTING PARKING: 17 SPACES
SITE CONCERNS: N/A

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:
SHORT TERM: N/A
LONG TERM: EVALUATE POTENTIAL FOR RIVER ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN COORDINATION WITH FUTURE MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT





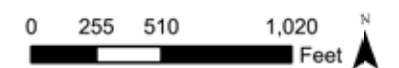
Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities



Existing Conditions - Infrastructure



Existing Parking Lot: 17 Spaces



MIAL PLANTATION RD.

The City of Raleigh acquired the 212-acre property at the intersection of Mial Plantation Road and the Neuse River in 1991. The parking area serves the Neuse River Greenway Trail. There are 11 car spaces and 8 trailer spaces in the parking area.

There is a gravel area that gently slopes down to the river near the greenway trail that people are using as an informal boat launch. It is recommended that this launch becomes established as a formal gravel ramp launch and that improvements be made to the launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction.

Mial Plantation Rd. is located outside of the Raleigh Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. Permits must be issued from Wake County for a canoe launch at this site. There is an opportunity to close the 7-mile gap from Poole Road Canoe Launch and create a gateway to Johnston County on the Neuse River. A concept plan has not yet been developed for this launch site.

SITE SUMMARY

EXISTING LAUNCH: UNDEVELOPED

EXISTING PARKING: 19 SPACES

SITE CONCERNS: LAUNCH IS INFORMAL

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

SHORT TERM: IMPROVEMENTS AT LAUNCH TO DECREASE EROSION & SEDIMENTATION AND TO IMPROVE TRACTION

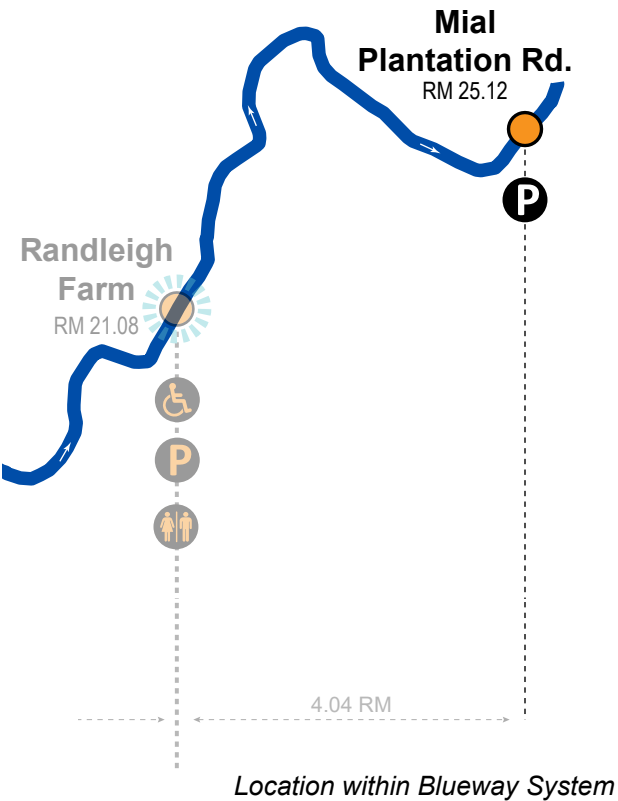
LONG TERM: N/A



Existing Greenway Parking

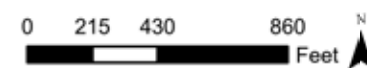
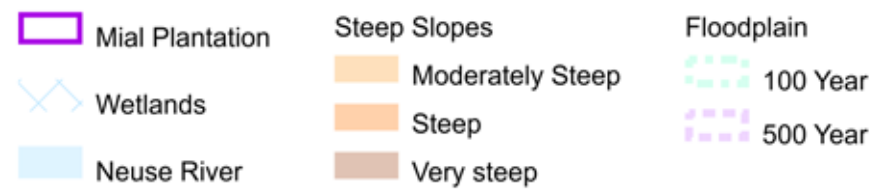


Existing Informal Launch Area

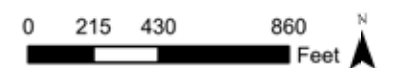
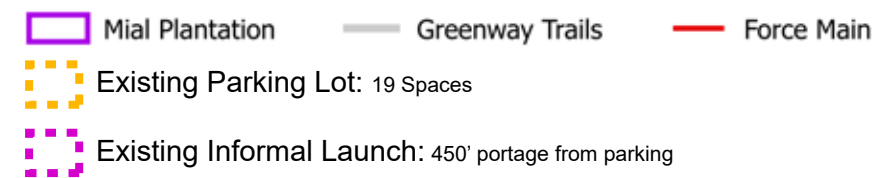




Existing Conditions - Natural Amenities






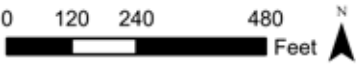
Existing Conditions - Infrastructure





Proposed Improvements

-  Mial Plantation
-  Proposed Launch Improvements
-  Proposed Site Circulation





Next Steps

From December 7th to December 28th, the draft Neuse River Blueway Plan was uploaded to the project website for public review and comment. During this feedback period, the public were also asked to rank the short-term proposed improvements of individual launches in order that they would like to see them implemented. These results are found in the chart to the right.

The Neuse River Blueway Plan proposes that the system-wide improvements proposed on pages 28-29, be implemented once funding and resources become available. Prioritization of long-term proposed improvements of individual launches should be determined at a later date by utilizing the System Plan Update’s Park Access Metrics and Social Equity Prioritization.

PRIORITIZED SHORT-TERM PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

70%	Falls Dam - Improve launch for increased safety and accessibility— evaluate site for feasibility of concrete ramp or boat slide	Rank: 1.94	16 ✓
70%	Thornton Rd. - Develop new concrete ramp launch in partnership with Wildlife Resource Commission	Rank: 2.63	16 ✓
52%	Poole Rd. - Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction	Rank: 3.33	12 ✓
48%	Anderson Point - Improve existing launch and expand parking in coordination with Wildlife Resources Commission	Rank: 3.36	11 ✓
52%	Milburnie - Maintain existing natural beach launch	Rank: 3.92	12 ✓
48%	Elizabeth Dr. - Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction	Rank: 4.36	11 ✓
43%	Mial Plantation Rd. - Improvements at launch to decrease erosion & sedimentation and to improve traction	Rank: 5.50	10 ✓

23 Respondents



Appendices

APPENDIX A: PERMITTING & COST ESTIMATES

UDO Section 9.3.4.C describes restrictions on existing structures within the floodway. A 50-foot vegetation buffer must remain on each side of the river per Neuse River Riparian Buffer Rules. Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act apply to any development on the Neuse River or near wetlands.

In order to obtain a permit from the City of Raleigh Stormwater Division, a Flood Study Model must be calculated in order to determine if changes in grade during construction will cause the river water levels to rise. Depending on stormwater calculations, a Conditional Letter of Map Revision may also be required.

Permits that may be required are:

- Tree Removal Permit
- Land Disturbance Permit
- Stormwater Control Permit
- Flood Study Permit
- Neuse River Riparian Buffer Rules Authorization
- Watercourse Buffer Permit
- Clean Water Act 401 Certification
- Clean Water Act 404 Certification

APPENDIX B: ANDERSON POINT PARK - CONSTRUCTION DETAILS



OWNER:
City of Raleigh
Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department
P.O. Box 590
Raleigh, NC 27602
PH: 919-996-3285
FAX: 919-807-5573



DESIGNER:
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
Division of Engineering & Lands Management
1720 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

PH: 919-707-0150
FAX: 919-707-0162

- Sheet Index--PCN PERMIT DRAWINGS
- 1.0 - Existing Site Conditions
 - 2.0 - Proposed Site Plan Overview
 - 2.1 - Proposed Fishing Pier Details
 - 2.2 - Proposed Ramp Area Details
 - 2.3 - Proposed Parking Lot Expansion Deatils

ANDERSON POINT PARK
FISHING ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS
Renovation Project
SCO Project #17-17857

Anderson Point Drive,
Raleigh, NC 27610

PCN PERMIT DRAWINGS 9/25/2017



Vicinity Maps







APPENDIX C: PLANNING FOR LAUNCH TYPES

The quick reference guide to the right is from Logical Lasting Launches by the National Park Service. When planning for new river launches the below resources should be utilized:

RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

Prepare to Launch

<https://rms.memberclicks.net/prepare-to-launch->

Logical Lasting Launches (Design Guidance for Canoe and Kayak Launches)

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/RTCA/GetAsset/86bb0d45-8417-4904-97ae-771c8eba5a42/original#:~:text=A%20logical%2C%20lasting%20launch%20provides,the%20environment%20and%20riparian%20ecology.>

