







Glenn Strouh

Dear Members and Friends of the MST:

2008 was a year of great progress on the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, thanks to the hard work of volunteers and staff, generosity of members and partners, and public enthusiasm for North Carolina's flagship trail. Thank you for your help in making the year such a success.

I am pleased to submit this annual report of our accomplishments. Highlights include:

- More volunteers helped build and maintain the trail than ever before. As a result, more than 15 new miles of trail were built and hundreds of miles were maintained.
- Volunteers stepped up to help in other ways: by recruiting new members, staffing festival booths, producing an e-newsletter, helping in the office and assisting with many other tasks.
- More than 1000 people participated in our first annual *Mountains-to-Sea Trail Month* by hiking, backpacking, paddling, biking, and learning about the trail at slideshows and nature programs.
- The NC Division of Parks & Recreation made grants totaling \$8.5 million to acquire land for the trail in Guilford, Alamance, Orange and Johnston counties. The land already purchased or under contract will provide approximately eight miles of new trail and camping.
- An archeologist approved the route for the final stretch of trail between Blowing Rock and NC 16, clearing the way for the South Ashe and the Watauga volunteer task forces to close that trail gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- Newspapers, magazines and blogs gave the MST extraordinary press coverage this year. A highlight was the *Raleigh News & Observer's series* that ran once-a-month on Sunday's front-page from June to September.

This was also FMST's first year with a staff member – Executive Director, Kate Dixon, who started work on January 7: 2008. She comes to us with a strong background in nonprofit management, land conservation and environmental advocacy, and she has already been a huge help to the board and volunteers as we work to get this trail on the ground.

I look forward to working with you to make 2009 even more successful for the trail.

Sincerely,

Jeff D. Brewer Board President





TRAIL BUILDING & MAINTENANCE

In 2008, FMST Task Forces continued to maintain approximately 425 miles of trail (approximately 60 miles on the Outer Banks need to be adopted by volunteers).

In addition, three Task Forces built approximately 15 miles of new trail in three areas:

- Blue Ridge Parkway US-421 to US-321 with the Watauga Task Force
- Blue Ridge Parkway NC-16 to US-421 with the South Ashe Task Force
- Falls Lake NC-50 to Rolling View with the Falls Lake Task Force

Almost every weekend in 2008, trail was being built and maintained somewhere in the state. FMST hosted statewide trail days on June 7 (National Trails Day) and September 27 (National Public Lands Day) to construct, maintain, or research the MST. The FMST hosted two "Big Digs" along the Blue Ridge Parkway to assist the South Ashe and Watauga task forces.

The Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) continued its diligent work from Balsam Gap (south) to Soco Gap, working under the guidelines of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Trail construction started on the Blue Ridge Parkway between US-421 and US-321 during the spring of 2008. The Watauga Task Force flagged and prepared the MST for archeological studies south from US-421 for approximately four miles. This study is now complete.

The South Ashe Task Force continued trail construction on the Blue Ridge Parkway from NC-16 south towards US-421. Approximately four miles were constructed in 2008 as workdays were held twice monthly on this section.

Eno River State Park agreed to a routing of the trail through its boundaries, and Fred Dietrich and Jennie Tenor have agreed to be the Task Force Leaders to build this section of trail.

Trail construction at Falls Lake continued from Rolling View State Recreation Area towards Hickory Hill Boat Ramp near I-85. Approximately 7.5 miles were built in 2008 by the Falls Lake Task Force. As many as 115 volunteers have turned out at workdays due to great publicity in the local paper and a meetup.com group established by FMST members Will and Donna Farmer.

FMST assisted the Carteret County Wildlife Club and US Forest Service in the Croatan Forest by hosting workdays on the Neusiok Trail/MST in January. Approximately 1,000 yards of boardwalk were installed along with regular trail maintenance on this 21-mile section.

As in the past, trail volunteers have shown an impressive record of work on the MST.

Task Force	Hours Worked
Carolina Mountain Club	5,370
Central Blue Ridge Task Force	545
Bald Knob Task Force	144
Outward Bound School Task Force	609
Watauga Task Force	2,024
South Ashe Task Force	1,281
North Ashe Task Force	283
Alleghany Task Force	136
Sauratown Trails Association	936
Greensboro Task Forces	402
Falls Lake Task Force	6,088
Croatan Task Force & Carteret Wildlife Club	359
TOTAL HOURS	18,177

Our documented hours of work represent \$181,765 of in-kind services. See the list of volunteers who contributed more than 75 hours or more of work on the trail at the end of this annual report.

HIKERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE TRAIL

One thru-hiker, Scot Ward of Lexington, Kentucky, completed the trail in 2008. Others continue to section hike the MST.

Thanks to volunteer Arthur
Kelley, visitors to our website can
now find more up-to-date GPS maps of the
trail. We also continue to aid people interested
in hiking the trail by connecting them with
others who have hiked the trail before them.

NEW LAND AND EASEMENTS (WEST TO EAST)

The MST officially became recognized as a National Recreation Trail wherever it crosses land in the National Forests. This includes sections of trail in the Nantahala, Pisgah, and Croatan National Forests.

A National Park Service archeologist approved the route for the final stretch of trail between Blowing Rock and NC 16, clearing the way for the South Ashe and the Watauga task forces to close that trail gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

In Spring 2008, the NC Division of Parks and Recreation and the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments released a brochure showing primary and alternate routes for the MST from Stone Mountain State Park to Greensboro. Local governments were asked to seek approval of the proposed routes from their elected officials. To date, Guilford and Rockingham counties have adopted the proposed trail routes.

State Parks designated a mile of trail on the Haw River in Swepsonville as part of the MST. Although the current hiking route does not connect to this land yet, Haw River Trails is working hard in Alamance County to acquire additional land for the trail in this area.



The NC Parks & Recreation Trust Fund approved grants totaling \$8.5 million to purchase land for the trail. FMST members who attended the 2008 Conference of Task Force Leaders will remember NC Parks Director Lewis Ledford's pledge to work for *at least* \$1 million in funding for the MST each year. These \$8.5 million in grants were an exciting beginning to mark that new level of commitment to the MST by State Parks.

To date the State has used the grants to acquire land in Guilford and Johnston counties:

• Guilford County matched its portion of these grants so that it and State Parks could acquire two tracts totaling 440 acres of beautiful hardwood forest that will extend the trail approximately five miles from Lake Townsend toward the Haw River State Park. This land will be managed by the City of Greensboro.

 State Parks closed on 330 acres on the Neuse River in *Johnston County* just over the Wake County line with help from the Trust for Public Land and Triangle Land Conservancy. This tract pro-

vides a 300-foot-wide corridor for the trail along the river and also has land for camping.

The Town of Clayton is to manage the land for State

Parks. Since

Raleigh and Wake County have committed to finish their section of the trail by 2012, this new land should quickly become part of an uninterrupted trail corridor extending more than 60 miles from Falls Lake.

The Eno River Association also helped acquire land for the trail by transferring 65 acres in Orange County to the Eno River State Park. This land is part of a missing link in the park and trail route along the Eno River. The State considers the tract a nationally-significant natural heritage area because of the occurrence of rare mussels. It is covered in hardwood forest and includes a high bluff overlooking the river. It is also the site of an old slave cemetery.

Portofino, a new subdivision near Clayton in Johnston County, has already built about 1/2 mile of the MST on the Neuse River. The developers are excited about the trail and have urged adjacent landowners to extend the trail onto their land.

EDUCATING PEOPLE ABOUT THE TRAIL

For the first time the FMST hosted "MST Month" in October. Over 60 events were held and more than 1000 people participated in day hikes, backpacking trips, trail work days, bike rides, paddles and nature and educational programs.

Bruce Wisely

The MST received much press coverage in newspapers and blogs. A highlight was the Raleigh *News and Observer's* four-part summer series about the MST. The MST also received coverage in several magazines including *American Hiking Society, Our State*, and *Backpacker*.

FMST's website (www.ncmst.org) has proven to be an effective way to inform the general public about the MST, and the physical website doubled its size in 2008. Approximately 2500 people visit the MST site on a daily basis. Several hikers have listed their MST adventures on Trails Journals (www.trailjournals.com).

FMST began an e-newsletter in July, and the distribution list for this newsletter has now grown to 2300 friends. We developed a new membership brochure, powerpoint presentation and display which was used at five festivals.

In 2008, volunteers helped with many tasks in addition to building and maintaining trail. This table gives you a picture of how people helped and how many hours were donated.

