



Progress and Plans

Report from
Executive Director

17th Annual Meeting

February 7, 2015

Elon University



Thanks to our annual
meeting sponsors!

You!



1,150 miles from the mountains...



Adam Warwick, On Shortoff Mountain overlooking Linville Gorge

to the sea.



Danny Bernstein, Sharon on the Beach

MST travelers experience wildness...



*Matt Mutel, Relaxing at lunch
after a long climb near Mt.
Mitchell 2008*



Wildlife...

*Jim Hallsey, Green Tree frog
on MST Sign*



Small towns in the West...



Downtown Sylva NC

and small
towns in
the East...



*Train depot in
downtown
Burgaw on
Osgood
Canal
Greenway*

Historic sites...

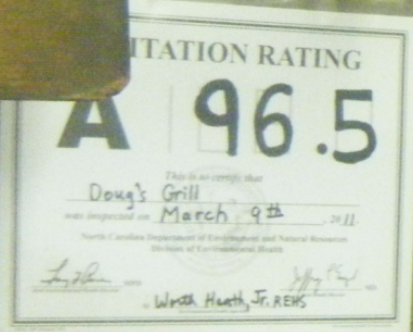


NC Culture, Bentonville Battle reenactment.

Places to learn about nature & history...



And
people
who call
North
Carolina
home.



**THIS IS NOT
BURGER KING
YOU DON'T GET IT
YOUR WAY.
YOU TAKE IT MY WAY,
OR YOU DON'T GET
THE DAMN THING.**



*Lora Arrington,
Doug's Grocery &
Grill.*

**The MST is primarily a
footpath built and
maintained by volunteers**



2011

Margaret Lillard, Volunteers at Falls Lake.

It follows back roads to connect trail segments.



Glenn Strouhal, Road in Coastal Plain.



**The route goes through 37
counties and 41 towns.**

Our Vision



The MST as one of the great trails of the world - a place for quiet enjoyment, experiencing NC nature and culture, and sharing with friends.



*Sunset on the MST, Tyler Dishmon; Scouts Cross Lost Cove Creek, Bruce Kolkebeck;
Lunch Hour at the Bull Thistle Café, David Fairall*

Most people on the MST will be day-hikers or weekend travelers out to explore new parts of North Carolina...



Official White House Photo of Day.

**And thousands will complete
the inspiring, challenging trek
across the state each year.**



Charlie Peek, Trevor and Tennille 10 miles from Jockey's Ridge

Exciting Progress

- ❖ **150 miles moved from road to trail since 2008**
- ❖ **Increases in**
 - Visibility
 - Number of hikers
 - Individual and corporate support
 - Interest from state and local governments
- ❖ **Strong, effective volunteer corps – More than 29,000 hours in 2014**

Obstacles to Achieving our Vision

- ❖ **People don't know where the MST is**
- ❖ **People think it isn't "complete"**
- ❖ **Logistics difficult**
 - Finding the trail
 - Camping/lodging
 - Shuttles for one-way hike

Clearing the Obstacles - FMST is working to improve

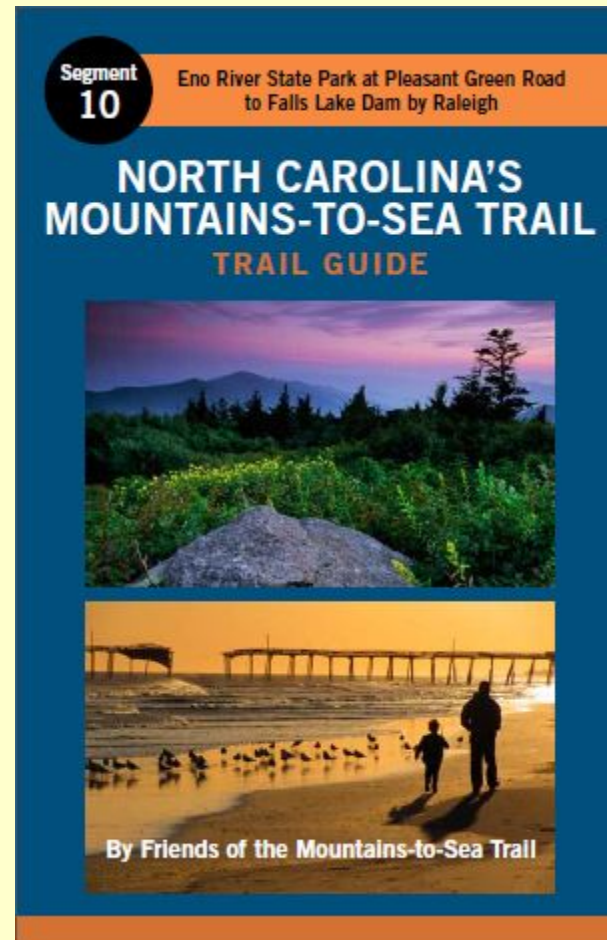
- **The trail route**
- **Hiking directions**
- **Lodging/camping**
- **Signs**
- **State and local support for trail**