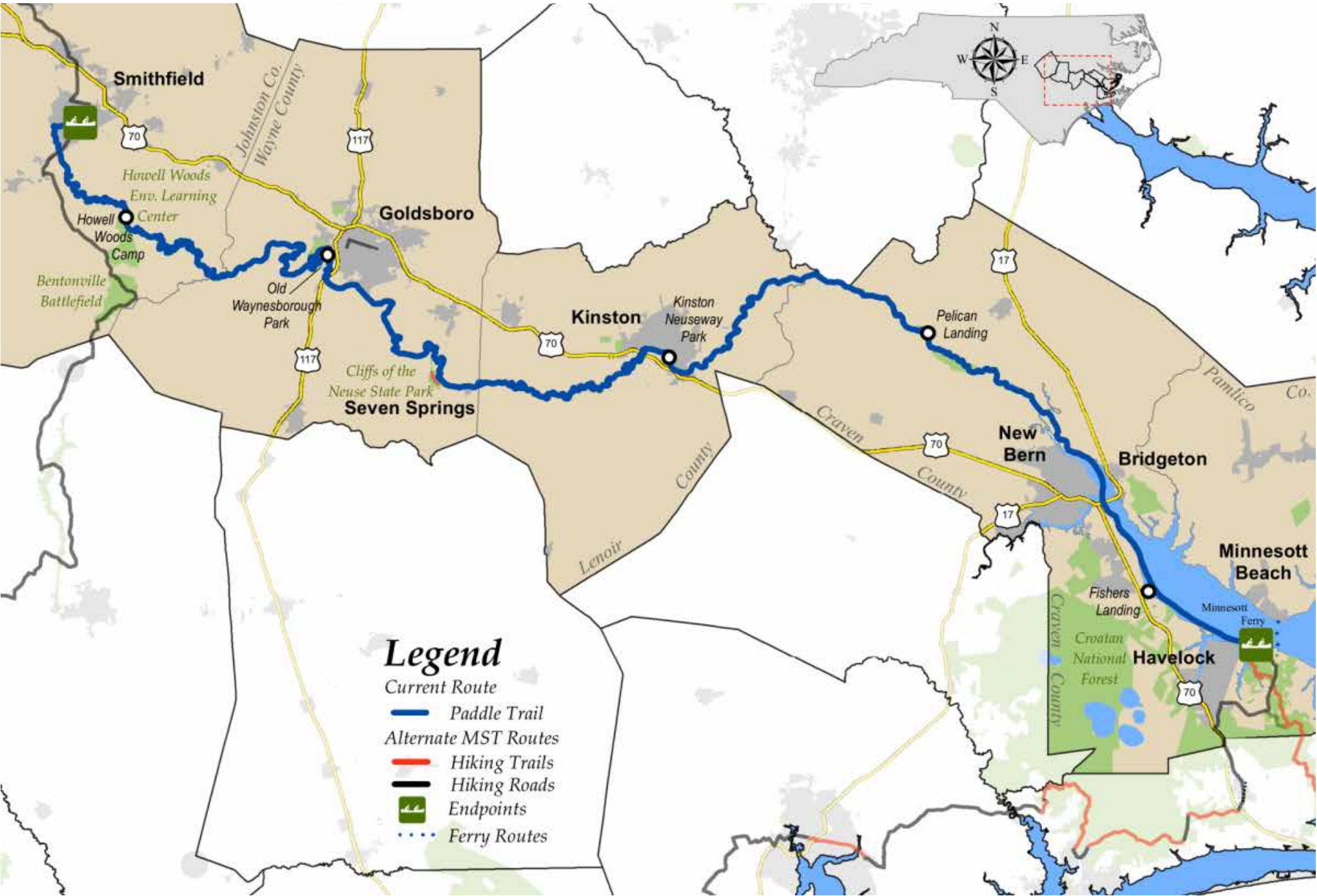
QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO LAUNCH TYPES AND USES

If you have...	Consider using ...	as long as...
<div>“Naturally” suitable areas, e.g.:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shorelines with sturdy banksStable rock outcropsBeach areas with firm substrates</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Existing site, with slight modifications, if necessary (e.g., adding sand or gravel to improve drainage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shoreline or riparian area is not vulnerable to erosionSpace is sufficient to launch and maintain balance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">An area with minimal current or exposure to elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reinforced natural site (<i>see Chapter IV</i>)Simple gravel rampFloating launchPipe or pile launchCantilever launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Access is hazard-freeEnvironmental impact is minimalWater depth is sufficient for launching
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Steep shoreline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Step-downs, timber steps, handrails, or rope supportsConnecting structure or structures (e.g., gangways) with floating or pile launchTimber, concrete, or metal stairsAdded soil to level slope (least favorable choice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Slope is reduced to enable safe transition to water (and to meet ADA standards, if possible)Space is sufficient for safe launching
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shoreline with slippery slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Corrugated/aggregate rampAdded gravel or other surface to provide tractionConcrete mats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Added traction does not prevent access to paddlers with disabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Steep drop-off from shore	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Concrete, timber, or metal steps/stairs with handrails and boat slideConcrete or other type of ramp with corrugated surface to provide traction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Area is protected from hazards, strong currents, and windsLaunching area at water level is sturdy and provides sufficient space for launching

APPENDIX D: EXTENDING THE NEUSE RIVER BLUEWAY TRAIL

This planning document is primarily focused on opportunities to improve river access along the upper 25 miles of the Neuse River under the City of Raleigh’s jurisdiction, which extends from the Falls Dam Canoe Launch to the Mial Plantation Rd. bridge, just north of the border between Wake County and Johnston County. However, the full scope of the Neuse River Blueway Trail can and should extend beyond these jurisdictional boundaries.

The Town of Smithfield operates a boat launch at Smithfield Town Commons Park, constructed in partnership with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, which acts as the starting point of the informal Neuse River Paddle Route (as shown on the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail website). This Paddle Route extends 170 miles through Smithfield, Goldsboro, Seven Springs, and New Bern before terminating at the northern end of the Neusiok Trail in the Croatan National Forest near Havelock. More information on the Neuse River Paddle Route is



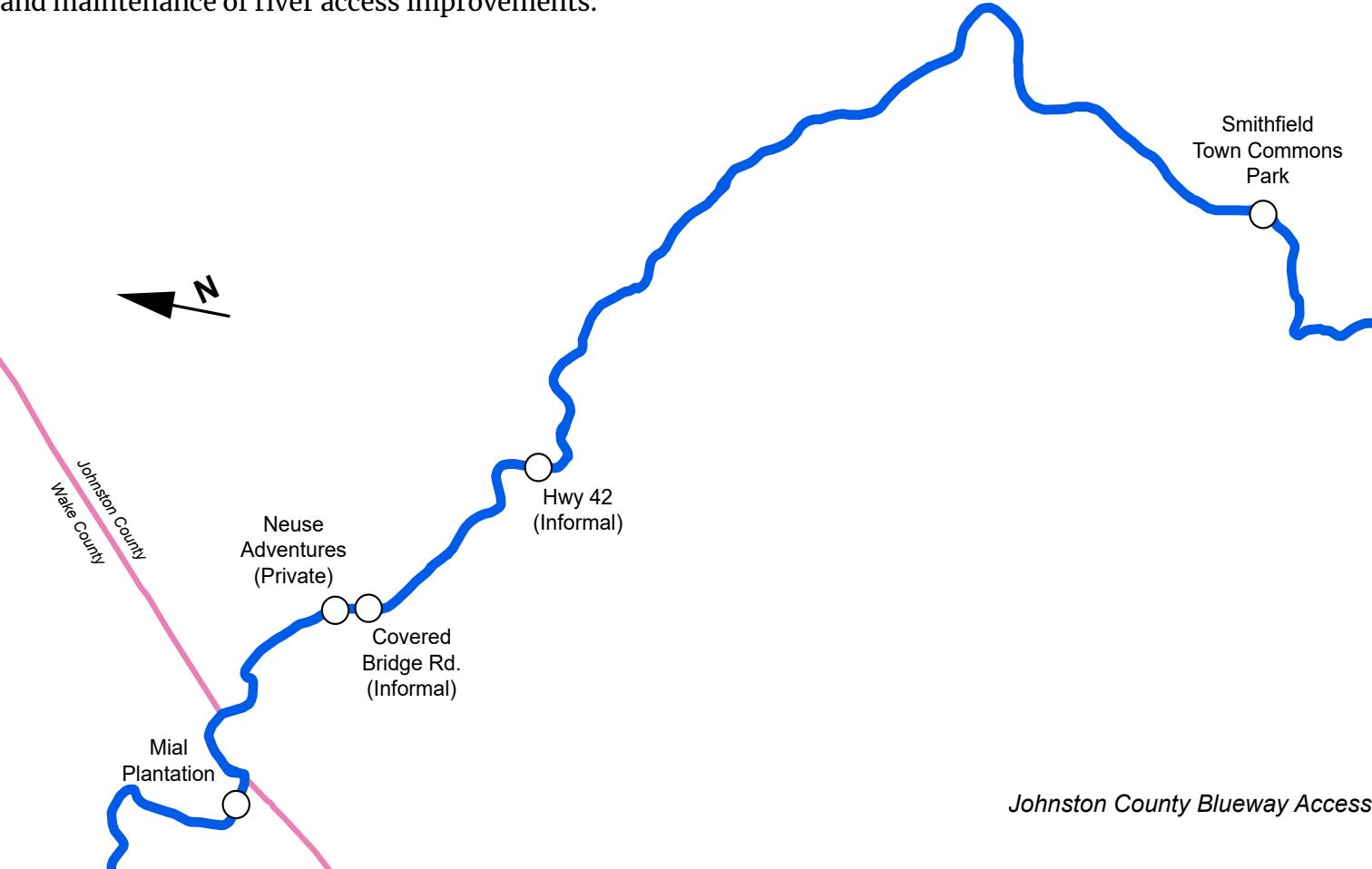
Informal Neuse River Paddle Route

CONNECTING TO SMITHFIELD

available at mountaintoseatrail.org/segment/11a-16a.

There are three river access points currently used by paddlers between the proposed launch at Mial Plantation Rd. and the boat launch at Smithfield Town Commons Park. Further improvement of these access points, at Covered Bridge Rd. and the Highway 42 bridge, would present an opportunity to extend the upper portion of the Neuse River Blueway Trail farther south to connect with the Smithfield launch. Currently, the Town of Clayton and Johnston County are pursuing feasibility studies and investigating additional land acquisition and trail development projects that may result in the improvement of these and potentially additional river access points along this section of the Neuse River.

Adding these downstream access points to the upper portion of the Neuse River Blueway, and ensuring that formal public access points are maintained at regular intervals along the entirety of the paddling trail, could help to establish the Neuse River Blueway Trail as worthy of designation as a State Trail by North Carolina State Parks, similar to the French Broad River State Trail or Yadkin River State Trail. Pursuing State Trail designation would significantly increase broad public awareness of the Neuse River Blueway, improving recreation and tourism opportunities for all communities along the length of the trail, and could present the opportunity to pursue grants, technical assistance, and other resources to assist in the design, construction, and maintenance of river access improvements.



NEUSE ADVENTURES

There is a privately owned river access point about 1,500 feet upstream of the informal launch at Covered Bridge Rd. The private launch is run by Neuse Adventures and offers canoe & kayak rentals. They offer a 5-hour trip that runs from the Poole Rd. launch to the Hwy 42 informal launch. They also offer a 2 hour trip from their privately owned access point to Hwy 42.

COVERED BRIDGE ROAD

The Town of Clayton maintains the 4-mile River Walk on the Neuse greenway trail that runs under Covered Bridge Road. The parking area has 44 car spaces. Under the bridge is an informal launch area. The slope is gentle and there is rip rap covering the bank to minimize erosion. Boat launch implementation at this location should be considered as a long-term project.



HIGHWAY 42 BRIDGE

There is also an informal launch located underneath the Highway 42 bridge. There are long-term plans to formalize this launch and potentially partner with the Wildlife Resources Commission. This launch area is currently owned by the school system and ownership would have to be transferred to Johnston County.



STATE TRAIL DESIGNATION










STATE TRAILS IN NORTH CAROLINA

What is a State Trail?

A State Trail is a linear corridor on land or water, protected from vehicular traffic, providing public access for non-motorized recreation or transportation. All State Trails must be authorized by the General Assembly.

Where are the State Trails?