MST Month	419
Staffing Festival Booths	145
Mapping the Trail	100
Media Relations	66
Membership & Outreach Committee	50
Acquiring New Trail Corridor	48
By-law Revision Committee	46
E-Newsletter	30
Bookkeeping	24
Graphic Design	16
Shipment of Merchandise	10
Advocacy with Governments	9
MST License Plate Committee	8
Mailing Parties	8
TOTAL HOURS	979

The value of these hours is calculated to be approximately \$18,556 of in-kind service to the MST.

RAISING FUNDS FOR THE TRAIL

In addition to the \$8.5 million in state funding to be used to acquire new land for the trail, 2008 saw an increase in trail construction grants and in the amount of private and corporate funding for the trail.

A new FMST committee focused for the first time on encouraging trail enthusiasts to become members of FMST. Thanks to their efforts, we finished 2008 with 271 members, four times the number we had in 2007.

The committee also established the 1000-Mile Society to recognize donors who give \$1000 or who volunteer at least 75 hours and donate

\$500. Eleven members joined this Society in its inaugural year.

Other important donors in 2008 were Great Outdoor Provision Co. and Johnson Subaru, our corporate sponsors for Mountains-to-Sea Trail Month. Great Outdoor Provision Co. also generously sponsors breakfast for our trail workers at Falls Lake.

FMST received two new generous grants for trail construction: a state Adopt-a-Trail (\$3,000) grant and a federal Recreational Trail Program (RTP) (\$75,000) grant. The Adopt-a-Trail grant paid for the archeological studies along the Blue Ridge Parkway. The RTP grant will be used to construct a 100-foot steel bridge at Falls Lake.

ADVOCACY

In 2008, FMST organized a coalition of trail groups to seek additional funding from the NC Legislature and now through the proposed federal economic stimulus package which is expected to pass Congress in February 2009.

The FMST continued its support as an Alliance Member of American Hiking Society's Southeastern Trails Coalition and as a member in the Land Trust Alliance on a national level. We know that in order to complete the MST we must engage in the land trust community.

ORGANIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

On January 7, Kate Dixon began work as FMST's first Executive Director. The FMST hosted the Annual Conference of Task Force Leaders on February 2, 2008 to continue our organized support of the MST. In April, we opened a post office box and an office in Raleigh. Board President Jeff Brewer received national recognition for his leadership when he was selected by American Trails to be North Carolina's recipient of its State Trail Advocacy award.

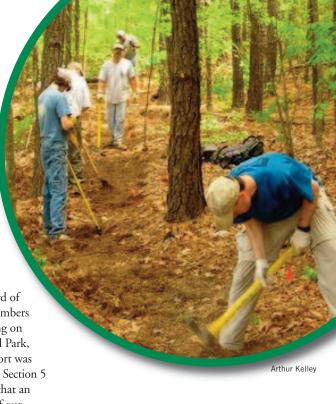
"B" Townes, Vice President for Development at Wilkes Community College and a member of FMST's South Ashe Task Force, was elected to the board to take the seat of Bob Benner who retired after several terms on the board. Bob will continue to serve as Leader of the Central Blue Ridge Task Force.

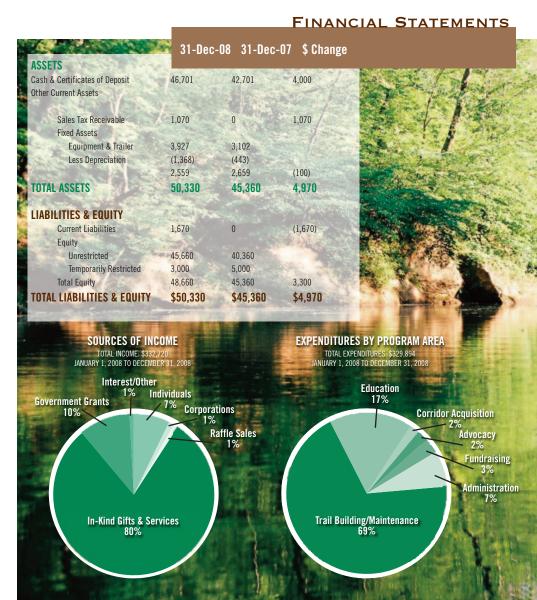
Emily Grogan, Steven Joines and Bruce Wisely were elected to new three-year terms on the Board of Directors.