Improving the trail route

- **FMST volunteers maintain 530 miles**
- **New trail built in 2014 near**
 - **Waynesville**
 - **Burnsville**
 - **Elkin**
 - **Burlington**
 - **Hillsborough**
- **Two new camping areas at Falls Lake**
- **Coastal Crescent Trail provides new hiking option in Coastal Plain**

Up-to-date hiking directions

FMST
is
writing
a new
trail
guide



Places for people to stay



- ❖ Falls Lake – 2 new camping areas!
- ❖ Progress on other campsites
 - Northern Blue Ridge Parkway (Blowing Rock to Sparta)
 - Raleigh Greenway
- ❖ Camping at churches, fire houses and private museums
- ❖ Trail guides list hotels and other lodging near trail

Improving signage

- ❖ Sign standards for **trail segments** to be included in State Park master plan for the MST
- ❖ NC Legislature directed NCDOT to develop plan for signing **road segments**

Building Local Support

❖ Trail Town Conference

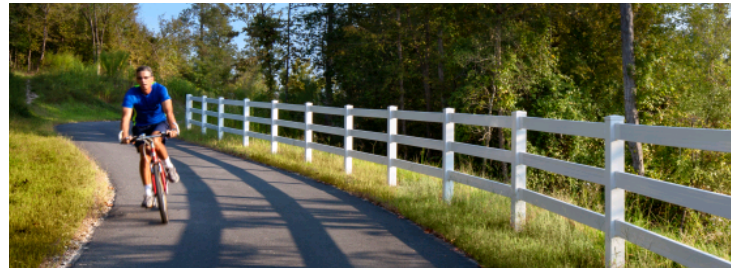
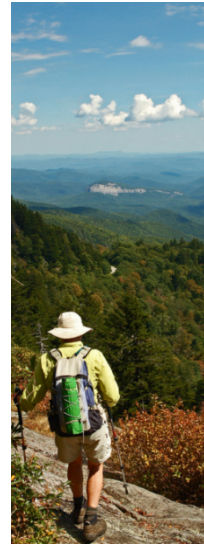


- Leaders from 21 towns & 22 counties
- Learned from other successful trails, MST communities, and state leaders
- Focused on
 - marketing trail
 - increasing lodging options
 - building local and state support

Charles Scott, Daniel White and Robbie Willis enjoy dinner at the MST Trail Town Conference. Photo by Adam Mills.

Building State Support

- ❖ NC Trails Coalition
- ❖ Engaging
 - NC DOT
 - NC Dept. of Commerce
 - NC Dept. of Cultural Resources
- ❖ State Park master plan for the MST