Currently, there are nine State Trails in North Carolina:

- **Deep River State Trail** from Jamestown to Moncure 
- **Fonta Flora State Trail** from Morganton to Asheville, circling Lake James on the way 
- **French Broad River State Trail** in Transylvania, Henderson, Buncombe and Madison Counties 
- **Hickory Nut Gorge State Trail** in Henderson, Rutherford, and Buncombe Counties 
- **Mountains-to-Sea State Trail** stretching from Clingman's Dome to Jockey's Ridge State Park 
- **Northern Peaks State Trail** will connect Boone to West Jefferson along a series of mountain peaks, including Elk Knob State Park and Mount Jefferson State Natural Area. 
- **Overmountain Victory State Trail** traces the route used by patriot militia in North Carolina during the Kings Mountain campaign of 1780. 
- **Wilderness Gateway State Trail** connects Chimney Rock State Park and the Hickory Nut Gorge State Trail to South Mountains State Park, Valdese and Hickory. 
- **Yadkin River State Trail** in Wilkes, Surry, Yadkin, Forsyth, Davidson, Rowan and Davie Counties 

Not all sections of a state trail are open to bicycle or equestrian use. Please check with the land manager before you go.

These trails share legal status as components of the State Parks System. This distinguishes them from other regional and local trails and pathways. These trails offer opportunities for regional connectivity and public access to some of North Carolina's most significant and scenic landscapes.

Who manages State Trails?

State Trails epitomize partnerships. While a State Park is operated and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation, a State Trail is comprised of multiple connected sections and each section of the trail is sponsored by a state or federal agency, local government or private landowner.

Section sponsors build, maintain and manage their section of the trail. This includes location, design, surface, permitted uses and amenities. Section sponsors retain authority on lands under their jurisdiction. They are encouraged to showcase places of natural, scenic, historic and cultural significance; to feature the diversity of the natural communities and landscapes in the state; to consider the needs of both long and short distance hikers; and to employ recognized standards of sustainable trail design and construction. Often, and ideally, section sponsors are supported by dedicated volunteers.

The overall trail corridor planning and coordination are the responsibility of the Division of Parks and Recreation. The Division will provide guidance, coordination and assistance for the multiple section sponsors whose individual and diverse sections link together to form the State Trail. Working together on connecting sections of a State Trail is a way for communities to leverage their investments in trails to maximize the value for their citizens.



Please contact the state trails program if you have any questions about state trails.

Scott Crocker
State Trails Program Manager
scott.crocker@ncparks.gov

Smith Raynor
State Trails Planner
smith.raynor@ncparks.gov



HOW IS A STATE TRAIL CREATED?

A new state trail is authorized by the General Assembly—ideally after a feasibility analysis.

This analysis includes:

1. Statewide significant natural, cultural, scenic and recreation value
2. Enough potential length and beauty to attract varied and significant use from regions outside the local area.
3. Minimal and surmountable incompatible features such as roads, intrusive development or large water bodies.

If a potential State Trail meets these basic requirements, then the feasibility of inclusion as a State Trail is based on:

1. Local public support for the general concept of a public trail and the availability of trail volunteers
2. Presence of viable section sponsors committed to the design, construction, maintenance and management of the trail.
3. Environmental and economic sustainability of the trail route.

The law that creates a state trail may place some restrictions on the trail, such as specific counties where it must be located, but gives few other details on the trail location. To move beyond this concept, detailed planning is required.

NC State Parks plans the general corridor where the trail will be located. The planning process includes meeting with stakeholders, potential segment sponsors and holding public informational meetings. Usually, the planned corridor is 5-10 miles wide to permit for segment sponsors to take advantage of available land and advantageous topography.

Segment sponsors design and construct trail within the NC State Parks planned trail corridor. This should be done in coordination with NC State Parks to ensure that the segments will connect; sustainable standards are met so that the segment can be authorized as an official part of the state trail; and resources can be leveraged.

After the trail is constructed, the segment sponsor applies for state trail designation through NC State Parks. This process involves the approvals of the State Trails Planner, North Carolina Trails Committee and the Secretary of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Criteria for designation include public access, an emergency management plan, detailing available amenities and inspection by a regional trails specialist.



Please contact the state trails program if you have any questions about state trails.

Scott Crocker
State Trails Program Manager
scott.crocker@ncparks.gov

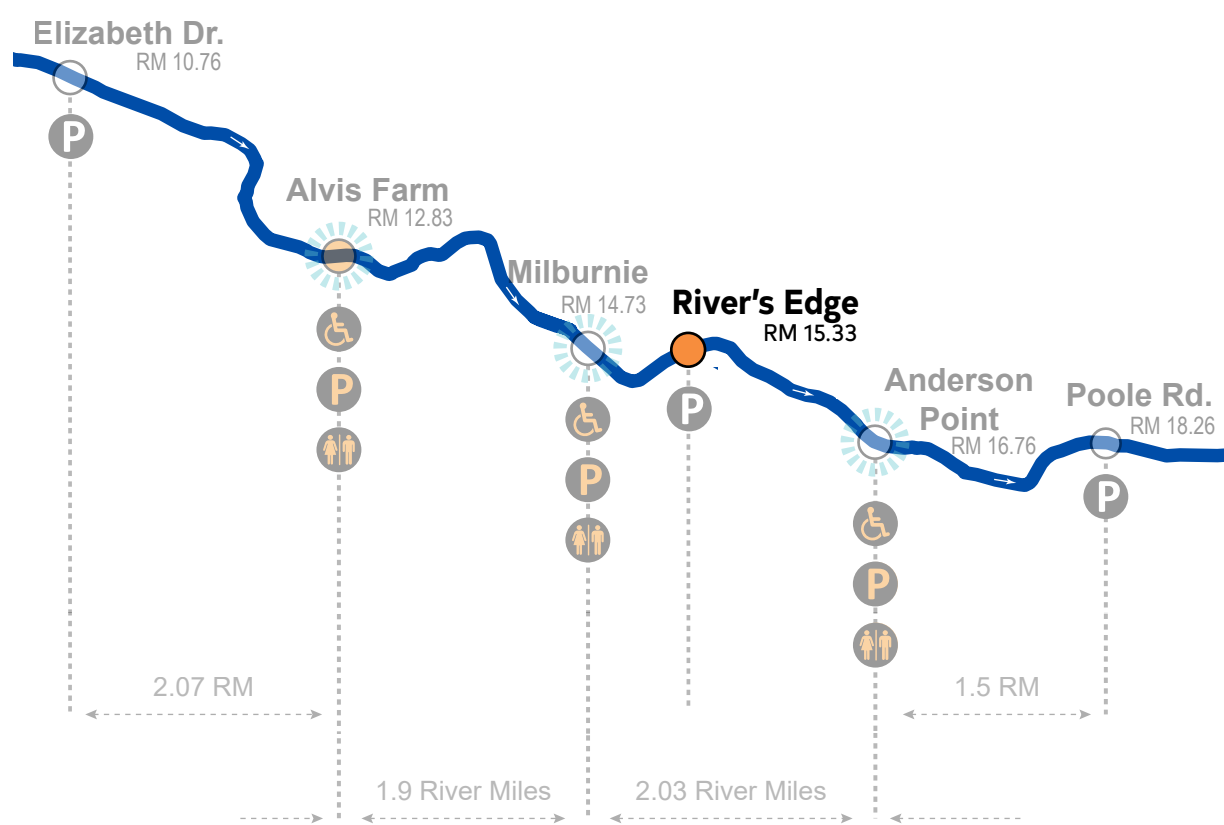
Smith Raynor
State Trails Planner
smith.raynor@ncparks.gov



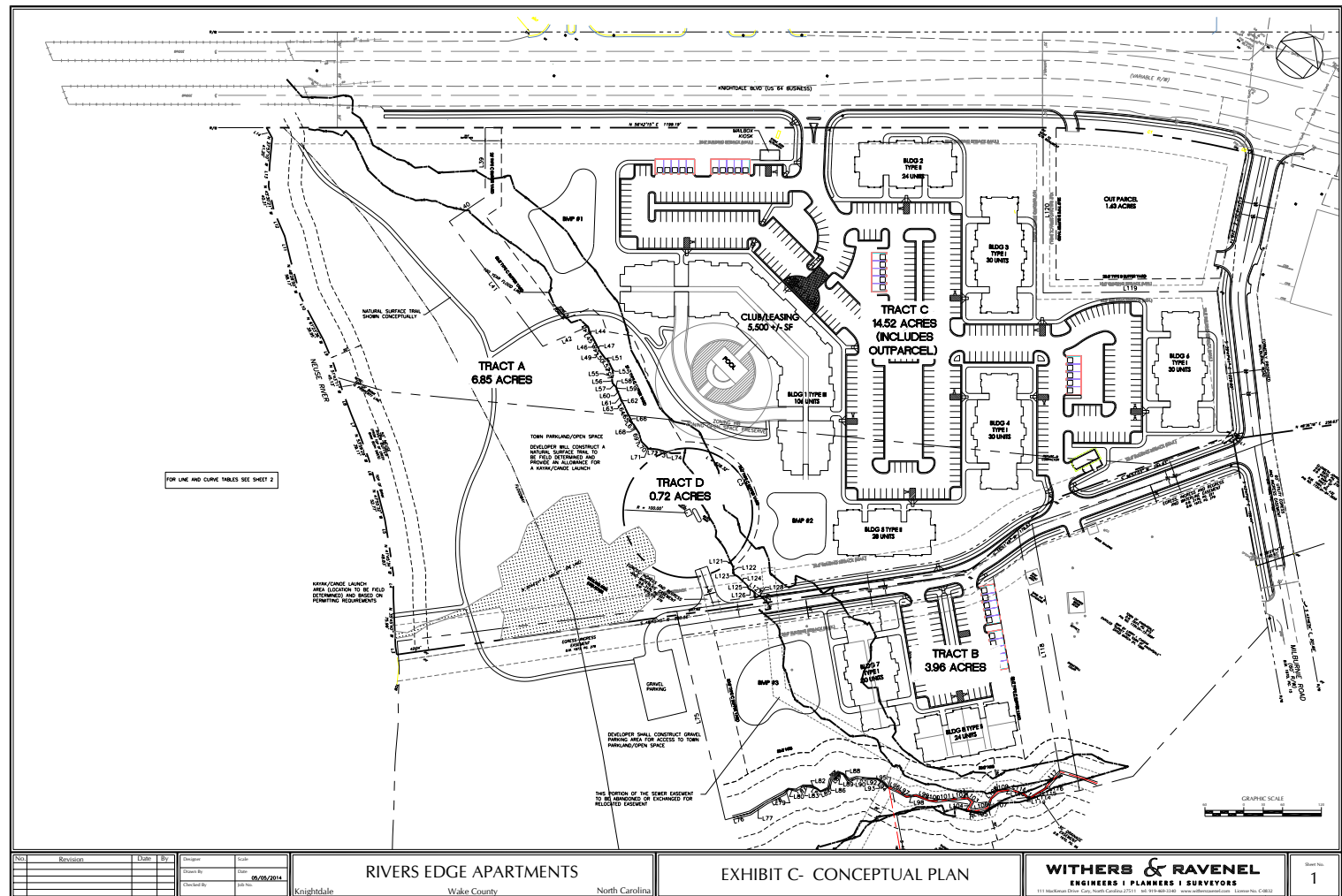
COMPLEMENTING THE NEUSE RIVER BLUEWAY

As stated earlier, this planning document is primarily focused on opportunities to improve river access along the upper 25 miles of the Neuse River under the City of Raleigh’s jurisdiction. This document is primarily focused on City of Raleigh owned and operated launches. This section will expand on river launches along the first 25 miles of the Neuse River that are publicly accessible but privately owned and operated.