Allen de Hart, after serving ably as FMST's Board Treasurer for eleven years, stepped down from that role to focus on his work as Project Director and a new edition of his guidebook, *Hiking North Carolina's Mountains-to-Sea Trail.* Bruce Wisely agreed to succeed Allen as Treasurer.

The MST is an on-going project that relies on volunteer efforts to move it forward as the flagship trail across North Carolina.

This report was submitted to the Board of Directors, Task Force Leaders, and members at the Eleventh FMST Annual Meeting on Saturday, February 7, 2009 at Bur-Mil Park, Greensboro, North Carolina. The report was prepared in accordance with Article IV, Section 5 of the FMST By-Laws which require that an annual report be made on the status of our organization and the trail.







FMST MEMBERS IN 2008

1000-Mile Society Members (# of years an FMST member)

Jeff and Amy Brewer, Raleigh (9) Allen de Hart, Louisburg (9) Crawford Crenshaw and Laurie Dunn, Raleigh (1) Kate Dixon and Dan Wilkinson, Raleigh (2) Garrison-Cole Design, Raleigh (1) GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park (1) Great Outdoor Provision Co. (8) Johnson Subaru, Cary (1) Margaret Parker, Chapel Hill (1) Restoration Systems, Raleigh (1) "B" and Martha Townes, Boomer (2)

Matching Gift Companies

ExxonMobil Progress Energy Wachovia Foundation

Nine-Year Members

Jeff and Amy Brewer, Raleigh Allen de Hart, Louisburg

Eight-Year Members

Lillian A. Benton, Bunn City of Greensboro, Bur-Mil Park Great Outdoor Provision Co. John Jaskolka, New Bern Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI) Mike and Ruth Simpson, Greensboro Dwayne and Sara Stutzman, Asheville Donald and Jean Walton, Mills River

Seven-Year Members

Carol Banaitis, Raleigh Beverly Duval, King Steven Joines, Sparta Sherman L. Stambaugh, Asheville G. Bruce Wisely, Raleigh

Six-Year Members

Anonymous Bob Benner, Morganton Mike Davis, Charlotte Allan R. Ellstrom, Knoxville Tom and Marian Jerdee, Chapel Hill Joe and Laura Mayretic, Raleigh David Thoenen, Raleigh

Five-Year Members

Nancy L. Cormany, Raleigh Robert Dixon, Fuquay-Varina Dewey and Martha Fox, Morganton Stephen Meehan, Stephen Meehan Communications James Lee Price, Jamestown Joe and Jo Ann Swofford, Clyde John C. and Kathy Underhill,

Four-Year Members

Ray L. Benedicktus, III, Orange, California

Wendell Burton, Burton Farms, Advance Robert and Martha Cline, Sanford Mark Gatehouse, Greensboro Emily G. Grogan, Pinnacle Jim and Jennie Hallsey, Fleetwood Alan Householder, Sevierville James W. Mangum, Raleigh L.P. McElroy, Waynesville Glenn McLeroy, Charlotte Howard Pate, Jr., Spring Lake Allen Poole, Manteo Kenneth and Elizabeth Schapira, Arden Edward Seltzer, Marion James L. Spencer, III, Pisgah Forest Dave Whitlow Havelock Billy & Deborah Williams.

Three-Year Members Mary V. Alford, Highlands

Hickory

George Andrews, AntiGravityGear, Wilmington Lee and Lois Barry, Shelby Dilys Bowman and Will Mitchell, Chapel Hill William J. Bretz, Weaverville Tom and Nancy Burgiss, Thistle Meadow Winery, Laurel Springs Kenneth and Carol Deal, Asheville John French, Raleigh Robert M. Getchell, Goldsboro Elizabeth King, Cary Johnny & Carleen Massey, Garner Richard McDowell, Raleigh Henry and Kathryn Nelson, Maryville George Rawlins, Reidsville David Royster, Charlotte Gregory Scott, Raleigh Vernon C. Tetter, North State Services, Washington Dolores S. Ussery, Raleigh Ronald Walker, Atlanta Michael Willett, Raleigh

Two-Year Members

Anonymous Danielle and Leonard Bernstein. Asheville Paul Black, Huntsville Piet Bodenhorst, Asheville Richard Bostic, Raleigh Clint Burton, Carolina Specialites, Winston-Salem Gordon and Jean Coleman. Wilmington David de Hart, Raleigh Michael L. Devall, Franklinton Thomas Dillon and Grace Mauney, Winston-Salem Elizabeth M. Dixon, Washington, DC Kate Dixon and Dan Wilkinson, Raleigh Les Evans, Raleigh Gordon and Bobby Ferguson, Chapel Hill Broaddus Fitzpatrick, Roanoke Richard E. Gainer, Winston-Salem Robert Glenn, Jr., Durham Doris Hammett, Asheville