North Carolina Trails

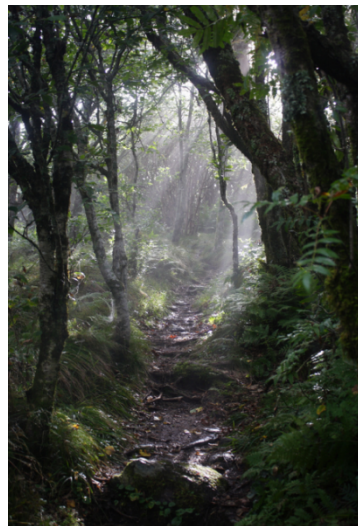
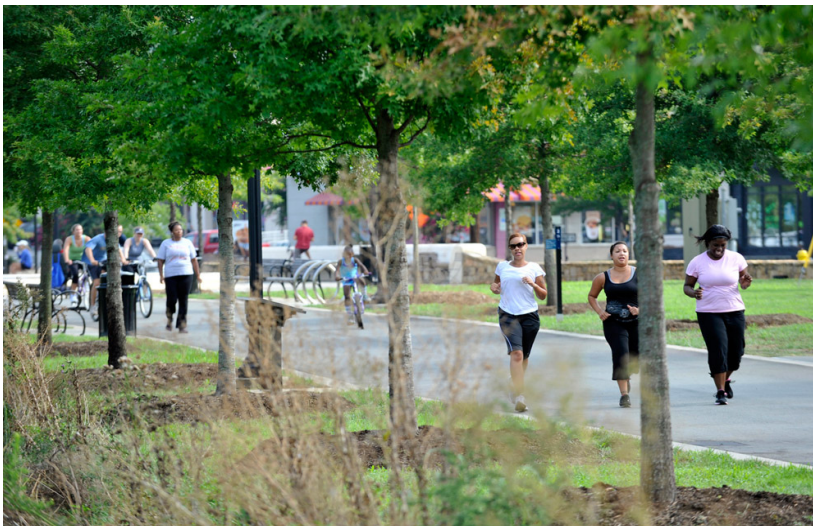
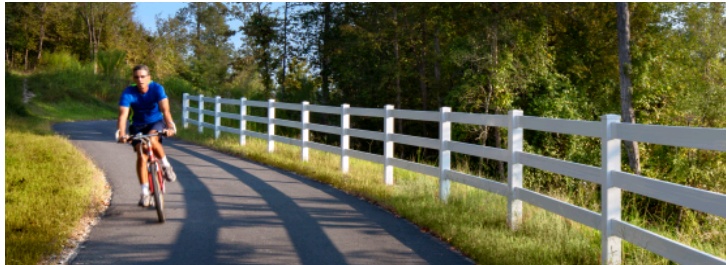
A Path Forward for Economic Growth and Job Creation in NC

North Carolina Trail Coalition (NCTC)