The River’s Edge Apartments are currently pursuing permitting by the Town of Knightdale and are expected to start construction in late 2021. Part of their development plans includes a river access point. The access point will be between Milburnie Park & Anderson Point Park and would provide parking.



Location within Blueway System



Preliminary Draft Conceptual Plan

APPENDIX E: RIVER SAFETY

During the community engagement phases for the Neuse River Blueway Plan, there were several comments left by the public expressing concern for their safety while on the Neuse River. This appendix is meant to shed light on ways the public can stay safe while on the river, and how the City of Raleigh is working to increase safety as well.

RIVER SAFETY SIGNAGE

City of Raleigh Staff in the Natural Resources Division of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Dept. are currently working with the Communications Dept. to develop River Safety signage for the seven existing river access points.

These signs are expected to be fabricated and installed by March 2021.

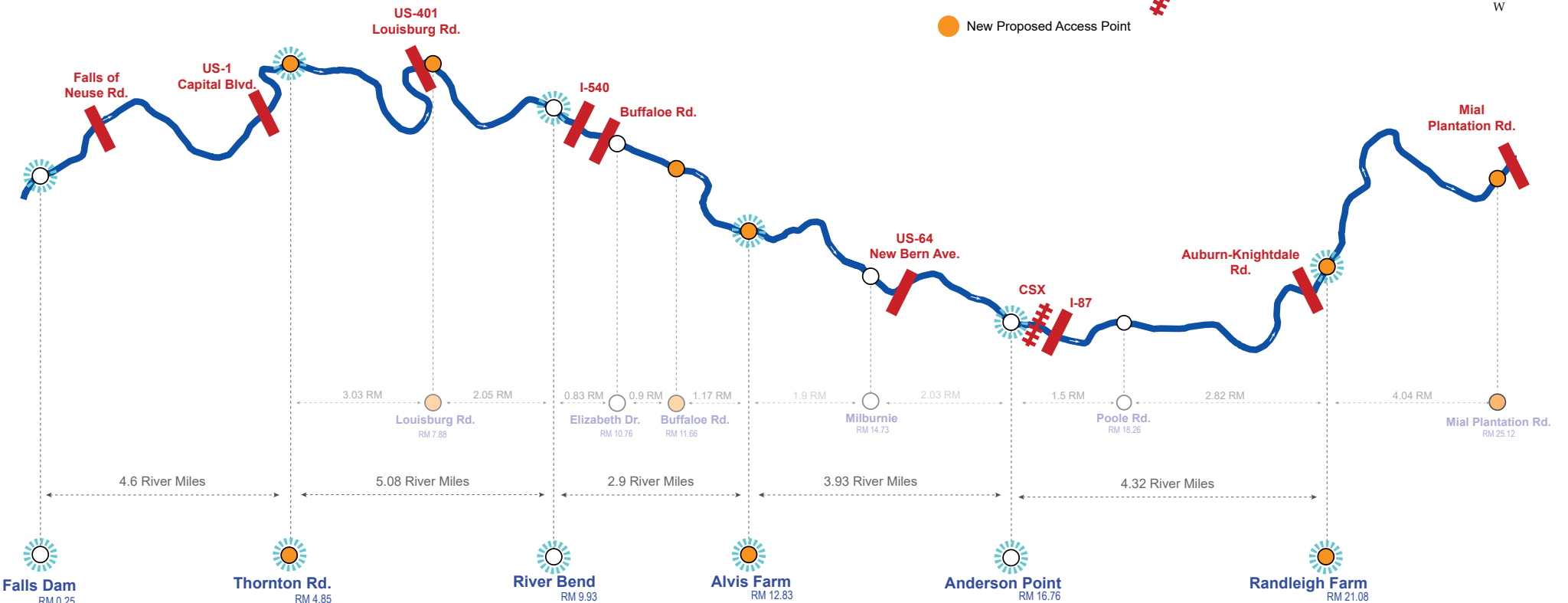


Draft River Safety Sign

NEUSE RIVERKEEPER WATER QUALITY ALERTS

Sound Rivers’ Neuse and Pamlico–Tar Riverkeepers work with interns and volunteers to monitor water quality sites in the Neuse and Tar–Pamlico watersheds. The sites are sampled weekly from late May through the end of August. Sites are monitored for E. coli bacteria in freshwater and enterococci bacteria in salt water. E. coli is a type of bacteria found in the intestines of people and other animals, and is a good indicator of recent fecal contamination. While most types of these bacteria are harmless, some types can make us sick or cause more severe gastrointestinal issues in more sensitive groups.

As soon as results of monitoring are available they are posted to the Sound Rivers’ website at <https://soundrivers.org/swimguide/> as well as on the Sound Rivers’ facebook page and their smartphone app. The results are also announced on Public Radio East between 4pm and 6pm each Friday. You can also get weekly alerts during the summer via text (text SWIM to 33222 to join their text alert list).A link to the Sound Rivers’ website can also be found on the City of Raleigh’s River Access website: <https://raleighnc.gov/parks/content/ParksRec/Articles/Programs/Outdoor/RiverAccess.html>



Neuse River Blueway & Bridge Locations

LOG JAMS & DEBRIS

When the US Army Corps of Engineers releases water from Falls Dam, the water levels in the Neuse River rise quite rapidly. This can lead to downed trees and debris being pushed down the river and often leads to them collecting under vehicular bridges or the CSX railroad bridge. The jams can make it dangerous and difficult to paddle the Neuse River.

It is difficult to clear these log jams with standard equipment and the responsibility of clearing the log jams is unclear. To work towards resolving this issue and while keeping the safety of paddlers at the forefront, the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Dept. is forming a stakeholder group with the City of Raleigh Fire Dept., NC Department of Transportation, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the NC Wildlife Resource Commission. The purpose of this group will be to address future log jams, consult on new launch design & construction to facilitate swift water rescue/motorized rescue boats, and improve monitoring & communication on potential hazards.

APPENDIX F: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - COMMENTS

INITIAL SURVEY (2019)

What type of paddlecraft do you use?

Kayak
Opencanoe
Canoe
1-person fishing pontoon boat.
Kayak, raft, duckie
Canoe
Tune
Tube
Canoe and Kayak
Drift boat
Kayak
Kayak
canoe, blow-up kayak
Canoe
Raft
kayak
Raft
Kayak
canoe
Rafting
Rafting
canoe
Canoe
Fishing raft
Canoe
canoe and kayak
canoe
None, and I've never paddled before so I can't comment on the previous question or some of the others. I'll keep them blank.

Do you own or rent paddlecraft? If you rent, where do you rent from?

other out of state rentals in Florida
I rent when out of town.
Florida
Frog hollows outdoor
Paddle creek
Paddle creek
Paddle Creek
Paddle Creek
Whatever location is nearest where I am.
Paddle Creek
State parks
private businesses
University Recreation Depts.

Paddle Creek
lake johnson park
borrow from friends
Shelly Lake in Raleigh
I prefer to rent from the parks department because it's convenient
Parks department.
Whichever location is closest to the launch site.
Paddle creek (I pay to use their take out and to transport my boat. Would love to have a way to drop off kayaks, drive to take out, cycle back to put in, and then kayak to car. All I need is a safe place to lock up my bike. It's fun!!! Multi sport!
Paddle Creek
Don't remember, but I've never paddled on the Neuse. Am looking forward to trying it!
Paddle Creek
rei
What ever is local to the body of water I'm on
Various locations
REI
Paddle Creek
Paddle Creek
Calabass
Rental store at Falls dam site.
store
Paddle Creek
Outpost
Dont own or rent
i believe I tried in once while attending Pullen Park in Raleigh
i believe I was at Pullen Park in Raleigh
Depends on which river I am paddling on. Haven't had any experience on the Neuse River.
Lake Crabtree County Park
I didn't own. I paddled with owner.
Paddle Creek
Paddle creek
Paddle Creek
When we need more kayaks, we rent from Paddle Creek
Paddle Creek NC
Various places when on vacation- OBX. Lake Johnson.
Lake Johnson, Outer Banks.
Wherever I'm at.
NCSU- outdoor recreation
I haven't rented but I don't own my own so would need to - if the City had ones for rent that would be great!!!
parks
Paddlecreek
Paddle Creek
Paddle Creek
Western NC Trips.
Zaloo's Canoes on the New River, NC

Paddle Creek
I own but also rent from Paddle Creek for the convenience.
Use friends

Please share your ideas for improvements at Neuse River boat launches.