David C. Harper, Youngsville Richard Hostelley, Stanley John Huber, Cornelius J. Scott Kanich, Chapel Hill W. Phil Kanoy, Thomasville George and Leslie Kennedy, Apex Carolyn B. Kiger, Walnut Cove David and Susan Lennox, Stone Mountain Margaret Lillard, Raleigh Gerald Mackle, New Bern Rodney McDonald, Durham Jack C. McVey, Pinehurst Steven Mierisch, Clemmons Charles F. Moeller, Morganton Alice S. Monk, Mocksville Margaret J. Newbold, Garner Ken Parker, Wake Forest Bill Pruehaner, Ararat Ray Raymer, Statesville David B. Rittlinger, Wake Forest William Ross, Chapel Hill Darren Schwartz, Winston-Salem Boyce R. Staton, Erwin lames B. Suiter Carrboro Matthew Terribile, Raleigh B and Martha Townes, IV. Roomer Thomas and Janis Wade, Durham Michael G. Wenkstern, Martinsville Shawn Williams, Chapel Hill

One-Year Members

Tom Anderson, Garner

Sharon Anderson, Pfafftown

Garland & Charlene Askew,

Anonymous

Raleigh Tim & Michele Avdlett. Elizabeth City Tammie Badarak, Apex Bes Baldwin, Durham Jerry Barker, Raleigh Sindy and Brad Barker. Chanel Hill Kenneth B. Barnhill, Pfafftown Karen & Ine Bearden Raleigh John Benson, Rodanthe Donald B. Bergey, Winston-Salem John F. Blair Publisher, Winston-Salem David Bland Cary Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Winston-Salem Audrey J. Booth, Chapel Hill Bill Borden, Raleigh Terry Bostian, Raleigh Blair Bowers, Chapel Hill Susan Bowers, Raleigh James T. Bowles, MD, Cullowhee Jackson A. Branch, N. Wilkesboro Jeff Branin, Wake Forest Charles L. Braswell, Jr., Clayton Lynne Bresler, Chapel Hill Buffy Bailey Burge, Bailey Family Foundation, Fletcher Samuel & Janet Burgiss, Knoxville Wendell Burton, Clemmons Drywall Company, Clemmons Ken Canter, Wilkesboro Margaret & Stephen Chandler, Chapel Hill John C. Clamp, Durham William R. Cocke, Chapel Hill Bronwyn Cole Bryant Cole, Garrison Cole, Raleigh Edna Collins Durham Lenwood Collins, Greensboro Joe Cook, Winston-Salem David Craft, Greensboro Crawford Crenshaw, Raleigh Carolyn Crump, Carrboro Steve Cummings, Reidsville James Davenport, Asheville

Karl Gottschalk, Durham L.C. Green, Apex Archie P. Gupton, Raleigh Wilbur Gurganus, Jacksonville Eric & Kathy Gustaveson, Boone Mark & Martha Gustaveson. Greenshoro Norman and Nancy Gustaveson, Chanel Hill Ozzie Hackett, Jr., Raleigh Mary Hagan, Fayetteville Shannon R. Hardy, Knightdale Alfredia Harris Raleigh James E. & Marjorie P. Haynes, Rockingham Richard L. Hibbits, Egret Inc., Raleigh Helen Holbrook, Havelock Bill Holman and Stephanie Bass, Raleigh Alice & George Horton, Durham Anita Howell, Chapel Hill Ray Huger and Beth McKee-Huger, Greensboro Marianne Jacobi Peter & Sandra Jacobi, Durham Jacob Jaskolka, Raleigh Jennifer Jaskolka, Raleigh John R. Jaskolka, Raleigh Cara Johnson, Durham Johnson Subaru, Cary James Johnson, Raleigh Robert Johnson, Statesville Randy Jones and Marcia Lieber, Raleigh William and Mary Joslin, Raleigh Philip and Emily Keel, Robersonville Arthur Kelley, Raleigh J. Edwin King, Pittsboro Douglas Kline, Apex Jay Lamm, Knightdale John Lanman, Blowing Rock Wendy Lapish and John Beck, Anex Joe Layton and Sarah Roholt, Raleigh Avden & Betty Lee, Clayton Marge Anders Limbert and Thomas Limbert, Chapel Hill Simon Lobdell, Moncure John Manuel, Durham JoEllen Mason, Durham Michael K. Mavretic, Raleigh Margaret McCann, Chapel Hill Benjamin McFalls, Boone Palmer & JP McIntyre, Greensboro David W. McPherson, Mebane Dr. Houck M. Medford, Winston-Salem Kenneth Mitchell, Durham Sandra Moffitt, Claremont Donald Moll, Roxboro Eric Motzno, Raleigh Mitzi C. Moye, Maury Barbara Oslund, Pittsboro Harry Oxnard, Chapel Hill Maurita Paprocki, Durham Margaret Parker, Chapel Hill Lucia Peel, Williamston