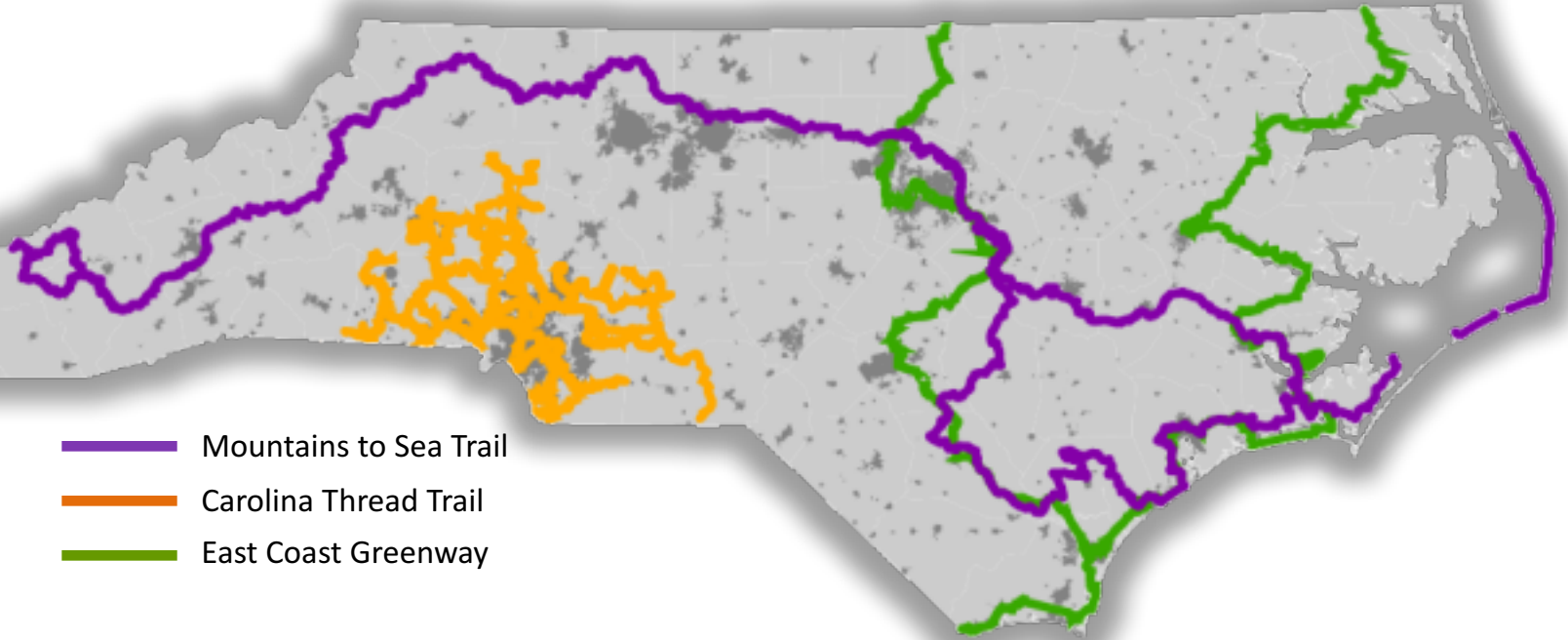
Summer 2014

Our Goal

Make North Carolina the **Great Trails State**



We Connect North Carolina



Our combined trail networks will connect over
5.4 Million residents, span more than **2,800 miles** and touch **64 counties**.



Request to Secretaries

Work with us to craft a plan that makes trails an integral part of North Carolina's economic and job creation strategy.

- Market North Carolina's Trails
- Optimize existing trail programs
 - Streamline current programs
 - Preserve funding levels
 - Prioritize trails in existing programs
- Increase state funding in 2015 for long distance trails



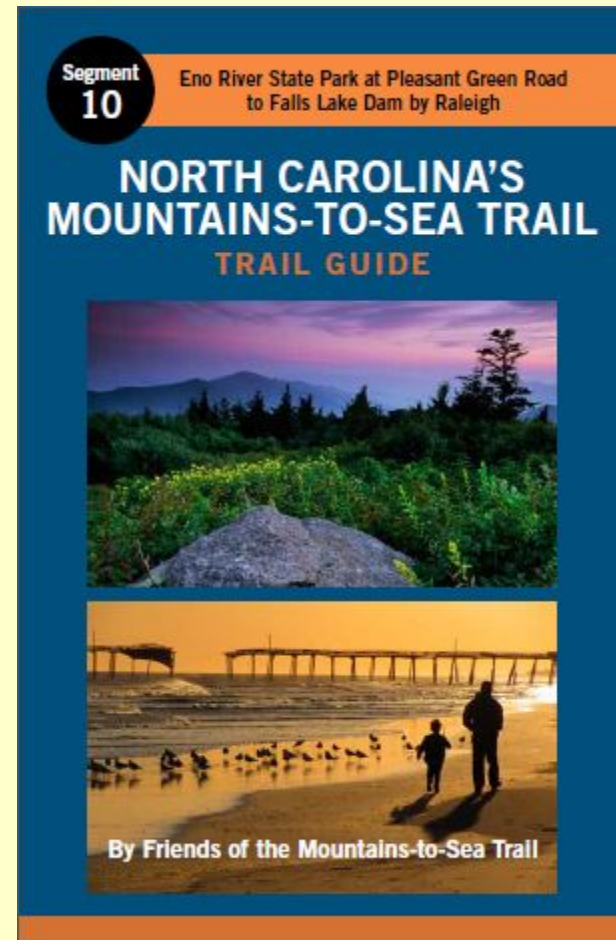
July 17, 2014

Back Row - Deputy Secretary Karin Cochran – Cultural Resources, Assistant Secretary Brad Ives - Natural Resources, Ann Hayes-Browning - Carolina Thread Trail, Niles Barnes - East Coast Greenway, Jerry Barker - Friends of Mountains-to-Sea Trail, Tony Almeida - Duke Energy, Karl Froelich - Carolina Thread Trail, Lauren Blackburn, AICP - NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Director

Front Row – Cakey Worthington - Carolina Thread Trail, Secretary Sharon Decker – Commerce, Iona Thomas, AICP - East Coast Greenway/Stewart, Secretary Aldona Wos - DHHS, Secretary Tony Tata – NCDOT, Secretary Susan Klutz – Cultural Resources, Dennis Markatos-Soriano - East Coast Greenway, Kate Dixon – Friends of Mountains-to-Sea Trail

How can you help?