At Poole Road improve the takeout, it is too steep and too muddy. At Anderson Point, the ramp is too muddy and there is a huge log jam/river wide strainer jammed up against the railroad bridge creating a big hazzard.
Improve the takeout at Poole road.
The entire run will have to have more reliable water to have any hope of being a consistent paddling location. A minimal 75-100cfs release from the dam is insufficient to support enjoyable paddding in the upper reaches of this section. The river will need frequent de-snagging operations and regular litter cleanups to become inviting to a broader demographic than it currently enjoys.
Love the Neuse! We paddle all the way to Oriental.
Please include kayakers as members of your advisors regarding the design of put in take outs that aren't too steep. Provide for trash disposal and pick up. Sustain surrounding natural environments so to prevent erosion that reduces water quality
All launches would benefit from having packed gravel or paved pathways down to the river edge. Creating even a 10 foot wide space that is a gentle slope into the water would be better than most of the places that are too steep. More people would use the river if the put ins and take outs were more user friendly. Kayakers would use the river more, (and help with river clean ups) also if there were more opportunities for paddling features along/in the river. Many times we have wanted to paddle and the flow was too low for anything worthwhile so we went somewhere else.
Anderson point launch is extremely muddy and hazardous with a log jam on the bridge. Poole road could use some better steps for getting out of the water
A whitewater park that makes the river usable at lower water levels would be a great addition to the falls dam area. A whitewater oark would allow new paddlers to safely learn about the sport.
Buffalo Road desperately needs more parking. Milburnie needs more parking. There is a large log jam around the center piling of the greenway bridge and the upper end of the island downstream of the bridge. The launch site at Poole Road needs to be completely redone from scratch. I have some pictures of the launch setup at Wilton Slopes Park (Granville County), an arrangement that might work better at Poole Road. Anderson Point is muddy, but I don't know what you would do about that given how much the Neuse rises and falls with different releases from Falls Dam. At least it isn't steep.
A whitewater feature with regular year round access at Falls Dam that allows use of kayaks, canoes, stand up paddleboards, and surfboards. This would be a valuable asset to the Raleigh-Durham area in attracting young urban professionals.
A park and play whitewater feature with parking and eddy access would be ideal.
They are fine. A little small if there was more traffic.
Play wave at the dam! Easy, cheap, low impact.
More access points along the river
Park and play whitewater features would be a huge draw for whitewater paddlers
New whitewater features and more access points along the river would be appreciated.
Picnic tables and restrooms
Buffaloe Road launch is pretty much just a dirt path to the River. This really needs to by upgraded and designed in a way that multiple people can launch and it minimizes erosion. Public restrooms would be a nice feature.
Standing wave and whitewater obstacles at falls.
The stairs and at falls d am are in bad shape at the base going into water. Also after excessive washout occurred a bunch of rip rap was dump along bank making it very dangerous for entering river. The area deserves better than that.
A permanent set of whitewater rapids or waves at the Falls Dam area with consistent releases throughout the year.
Add more parking at Milburnie Dam. Install a handrail to help down ramp at Poole Road.

More parking at buffalo and even falls boat launch. A place to take out at horseshoe farm would be nice since paddle creek isn’t always available.
I live between paddle creek and buffaloe rd launch areas, and the neuse could really use some embankment cleanup and more stopping areas cleared
Easier access i.e. getting in and out and launching. Maybe a small accessible floating dock in some spots.
Launches need rock or other paving as mud can be slippery and dangerous. Low grade is also helpful to prevent muscle strain from hauling a heavy boat up a steep incline.
Pavement would create rapid runoff. Stone slows the runoff and allows for better footing. Lower grade would be easier in/out access and would also slow runoff.
Add additional boat launch areas along the river.
There needs to be an alternative to the Paddle Creek launch.
Improve take outs. Provide a take out at capital blvd that is not privately operated
City of Midland Michigan does it right you should reach out to them
The takeout at Buffalo road has very limited parking and is very steep for a solo kayaker. It's in very poor condition for a city-maintained launch.
I believe that Falls Dam is a perfect location for a whitewater park. There is already a good place to put in and take out at this location.
safer water access including walking substrate, erosion control along river boat launches
New take out for capital site or close by. Improve/repair existing areas
I have been disappointed every time my daughter and I have tried to go places for river access- either for paddling/ playing or fishing. Trash, not maintained, no clear access points, and we don't feel safe at some of them. With so much greenway and such natural resources, it's surprising that we don't capitalize on it more and build more infrastructure that allows people to enjoy the water more.
Easy access with vehicle to get to water. Decent launch with steps or flat area next to water.
Would love dog-friendly rentals like Lake Jordan provides as an option as some of the launches.
Stairs at Falls are horrible!
Safer put in and take outs that aren't awkward especially for people with disabilities
Im pretty concerned about overall water quality issues in the Neuse, and get worried about being in the waterway because of that reason (algae blooms, trash, fish kills, etc.)
Paddle Creek put in / put out has vauge towing enforcement and has unfairly towed me before when my vehicle was parked correctly. I'd like more clarity on what public parking is allowed, or even allow the area to be picking I public parking like in the Falls Dam area.
Paddle Creek - US 1 has limited access.
Brunswick county has a put in on the river that has rollers to launch a boat. Makes it so much easier to launch
A shuttle service provided by the city with a number posted at each boat launch.
I would like to see improved put in and take out. Getting out of a kayak into a couple inches of mud is no fun. A tap to rinse off river water and mud might be helpful.
Add some rocks for Rapids near d a m and improve take outs
Improved launch areas that arent so muddy. Additional launch areas with car access. Additional parking at Buffalo access. Clean up of debris around bridge pillars. Love paddling on the Neuse.
Capital Rd is where I actually take out but that wasnt listed
Service to return to starting put-in point.
Actual areas to get into the river would be nice
Better, safer walkways and stairs.
public access and parking at Paddle Creek; more access points.
Better launch area with gravel and rollers at all sites. Takeout at Horseshoe or Capital Blvd (public - free access) Better maintained areas(trash/recycle) and include restroom facilities. Better parking at all sites.
Better launch sites with gravel paths and rollers. Free river access at Capital blvd or add a launch site at Horseshoe. Trash maintenance and restrooms at more populated sites.

I would love a take out near the paddle creek take out but on the other side and with parking.
I would love more parking at Buffalo road and a take out across the river from the paddle creek take out.
Camping near boat launches
The blueway and associated launches need to include CRABTREE CREEK. It is regularly paddleable and I have done it many times. locations should include Lake Crabtree Dam, Duraleigh Rd, Crabtree Valley, Lassiter Mill and New Bern Ave. before joining the the mainstem Neuse. This will add more diverse paddling experiences to the blueway. Dead wood and treefall clearing is needed along the route.
I second more public access points. More options for where to put in and take out that are not privately operated
Public launch, staff and rest rooms @ River Bend Park obvious major improvement to enhance trip options.
There are manufactured ramped launches with pull railings for VERY safe/dry launches and take-outs. I've used one at Beaufort Harbor and it was a CDC great experience.
More access points
I hope they are taking Water recreation and the present location of Paddle Creek at capital Boulevard into consideration as they plan to turn Cap Into a freeway going north
Partner with adjacent counties to provide further access beyond Wake County for shorter trips.
Docks that are easy to access. River markers alerting you exit point. More auto parking.
Please make sure that any changes made PROTECT the river and riparian systems. More traffic and more put-ins in theory are great!, as long as the river and its ecology are protected. It IS also public drinking water downstream (and "we all live downstream", so keep that in mind.
I'm usually with kids, so bathroom access and easy to see & manage pullouts.
Marked access points visible from road and river; trash cans
Parking and improved launches, maybe a ramp or faded embankment.
Hard but pervious surfaces for ramps. Clear river of fallen trees. Will help with flooding. Clear trash.
rock and sand area for launch, muddy and slippery would like to see more trash clean up on the river
Have easier beach access, more parking
Have launch and take out info available on line, bathrooms would be awesome!
Improved launches with less corrosion. More parking at Buffalo rd access.
Restrooms and more access points.
Beach launches are best.
Beach launches are best, especially for senior paddlers.
A low grade launch/exit is much better than what currently exists, particularly for senior paddlers. How exciting that this is being planned!
I think it is a really good idea to maximize the Neuse River resource; good luck with the process.
The launch near Falls Lake needs be changed to a gradual slope to the river. The existing concrete stairs are a real hazard for paddlers all paddlers, and especially older people and children.
Make them accessible to all paddlers, such as specialized entry and exits, as more older paddlers still want to paddle
Better signage, more developed access,
The Poole Road access was ruined when the Neuse River Greenway was put in. I have not used this access for the past few years because it is not really safe to get boats into or out of the water here. Would like to see an access for canoe/kayak at Meal Plantation Rd.
Some type of restroom facilities would be appreciated. (not only for paddlers, but for cyclist also)
Gravel pathways designed to minimize erosion for launching / landing would be a big improvement at most sites.
More parking, more put ins and outs, pave or gravel Buffloe.
Better signage along the river. A dock would be great!
Better signage along the river, as viewed from the river. A dock would be great!
Anderson Pt needs some gravel or concrete on the launch
Better signage as viewed from the river. A dock would be great!
do what you can about the mud at anderson point

I don't think this is the place for this comment. But I don't know where else to put it, or of this can be done.
The river is so shallow, it's hard to canoe down it. If the water be made deeper in the summer months, that would help.
Poole's road launch/take out is pretty rough. Small area, tends to have debris. Would like to have other launch/takeouts further south. Is there a web site with info on water levels and flow rate?
More parking. Areas along the river to get out and picnic. low grade launches
buffaloe road could use more parking opportunities!
The City/County really needs to invest in a take-out at Capital Blvd. This stretch of river can be a crown jewel of the park system w/ this addition. Paddle Creek does a good enough job, but I am always afraid their land will be sold to someone who will not renew their lease.
More access points and public restrooms would be awesome!
Enough room for multiple people to put in at same time, beach area to hang out/rest, plenty of parking, easy/convenient put in and takeout areas. If renting is available, decent equipment at reasonable rates.
Having put in/take out points at 2-mile intervals would be a big improvement. It would also be helpful to make the take outs more substantive (the current situation with using slippery timbers isn't so great). Also, having somewhere closer to Johnston County available for a campsite would be really good.
One last thing: there are a lot of trees down along both sides of the river. Is there any way those trees could be logged and removed?
Having access points on both sides of Horseshoe Farm Park would be a great opportunity for some kid-friendly paddling and tubing. Signage from the streets to the access points would also help.
need to be cleaned up at the Anderson Point launch
Easier access
Buffalo Rd launch could use some work as stated by others. Also, some brush clearing along the bank and even some signage alerting anyone coming down river of the proximity of the launch approach.
Have a way to get in and out and avoid mud and poison ivy. Maybe provide a secure storage for payment for kayaks and gear to make it easier to get to the river
improve launches to limit erosion
Keep them clean and accessible.
debris and water level influence access and use often Put in and take out could be easier.
It would be nice if you could develop some sort of railed launch. Also,a temporary storage for your kayak after pulling it out, and a fresh water (not necessarily potable) hose.
The Neuse is an excellent paddle. However, it is not a lake. Paddling a stream/river is very different than paddling a lake. Of course this all goes without saying.
Given that put-in/take-out places are located at areas on the Neuse where it is not 'hard' to paddle 'up-river' then that is the best of all worlds for 'flat-water' paddlers (like myself)
Take out points along the Tar River cart so much based on recent rainfall and levels of the river. Most take outs along the Neuse are usually Muddy and not well marked, additional signage and more developed launches could make the river more accessible
Better parking, better signage on the river when the takeout is coming up.
rr
Don't alter the river itself - I'm a fan of whitewater, but I did not like the idea of installing artificial rapids on the Neuse.
Improve the Buffaloe take out and parking situation. Both aren't good.
I'd love to see a boat launch near Horseshoe Nature Preserve so that there is another location with a lot of parking like the Falls launch and a shorter trip than all the way to Buffaloe from Falls. Paddle Creek location being private and a difficult take out is not a solution.
I would like to see better signage along the river, an improved falls lake dam launch without stairs, and more parking at Buffalo road launch