Mike Dayton, Raleigh

Nancie Deckard, Raleigh

James Delark, Charlotte

Will & Donna Farmer,

Wake Forest

Benjamin Dixon, London, UK

Mr. Chris Duggan, Charlotte

Thomas J. Fineco, New Bern

Janet C. Fortune, Greensboro

Frank and Carole Gailor, Raleigh

William Flournoy, Raleigh

Nancy D. Gill, Raleigh

John Goebel, Durham

Research Triangle Park

GlaxoSmithKline,

Christopher Ferguson, Charlotte

Lloyd A. Dosser, Burlington

Jackie Auzias de Turenne, Garner

Allmuth Perzel, Glendale Springs Cheryl A. Peterson, Cary Phil Piaski, Claremont J. Greg Poole, Jr., Raleigh Restoration Systems, Raleigh John Reavill, Wilkesboro David G. Rice, Winston-Salem Kathy Richey Family, New Bern Margaret Rose, Greensboro Mary Rulli, Archdale William W. Sadler, New Bern Carolyn Sakowski, Winston-Salem Steven M. Schewel and Lao Rubert, Durham Mr. and Mrs. Peter Schutz, New Bern Mr. and Mrs. Robert Segal, High Point Robert & Pearl Seymour, Chapel Hill Jon Shaw, Greenville Rich Shaw and Holly Reid, Hillsborough Gudrun and Peter Sieffert, Middletown Robert and Jenny Simchock, Durham Steve & Beth Sipple, Cary Pearson Stewart, Chapel Hill Brenda Summers, Raleigh Phil Sweigart, Durham Helen Tapper, Chapel Hill Tim Toben, Chapel Hill Kevin A. Tutor, Tutor Jewelry Repair, Erwin David & Linda Walker, Fairview Rebecca Wallling, Hamburg David Warwick, Pollocksville Dale Wiik, Milliken & Company, Greenville Doug Willard, McLeansville Rosemarie Williams, Greensboro Jan Willis, Morehead City John Willis, Hillsborough Albert Woelfle, Wake Forest R. Peyton Woodson, Raleigh Lynn Worth, Sparta Carter Worthy, Raleigh Smedes and Rosemary York, Raleigh

VOLUNTEERS WHO DONATED MORE THAN 75 HOURS OF TRAIL WORK

Bob Benner Don Bergey David Bland Jeff Brewer Tom Dillon Allen de Hart John French Jim Hallsey Peter Jacobi John Jaskolka Steven Joines Randy Jones Arthur Kelley John Lanman Steven Mierisch Eric Motzno Phil Piaski **Gregory Scott** Dwayne Stutzman Jim Suiter "B" Townes Chris Underhill Don Walton Dave Whitlow Aaron Williams Shawn Williams Bruce Wisely

DIRECTORS January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008 Jeff D. Brewer, President Raleigh Jim Hallsey, Vice President Fleetwood Elizabeth King, Secretary Cary Allen de Hart, Treasurer and **Project Director** Louisburg Crawford Crenshaw Raleigh Bob Benner Morganton Emily Grogan Pinnacle John Jaskolka New Bern Steven Joines Sparta Bill Sadler New Bern Bruce Wisely Raleigh

BOARD OF

STAFF

Kate Dixon **Executive Director**

Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail was founded in 1997 to bring together communities and volunteers to build a simple footpath connecting the state's natural treasures for the enjoyment and education of people.

PO Box 10431 Raleigh, NC 27605 919-698-9024 www.ncmst.org