- ❖ Volunteer
- ❖ Invite a friend to be an FMST member
- ❖ Hike the MST!



Questions?



Kate Dixon
Executive Director
Friends of Mountains-to-Sea Trail

kdixon@ncmst.org
919-698-9024
www.ncmst.org



Financial Picture

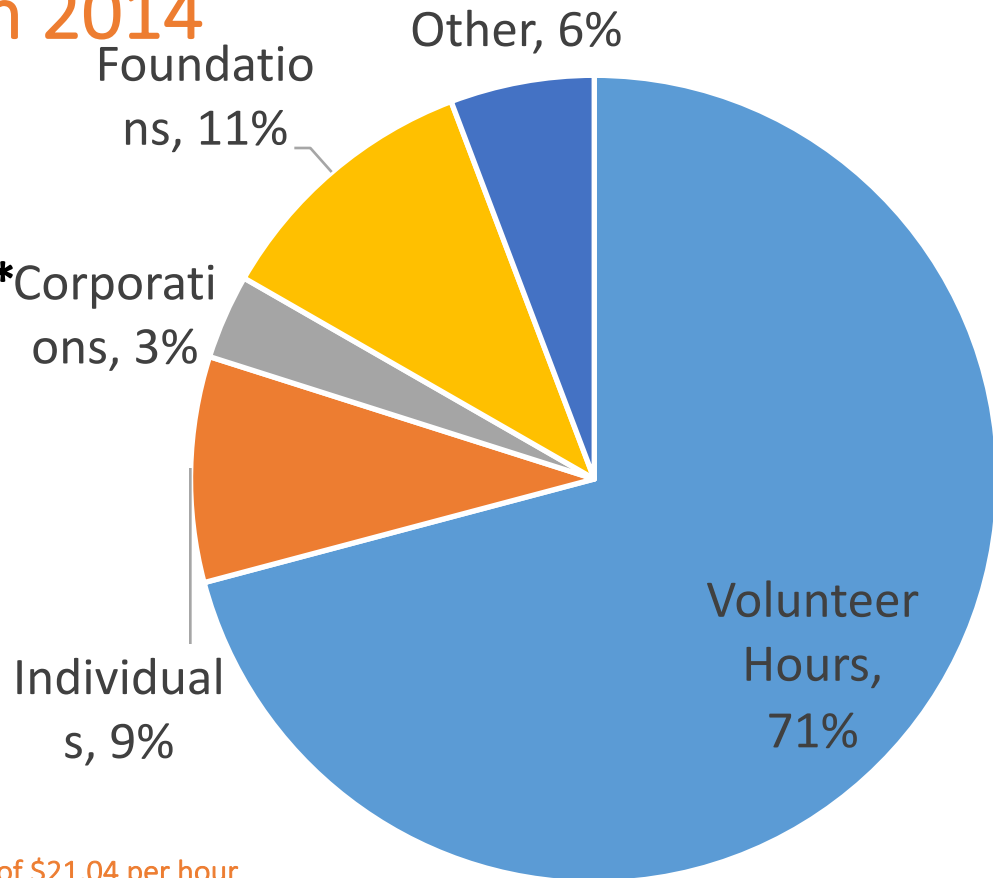
John Lanman
FMST Board Treasurer

FMST Annual Meeting
February 7, 2015

Donations received in 2014

Volunteer hours = \$615,315*
Cash = \$252,942

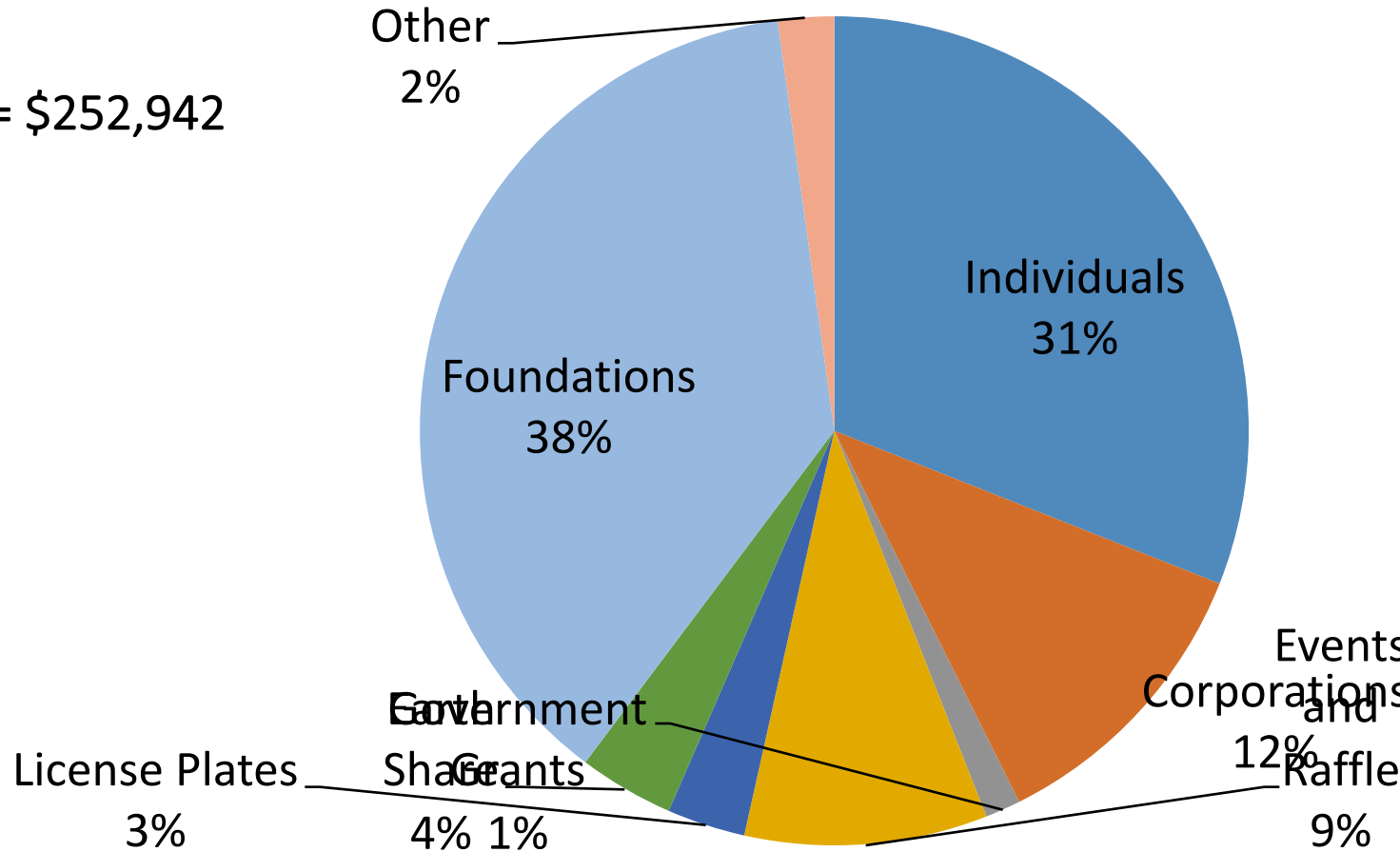
Total = \$868,257



*29,245 donated hours at State Park assigned value of \$21.04 per hour

Where cash donations came from

Cash Donations = \$252,942



Biggest corporate and foundation supporters in 2014

\$75,000

- Duke Energy Foundation

\$15,000

- Z Smith Reynolds Foundation
- Russell Foundation

\$10,000

- Great Outdoor Provision Co.
- REI

\$5,000

- Ecology Wildlife Foundation
- First Citizens Bank

\$4,500

- Bull City Running

\$3,000

- Darden Restaurants (Olive Garden, Red Lobster)
- Table Rock Ultra

\$2,500

- Walmart (Mebane, Chapel Hill, and Hillsborough)