Make a place to drop in and pull out at 401 by the bridge.
Mostly they are ok. Having a way to drive closer so I do not have to carry a canoe and gear far would be great. Just to launch. Parking a good ways away would be ok. Today we took out at Milburnie on the right side going down river (west side). It's where I saw the sign for this site, (good idea). The trek up to the gate is a long way to carry the canoe and the gate on Raleigh Beach road is hard to get around carrying a canoe. So in general, shorter portages from the car to the launch and back. Also, at this particular place the gravel road has large gravel and I worried about twisting my ankle. Also, another launch between the dam and Buffalo road would be nice. Don't want to sound like a complainer you guys do a great job. Thanks for asking for input.
We always use Anderson Point Canoe Launch for our Relay for Life paddle event in April of each year. We typically are trying to launch 20 to 30 paddlers at one time and we paddle all the way to Oriental which is an 8 day trip. We have made this trip 9 times. The Anderson Point site is the only one large enough for our group to meet and get in the water. It is typically very muddy. In the past two years due to hurricanes and other storms, there is a huge debris buildup at the railroad bridge that is dangerous during high water launches. There also needs to be some toilet facilities on the launch site. We currently use the ones at Anderson Point Park, but it is very difficult to get down in that parking area and turn around with a trailer in tow. Overall it is the best place for us to launch though, all the other sites in Raleigh are way too small for our group. hopefloatsnc.com
Definitely improve put in and take out areas. Include some kind of bathroom facilities. More parking at Elizabeth Dr. would be great.
Family oriented city classes and/or orientations that teach about paddling but also about city facilities and places to practice.
bathrooms
Launches are often for power boats and are difficult to use with kayaks. A kayak or canoe launch would make it much easier to launch
Boats for rent and equipment for rent would be a great addition!! There are many people who would love to paddle the Neuse but do not have access to the correct equipment. This would be a great addition for people looking for outdoor activities in our area.
A concrete slope... the current railroad tie steps are very difficult for carrying kayaks up. they are often muddy and slick
Remove the tree on the right river
It would be nice to have more areas with restrooms. This is a general recommendation for greenways and blueways. The launch areas could have significant improvements including more parking. A public access area around capital would be nice.
The facilities at this spot are good. The Whitewater park being proposed could make it amazing.
Would love love love to be able to get in on Thorton Rd.
protect our water quality so that we can continue to utilize this valuable resource.
Need an access point between Falls Dam and Buffaloe Rd... 10 miles is a little on the time consuming side.
Restroom facilities
Add more launch sites, including Crabtree Creek
This is a great idea.
Consider not just existing paddlers, but also those who don't. I don't have my own equipment so would need rental and shuttle service.
would love to rent canoe or kayaks from Parks and Rec for trips sown the Neuse.
More access for takeouts down stream. It seems like paying for parking at Paddle Creek, or going all the way Buffalo Rd are the only two options
A take out for shorter trips - I often only have a couple of hours.
None.
More (ie Capital and 401) and better sites
We are always going new places. We paddled the whole Neuse one time and now are working on other rivers mainly. DOWnstream, it would be great if the WRC putins extended further into the river so they were not so muddy when the water is low. We would love more parking at Buffalo Rd area, we like that place but cannot guarantee parking. Also,

we'd like a good putin near Cliffs of the Neuse SP. A few years ago that was a very challenging putin, I don't know if it has changed.
Up the fines for littering near and on the Neuse River. Garbage on the river banks has gone up 100 fold since the greenway and boat launches were opened. I suggest a \$2000 fine.
N/A I often launch from my property on the Neuse.
Anderson Point is a mud hole, you can't take out without being covered in mud as well as your paddle craft. Massive log jams at most bridges and other locations are extremely dangerous for paddlers, especially inexperienced ones. I also am concerned that with a big enough rainstorm a bridge could be taken out by the water piling up behind the debris. A big improvement at the launch/take out sites would be racks to rest your water craft on off the ground. Perhaps ask the Boy Scouts for someone looking for some Eagle projects to make some.
I haven't been out on the Neuse much because there is trash out there on the banks and it isn't as clean as I would like.
More access points
The current system of timbers is fairly primitive. It would be great to see a better system in place here. There also needs to be more boat launches, i.e., something between Capital Blvd and Milburnie would be really helpful. So glad you're undertaking this study!
There need to be more public spots to put in/take out. Horseshoe Farms should be a great public launch (and have camping). There could also be a launch near Riverside neighborhood or CASL soccer fields.
We need more public launch spots with better parking. Riverside neighborhood; CASL soccer fields; Horseshow Farms. Also, make it possible for folks to understand how far it is to the next launch and, even better, encourage people to start at the dam and float all the way to the coast.
I would prefer floating docks with ramps like at the Haw River Take-out, Robeson Creek. It would also be nice if the Blueway system put in a standing wave that all rivercraft could use. SUPs, kayaks, canoes and surfboards. AND I agree with Camille Warren more parking is needed. Definitely.
Please improve take outs and add signs to let people know that a take out is coming or how much time left.
More launch and take out points
A regular shuttle or at least one that you can call for transport back to your entry point would be great! Even if it's for a fee.
We are avid fishermen. There is no place for seniors to fish that does not have paddlers around. We need more accessible fishing spaces.
We are avid fisherman. There does not seem to be any place for seniors to fish without paddlers around. We need more accessible fishing spaces.
Sandy Beach access for kayaks!!
More access points for fishing along the Greenway. Safe parking utilizing Improved launch and take out locations from local public roads.
We need more take out points after Falls Dam that are within a 1-3 hour range. A public launch near Capital Blvd., and more options in between Capital and 401. Thornton Rd. Has a nice exit area, but then you have to get your watercraft back to the parking lot, which is 0.5 miles away. More launches with parking that is close by would be a huge improvement.
Wooden walkways and access points to stop the dirt becoming muddy and slippery. Sensible parking for cars.
More Parking at Elizabeth. Upgrading and monitoring of all access areas for safe entry to river. Some kind of marking, flag or pole visible from the river to indicate up coming access. Picnic tables at access points. Signs saying take it in/take it out for trash control.
need to clear our log jams at bridges. this could it make unsafe conditions at higher water flows. need ant easy app to get rivers stats and future release flows for next 12 hrs
Establish camping spots along the Blueway.
Please connect the Neuse Greenway to other Raleigh Greenways on its north end, such as East Fork Mine Trail and Baileywick Trail. Make it possible to commute downtown and connect to functional things by bicycle. Thanks!

What type of activities do you participate in near the Neuse River?

Hunting

I would do camping if there were a place to do it. I'm not sure why camping is a choice since there is no place to do it (at least none that I know of). At Milburnie (depending on water levels) sometimes I do wading in the water. I live near Milburnie and I have heard what sounded like single rifle shots. And there are lots of deer - or at least there used to be a lot more. In the past I have come home around 10 PM to see a dozen deer in the field in front of my house. Maybe the hunters got them and that's why there aren't as many. Or maybe coyotes. In the last few years I began to sometimes hear coyotes at night, especially in the spring.
Swimming
Camp sites would be a great addition.
Would love to see more areas suitable for just hanging out by the water, wading, fishing, just playing...restrooms, clean water sources, Campsites would be amazing, or even just more picnic areas. Boardwalks/ wildlife viewing areas would be cool.
The water is filthy. I gashed my leg two years ago an a tubing event and it ended up getting infected with 7 different aquatic pathogens! I was on antibiotics for a year. :-(
Day camp
Flying my drone
Would like to camp.
Photography--scenic and wildlife
none
We live on the Neuse River. Our everyday lives are centered around protecting and preserving all the land and forest that surround it!
Fishing on the banks and wading in the river behind my property.
Only ever tubed on the Neuse.
It would be nice if there were some places to eat or drink with views of the river.
Rock climbing, swimming

Are you affiliated with a river-based advocacy group or organization? If so, which one?

Carolina Canoe Club
North Carolina State Director of the American Canoe Association
Member of Carolina Canoe Club
Better take outs and easier
Carolina canoe club
Carolina Canoe Club
Carolina Canoe Club, Carolina Kayak Club, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater
Carolina Canoe Club
Yes, Carolina Canoe Club, American Whitewater
Tuscarora Canoe Club
AW
Carolina Kayak Club, Carolina Canoe Club
CCC
WaterKeeper
Carolina Kayak Club, American canoe association
Carolina Canoe Club, American Whitewater
Carolina Canoe Club
American whitewater
Falls Whitewater Park
Falls Whitewater Park
Carolina Canoe Club

Carolina Kayak Club
Carolina Kayak Club
no.
no
No
no
no
No
no
No
Bo
No
No
no
no
No
I am a member of TSCA (Traditional Small Craft Association) of Raleigh. We build and use small wooden watercraft. Would use the Neuse more if it were more accesable and cleaner.
River keepers, Carolina Kayak Club
Haw River Assembly, Eno River Association,
Simply kayaking
Simply kayaking
Simply Kayaking
Simply Kayaking
Simply Kayaking meet up group
No
No
no, how do i become a member of a group
Na
No
No
No
trout unlimited
no
No
NONE
Capital Group Sierra Club and Sound Rivers
No
No
No
No
not now. formerly Carolina Canoe Club
No
OLLI
Yes Falls Whitewater Park Committee, Inc.
none

Upper Neuse Riverkeeper, Sound Rivers
Pamlico Tar River Conservancy (past)
Sound Rivers
None
Carolina Kayak Club and Carolina Canoe Club.
No
no
no
No, but I would like to find ways to connect with other to create ride sharing to be able to shuffle cars to get kayaks/canoes out and back home. You need to advertise reputable guides services to help shuffle

SECOND SURVEY (2020)

Would you like to elaborate on the scores you gave?