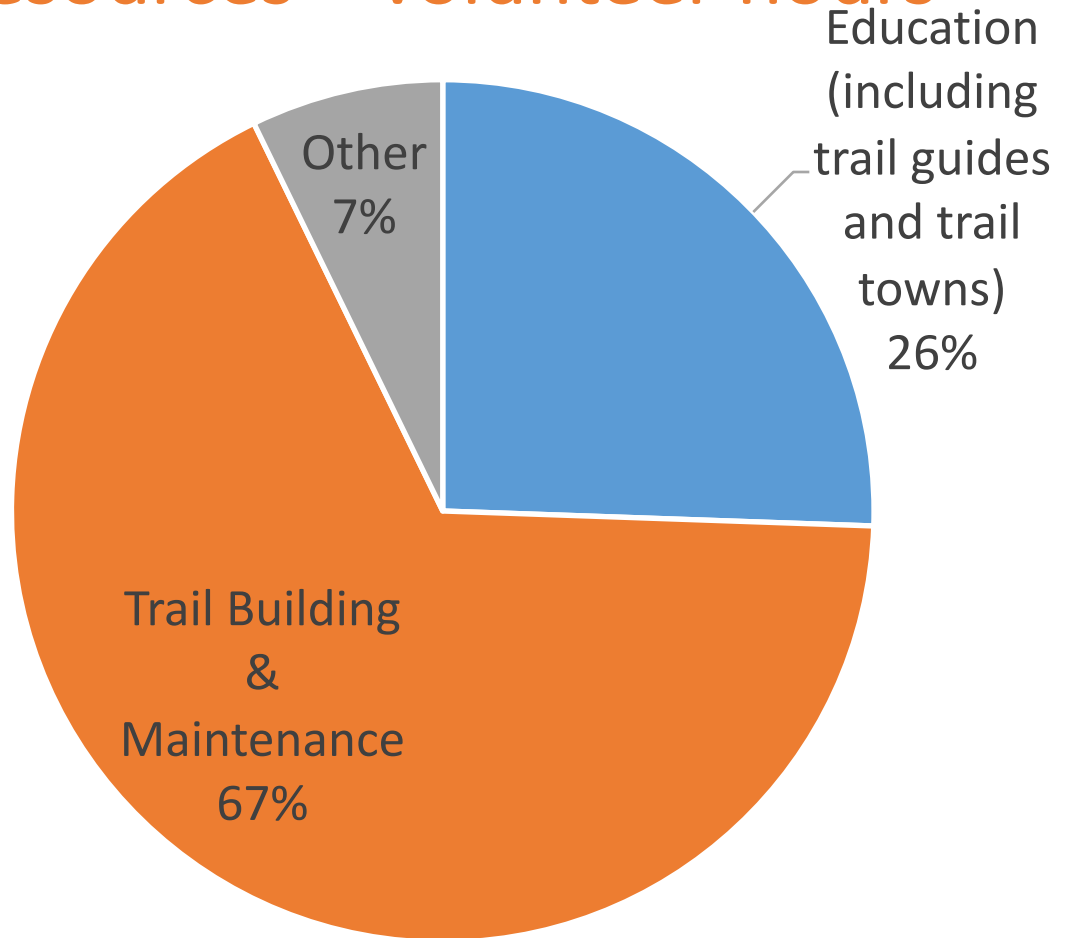
\$1,500

- Town of Hillsborough

\$1,000

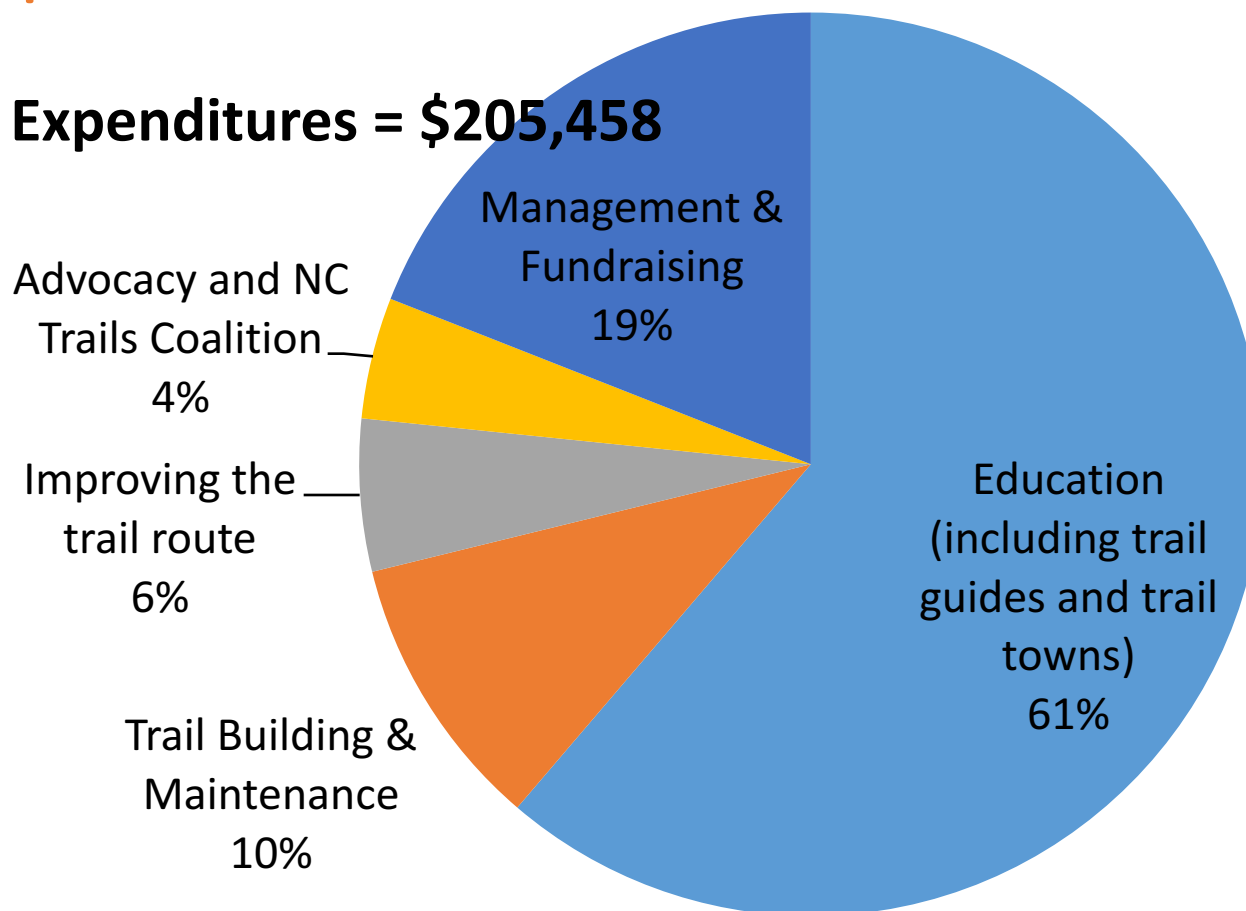
- Foliage Concepts
- Mast General Store

How we used our resources – volunteer hours and cash



How we spent our cash

2014 Total Expenditures = \$205,458



Where we stand

Cash to meet overall mission (unrestricted funds)

- \$170,989

Cash for particular projects (restricted funds)

- \$64,693 – for Coastal Crescent route
- \$12,124 – for trail guides and trail tools/materials
- \$6,225 – for trail town program
- \$650 – other

Endowment at NC Community Foundation (only income may be used)

- \$12,531 (on 9/30/2014)

Big new projects on the horizon

Bridge over Boone Fork

- Cost: \$265,000
- Grants requested from State Parks and Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

Needed tools and materials for trail maintenance statewide

- Cost: \$65,000
- Grants requested from State Parks

Advertisements in trail guides

- Goal to sell \$10,000 worth of ads to businesses that provide services to hikers along the trail route