Happy to chat
Anderson Point has a problem with debri blocking half the river at the bridge. An inexperienced paddler could be pulled under this and drowned. Needs to be cleaned out.
These sites have not but upgraded or updated in many years. Parking, bathrooms, changing rooms, and better safety are needed at all of the ones I use.
I will use the Blueway if you put a toilet at the Elizabeth Drive location! Currently, I don't use it, but your marketing communication is incentive!
The best canoe access has good parking and a short carry to steps down to the river. Wood steps do not damage boats as you slide then up and down them and they offer good footing so you do not slip. Elizabeth drive has little parking and no steps. Falls lake has good parking, but the steps need wood so the boats don't get all scratched. I think Thornton is a long boat carry from where you can park. Milburnie is a long carry. Poole road is a long carry. Anderson point is almost Ideal but very slippery.
Most sites are steep and muddy with limited parking.
Falls lake is the best but is pretty shallow at the put in location and is often blocked by people fishing or playing on the steps. Elizabeth Dr. is good for kayak access but the parking lot is too small, need to direct bikers and people just using the greenway to Buffalo Rd. Park instead. Thornton Rd. parking is a long way away from the river, further than I want to carry my kayak. I've seen a lot of broken glass in the Poole Rd. parking lot where car windows had been busted out, I probably wouldn't park my car there.
what happened to Horseshoe Farm access??
Falls Lake is by far the best access point of the ones I've used. Well-signed to get there, pretty good amount of parking, easy access to the river.
Would use the blueway system much more frequently if ramp & parking areas were improved.
I agree that facilities really need to be upgraded. Restroom access, tables, etc. I've felt unsafe at Milburnie.
Yes, it feels very unsafe at Milburnie
It's always nice to park close to the "put-in" but the bigger issue for us is the roughness of the "put-in" . Often uneven, jagged, broken concrete or rocks, slippery, extremely muddy (esp. Poole Rd). From the river , there is no way to know where the put-in is until you are right upon it. The opening can be extremely narrow especially if kayaks are coming in and out.
The debris blockages at the bridges are daunting and dangerous. I would also love to see an access around Milburnie Falls to the right side as you come down the river. I think it is possible to get around it now, but not easily, by walking, dragging and climbing up and over with your boat.
Thornton Road is is extremely rough terrain and makes it difficult to take out without injury. More parking is needed at the location as well. The city should look to purchase the Capital Boulevard take out and improve it to a more family friendly access if they are truly interested in using the river as a point of attraction.
Parking and ease of carrying the boat to the water make or break a put in.
The drop and take outs are not user friendly
I would personally like to see improvements to allow large rafts and drift boats access into and out of the river
None combine the parking and easy in/out of the waterways except Falls which is overly busy.
All you have to do is go launch or take out a kayak or canoe from most of these points to know that parking is too far away and too limited, the carries are way too far in several cases, the access points are often steep, narrow, somewhat dangerous and difficult, and or a complete mud pit.
Some are just rough ground to get in and deep to get out
Many of the access points are difficult to walk to and from due to mud and rocks.
No
Not familiar with some of the access points but I know that Falls Lake and Elizabeth Dr are either too steep or not easily accessible or user-friendly. You would have to drag your kayak a long ways to get to the water from the parking lot.
you should include buffalo road canoe launch in this survey.
Outside of Falls Dam, access isn't easy due to parking restraints and how far you often have to transport boats quite far for me to really call it "easily accessible".

All of these launches need upgrades to parking and the boat ramps. They are essentially mud pits with lots of trash. They are rarely maintained and due to river fluctuations often are silted over resulting in a dangerous, slippery situation. The entrance/exit at Milburnie needs to be addressed as it is only suitable for one-way traffic. Fall lake is too slammed on nice days and weekends for paddlers to have space to load/unload equipment. Anderson Point is awkward to use with bike traffic and the log jam under the railroad bridge is nearly impassable. Elizabeth Drive has only a handful of parking spaces and no close overflow which renders it fairly useless. Poole Road is a slippery, muddy mess even on good days. None of the launches have suitable facilities to lock boats to for shuttle purposes. Shuttling to parking away from the launch is frequently necessary due to lack of parking.
There is a nice parking lot for greenway access where it intersects with Auburn-Knightdale Road, but no canoe launch for the river. One is badly needed there. Many folks like to park their vehicles there, so they can haul out, but because there is no launch, it is a rough struggle dragging your boat up the slope there to put it up on your vehicle in the parking lot.
I only know the two I rated but look forward to exploring the others. The kids and I have only taken our kayaks out once at Thornton but it was fine. (But somewhat possible that I am not getting the location right.) We normally put in at the top at Falls Lake access (bank a bit steep to easily get kayaks down into water), and take out at Capital Blvd (unofficial access).
None of the accesses are kayak friendly as there is nowhere to park the kayak while loading it.
Didn't know they existed!
Not enough parking. No room for trailers.
Beaches are preferred as well as nearby parking areas so that access is easy with heavy kayaks or canoes. Most access areas have either beach or parking nearby, but not both.
Add a take out point with parking at Capital boulevard.
Needs signage to show exit point and mile markers while on the river. Need drop off or parking area immediately next to exit points.
Most of the accesses are dirty and need to be cleaned up. Others are way too far away for someone to haul their canoe to the river. The boat ramps need to be concrete.
NA
Take outs are hard to find and not user friendly
Would like more access and parking for half day float trips, acquiring the take out area along us1 would be very valuable to the citizens of Raleigh
The city should look to buy the take out point on Capitol BLvd to add a parking lot.
There needs to be more access points and the current ones need upgraded
Access? There's no easy access anywhere
Elizabeth drive has too little parking and it is hard to turn around if the lot is full. The distance from parking to drop in is pretty far but totally manageable. The drop in area is narrow and would get muddy when wet. Anderson point is a little confusing at first on if you're allowed to drive on the green way to get to the drop in. There was lots of trash and debris and it was not the easiest point to find when getting out of the water.
Would like a kayak takeout point with parking at or near the Capital Blvd/ US1 bridge.
Thornton Rd. access is too far from parking
Thornton Rd. is too far from parking
The poole rd access seems dangerous. There is not much support and the access seems a little steep. The Anderson point access is okay, but a bit far from parking, especially if you are in the from of the lot.
Parking is limited at most access points and a lot of the access points are not clearly visible from the river. When putting equipment in to the river, the access points are cramped and can get crowded
Parking is limited if your using the river and not the greenway. Plus the "ramp" doesn't really exist in most locations. There is no mile markers anywhere and so much debris in the river.
Having a reuse river Blueway green would be nice to get the word out. I just moved by Poole road and was Afraid to kayak.
Finally where are the other parking spots... why stop at poole road?
Any access is nice...some are easier than others to access

<p>The parking situation at Milburnie is terrible and dangerous. The access road is not wide enough for two cars to pass and there is no visibility to see if another car is coming towards you.</p> <p>There is not enough parking at any of these access points. Anderson point has the most but it still fills up in the summer and people park in unmarked spaces and block access.</p>
<p>The exit points should be more clearly marked so people are not stranded on the river.</p>
<p>Not enough parking. Road down to Milburnie is too tight and creates congestion.</p>
<p>I have never used the Falls Lake access but it looks nice. Thornton Rd looks like it is way too far to carry the canoe and all the gear to get to the river. Parking should be closer to the river if it is considered canoe access. I really like the Elizabeth drive location but parking is an issue. It is a very small lot and it gets extremely crowded with bike riders. I also really like Anderson point because it has great access but a lot of trash. Poole Rd is one of my favorite take out spots because it is close to my house, good parking, close to the river and has a rack to put your canoe up on to clean it off. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE build an access for Auburn Knightdale Rd!!! It will get a lot of use and it is a perfect location.</p>
<p>No question for it, but access at Auburn-Knightdale would be great</p>
<p>Huge resource under underutilized. We need restrooms, convenience concessions and the opportunity to have bistros on the river.</p>

Do you have suggestions for proposed improvements at the existing access points?

Happy to chat
More parking, changing rooms and bathrooms, more police patrols. I never go to Milburnie without smelling marijuana.
More parking, maybe restrooms. Better entries to water with debris cleared regularly?
More parking around Elizabeth Dr. A bigger access at Falls Lake. Also, most of these access points connect to the Greenway. It'd be nice to find an effective way to slow down or divert bikers in the greenway areas between the parking lot and the access point. I've had several times where I feel like I'm playing Frogger with the bikes while trying to carry my kayak.
Better signage along the river for all access points. I paddled right past Anderson Point the first time. Better directional signage to get to Milburnie and then lots more parking there.
More parking at Poole Rd.
Where parking is limited and adding parking is difficult, maybe at least one standalone parking spot for paddlers to unload their canoe/kayak and then find a regular parking spot?
Would like to see more access points on the upper section every 2 - 3 miles.
More access points and better amenities at existing points (bathrooms, lighting, safety, etc.)
Launch locations for boaters should not be on cement slabs or muddy locations. In a wet climate like ours, it becomes a slippery hazard. beach (sand) is best, but grass with erosion controls could work. You may want to consider accessibility in your designs as well that can assist those with varying degrees of physical strength. Therefore, long routes from parking lots to put in are a barrier for some canoeists, sea kayakers, kayakers, etc. Restrooms, outside showers, hoses for cleaning boats are nice..like at Robertson’s Millpond. But bikers and hikers, and fishing folks need guidance on navigation and stopping locations that don’t interfere with each other or boaters. Could there be designated areas for different types of users? Adequate parking for future growth would be needed as well as lighting, for safety . Due to water erosion and debris, these sites should be maintained to avoid hazards. The location near an overpass has potential safety issues for boaters without regular maintenance.
More access points, just better facilities. I am happy that Raleigh has so many parks and outdoor facilities but I wish they would improve on existing facilities before creating new ones. Inadequate parking, trash, and a feeling of the park being incomplete is something I run into at many parks and I feel the same way about these access points.
Better marking from the river, wider river access points, safer entry using engineered design to withstand water flow, erosion etc.
Any on-land improvement (toilets, parking, picnic areas are always nice but the river access is the main draw for us. Safer, easier, well-marked and maintained.
Oh yes, definitely more access points. It is 2-4 hours between any of them now.

Add signs on the river for each access point that includes distance to the next access point
Many cities across the country have invested in actual put in./take out equipment at river access points. This would be wonderful to provide disability access to the river.
Better signage online and along roadways would be helpful. Erosion is also an issue that should be addressed to make the sites safer.
At 401 where lots of people park anyway on private land. It would cut the Thornton to 5401 in half.
Add distance to marks. People are constantly asking us at Horseshoe "how much further?" to Buffaloe
Need an access at the proposed park near 5401.
closer parking to access; smooth/paved access.
Definitely better signage indicating when an access point is coming up or like others said- mileage noted to the next point.
Safer, more accessible access. Easy drop off spots for boats with better parking (overflow parking that's a short walk away?), distance markings between and along access points (with average time estimates for low, average, and high flows), easy warning markers to tell when water is too high and unsafe, more access points on the long stretches).
Grading is terrifically important if the River is to be accessible for all levels of paddlers. A visit to Beaver Dam Lake or Jordan lake would be excellent examples of safe accessibility.
A visit to Beaver Dam Lake or to several entrance points on Jordan Lake would be examples of safe and accessible entries. Grading is important if all levels of experience for kayaks, canoes or paddle boards are to be able to enjoy the Neuse River Trail.
Calling the one at Elizabeth Dr an access point to launch is a stretch. It has no sign on Buffalo Rd indicating location. Parking is inadequate. Try carrying a kayak or canoe down a two foot wide slippery clay foot path down the River bank. A sign by the river bank that can be seen from the river would be nice.
Expanded parking. Roadway improvement to access points. Safety signage. Log Jam removal from bridges
Check for dangerous debris where people step into the water. I’m always scared that I, my kids, or dogs will step on something sharp. Put ins just seem unkept and a bit sketchy. Almost prefer going in from the banks over official access points.
It’s also hard to find access points when on the river. Wayfinding signs from river, trails, and parking areas are needed.
Concrete. Plant trees and flower beds. Clean up trash. Create access points that are close to the river.
Set up areas specific for locking bike or boat for the single riders who park at one spot and bike back to the pick up spot.
Also include access points in the lower stretches of Walnut Creek and Crabtree Creek.
I have not paddled from any of these access points and haven't been to any recently, so I didn't rank them.
More access points with available parking for half day trips would be very valuable to the citizens of Raleigh, acquiring the take out below us1 would be very helpful
I’d like to see more access points!
N/A
More parking at some access. With Covid, access to parking lots later in the day has been difficult
more parking, larger and more access points
Closer parking and clear paths to the river. It is hard to launch at most sites.
More parking. Better signage at each exit point on the river. More information about the distance to each access point and the terrain you will encounter.
We need more parking at the Elizabeth Drive access, it fills up with bike riders and pedestrians way too quick.
Better parking
self serve concessions, restrooms, pit-stops for hikers/kayakers to eat lunch and grab a beer.

THIRD SURVEY (2020)

Overall are you satisfied with the Draft Neuse River Blueway Plan?

Sucks you need 82 pages to convince everyone of the biggest investment to that immediate area. Wildlife and nature combine. 82 pages cmon. Also would be great that once things are developed that they are upkept and not just completed. Trash and parking, landscape needs to be ever evolving. That kayak launch when it was gravel was clean and natural. Then pavement and parking lines came and so did the degradation of the are. Put some money into and quit being cheap cheap. We only have one river to enjoy. Peace
I was hoping to see additional improvements between Falls dam and River Bend. There is a long stretch of river that is inaccessible.. and it takes 6+ hours to "Float" (on a tube) that section of river. What about access at Horseshoe Farm park, or improving/acquiring access at Capital blvd? There also needs to be better public notice of the dam releases, its tough to find that information online
I LOVE all the new or improved launch sites but 69% launch from the dam and there is NOT enough parking there. It is too popular a site (especially with Covid) for the amount of parking. You talk about improving parking elsewhere but not there.
Parking needs to have a much greater prioity.
Parking at Milburnie needs to be a priority. It's so dangerous to drive down into that lot.
Would love to see funding for the Falls Whitewater Park added.
I believe the whitewater park should be a priority. The Raleigh area needs more whitewater paddling opportunities and this park could provide that. A flat water only blueway does not interest me. Whitewater paddlers go to Chatham Co., Durham Co., or Western NC to find good whitewater paddling because there is no such thing in the Raleigh/Wake Co. area.
I am a lifelong resident of the community impacted by the whitewater development. This area is very dangerous for all the traffic it gets to the river / greenway as it is. Cars parked along the roadway, even when parking lots are full make it dangerous for residents (many are elderly) to drive and make turns safely along the curvy Old Falls of Neuse / Fonville Road corridors. Adding MORE reason for MORE people to come and park and disrupt a peaceful neighborhood is poor planning, disrespectful, and dangerous. This area near the dam and the first section of the greenway is peaceful, serene, and should be left alone. Give the whitewater people space on a different, less congested section of the river - not our neighborhood!
Glad to see Falls Park on the Neuse River/Falls Whitewater Park included in the plan. Would like for increased priority for parking and restrooms/changing rooms at Falls Dam. The popular greenway means it is almost always hard to park and the only bathrooms are at the USACE parking lot and they are often out of order. It would also be nice to have access at Capital Boulevard. This is a commonly desired location for access, but there is none since Paddle Creek closed. I appreciate the effort to improve Raleigh's home river!
The falls dam launch is OK, but there are no places to take out anywhere really until Buffalo road. That's a loooong way to paddle.
This is a good start for the upper Neuse. However, the log jams and downed trees that litter the river must be addressed by the city too, NCDOT and CRX only care for river crossings. At the least the city should work with volunteer groups to ensure the navigation of the main river channel.
This seems like an exercise in promotion of an existing waterway. I and most of my friends are already aware of it and know what boat types to use on it. There isn't any cost information that I spotted, and I question the value of it, when plenty of resources already exist that give information on the river.
Perhaps spending the money on construction of a whitewater park at Falls Dam would give more bang for the buck.
You are right-on! A major focus of this project is boosting public awareness. Not enough people know that the Neuse River is right here, and not enough people think of it as a great outdoor recreation opportunity. We are hoping that some relatively low-cost improvements can help change that, and ultimately build broader support for other (larger, more expensive) river-related projects.
Well done. Well thought out.
LIGHTING - complaints about safety could be solved with lighting, no woman will go to a trail alone or with children day or night without lighting. GRAVEL - this would take care of all of the mud and debris causing issues with existing launches.
Poole road is a popular spot to leave the river. The trashcans are always overflowing, there should be more trash cans or more frequent pickup.

As someone who goes tubing frequently on the neuse, some AC outlets or air pumps at Anderson and Milburnie would be useful for inflating tubes.
There 2nd most important issue identified by the community is conservation, yet this is a proposal that deals almost exclusively with access. Please update to incorporate more intentionality behind the riparian conservation and water quality.
I hope there will be more focus on the distance between parking/drop-offs and the river. The 350 feet at the new River Bend doesn't make it friendly at all, especially to solo paddlers or canoes. Let's please not continue discussions about a whitewater park. We don't snow ski in Raleigh because the conditions don't exist to sustain it. I like whitewater too, but go where the whitewater is and stop trying to create it. Nature does its thing. Try to muster interest and investments in a completely man-made center. There will never be a consistent release rate from the dam to support a park there, and even with all of the releases in 2020, I hardly saw any whitewater boats out there playing, and I live right there.
Good overall plan to improve public access; I hope the blueway can be extended to Clayton, Smithfield and downstream.

Do you have any comments or questions about the Draft Neuse River Blueway Plan?

I am excited at the prospect of having so many launch sites. Glad this is getting prioritized.
I'd like to see some thoughts going into having a Whitewater Park (at the base of Falls Dam) that has been in the works now for some at least 6 years looked into.
Signage along the river and public art would make the paddling experience much better. But like others have said, any improvements won't matter if there isn't enough parking to access it. I can't put a kayak on my bike or on a bus.
We need a Horseshoe farm stop at 401. It was in an original Greenway proposal and people use the land next to 401 south of the river to try to access the river and greenway all the time. Plus, when the water is slow, we need more exits.
Also, I'd like to see these water markers/signs you ask for. Living on the river at Horseshoe, people are asking us all the time where the next boatramp is. They are exhausted and try to get out in areas they are not meant to around 401.
We need to assure that downed trees and other dangerous "strainers" are rapidly removed to avoid dangerous accidents.
Removing trees from the river is often more difficult than it sounds. Can be expensive and dangerous in itself. I'm lucky to be alive after stupidly thinking I could reduce the log pile on the left side of Gabriel's Bend on the Haw. On some rivers, this can be accomplished (e.g. Savage River in Maryland before major scheduled releases-they hire an expert contractor to do it though and it is expensive) but usually those are done when the river bed can be completely de-watered. But, at a minimum, maybe signage at put-in's and notifications of where strainers are and how to avoid.
Would love a whitewater park with advertised, planned releases. I understand that there are many competing priorities such as lake level, downstream flooding, rainfall, etc. but at least some amount of notice would be nice. Talk to kayakers about ideal levels. At approx 4,000 cfs, there is a wonderful and powerful surfing wave that is very difficult to catch. A little ramp would solve that problem. Talk to Brooks Burleson, a local boater and stone mason who has built a ramp at the Haw. He knows how to do it rithg.
Thank you for your reply and clarification to my comment about the whitewater park. I fully support the blueway plan and appreciate the opportunity to review and provide feedback.
The riverbend launch that opened yesterday is dark and the ramp is slippery... stop spending money building more “access points” until you fix existing issues.
Easy access to up to date water quality data for those interested in using the river.
Will there be public meetings, (pandemic allowing) going forward?

How would you prioritize the short-term improvements suggested in the Neuse River Blueway Plan?
Results of this survey will be included in the Next Steps section of the final Neuse River Blueway Plan.

Again: parking! I can ride a SUP like a kayak, so less concerned with other issues than parking. Can't paddle if I can't find a place to park.
H.C. Woody Woodward (OSAPAC)
Fund and follow through with plan for Falls Park on the Neuse River/Falls Whitewater Park. This aligns with other desired improvements in the Falls Dam area.
Address the strainers blocking the river channel.
Improving water quality.
Add gravel or sand to all the existing launches.. concrete launches will become slippery and require more maintenance/money in the long term. Add lighting. Trash cans should be easily accessible and in lighted areas.
Low fruit: improve Anderson & Poole access, take pressure off Falls area, reduce parking conflicts. Can run that reach twice on same day with good flow. Thornton Rd access next, addresses big gap, also may take pressure off Falls if publicize as put-in. Get on with Master Planning & Development of large tracts Falls River Pk and Thornton Rd. Pk. (Drop Mr. Leonard's name! he did nothing to facilitate public good.) Operation: resolve how to make river [relatively] safe re: snags, notifications, instruction, etc. w/ dedicated staff and facilities that support volunteers, build a paddling community. Good work overall - now get funded!



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