



2018

Roanoke Valley Greenway Plan



4. GREENWAY NETWORK

4.1. PRIORITIZATION OF GREENWAYS

The 1995 Plan recommended 51 greenway routes with each route labeled as either on-road or off-road on a map. The 2007 Plan focused on the off-road routes (35) and endorsed the 2005 Bikeway Plan and 2012 Update for on-road routes. In response to public and staff input, this 2018 Plan includes off-road routes and important on-road connectors. The 2018 Plan groups routes based on their role in the greenway network and their progress to date. On any given greenway, localities will be at different stages depending on the proximity to urban areas, opportunity for coordination with other developments, funding, availability of rights-of-way, and total workload.

Roanoke River will be in Category 1 and is the primary greenway corridor, the region's #1 priority since 2007. Category 2 routes are those hard surfaced greenways that are underway and that provide arterial north-south corridors, most connecting to Roanoke River Greenway. Category 3 routes are those greenways and trails that are most important to the region, provide destinations for users, or are funded/underway within a locality. Category 4 is routes with no resources at this time in terms of land or funding. Category 5 includes routes that are largely complete and clusters of trails and destinations on other public lands that help provide connectivity for the greenway network. This 2018 Plan, like the 1995 Plan, lists on-road routes to provide connectivity, described in Chapter 5; it also recognizes the blueway corridors that were introduced in 2007 and have developed since then, complementing the greenway system.

All greenways and trails discussed in this section are listed alphabetically. The number for each route is the number used on the Greenway Plan Map inside the back cover of this document; all routes and their numbers are shown in Table 4-1.

Category 1 Route: [**Map #40: Roanoke River Greenway**](#)

The only greenway in this category is Roanoke River Greenway, the longest greenway in the regional network. Many sections of this paved greenway are built, and it is still the #1 priority, in order to focus efforts on finishing it. This east-west route has proven to be an invaluable community asset in terms of economic development, tourism, special events, recreation, health, and environmental education. Roanoke River Greenway is the backbone of the greenway network.

Category 2 Routes: These are hard surfaced greenways which will run north and south from Roanoke River Greenway to the public lands surrounding the valley. Sections of each have been built, with some started and others extended over the last ten years. These routes provide the arterials, the major side corridors of the greenway network.

The Category 2 routes are:

- Map #18: Glade Creek Greenway
- Map #22: Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail
- Map #27: Lick Run Greenway
- Map #29: Mason Creek Greenway
- Map #43: Tinker Creek Greenway

Category 3 Routes: These routes are either important to the region, destinations, funded or engineered within a locality, or progressing with significant planning and design. Some are partially, but not completely, built. They may also be trails on another agency's land, where a portion of the network is complete but additional connections are needed or planned. They can be hard surface or natural surface. Many are important for connection to the network, economic development and public health.

The Category 3 Routes are:

- Map #5: Blue Ridge Parkway Trails
- Map #7: Carvins Cove Trail Network
- Map #9: Catawba Greenway
- Map #12: Daleville Greenway
- Map #13: Eagle Rock Greenway
- Map #14: Elizabeth Greenway
- Map #15: Explore Park Trail Network
- Map #16: Garden City Greenway
- Map #19: Gladetown Trail
- Map #24: Hinchee Trail
- Map #34: Murray Run Greenway
- Map #37: Poor Mountain Trails
- Map #38: Read Mountain Greenway
- Map #39: Read Mountain Trails
- Map #44: Wolf Creek Greenway

Category 4 Routes: These are other greenway projects to be addressed as opportunity and resources arise. They may be routes that localities are working on when possible or routes which have strong citizen support but no resources in terms of land or funding.

The Category 4 Routes are:

- Map #2: Back Creek Greenway
- Map #3: Barnhardt Creek Greenway
- Map #6: Carvin Creek Greenway
- Map #8: Carvins Cove Connections
- Map #11: Craig Creek Trail
- Map #17: Gish Branch Greenway
- Map #25: James River Greenway
- Map #28: Long Ridge Trail
- Map #30: Masons Cove Greenway
- Map #33: Mudlick Creek Greenway
- Map #35: National Forest Connections
- Map #36: Perimeter Trail
- Map #41: Roanoke River Greenway Extensions
- Map #42: Spring Hollow Trails

Category 5 Routes: These are existing trails and greenway projects that are substantially complete, given existing planning. They may be clusters of trails or destinations on public lands that help provide connectivity for the greenway network. While substantially complete, they will continue to require maintenance and may need improvements.

The Category 5 Routes are:

- Map #1: Appalachian Trail
- Map #4: Birding and Wildlife Trail Sites
- Map #10: City, County, and Town Park Trails
- Map #20: Green Hill Park Trails
- Map #21: Greenfield Trails

4.2.16. Garden City Greenway, Map 16, Category 3

The Garden City Greenway corridor follows Garnand Branch from the Roanoke River near the American Electric Power (AEP) substation to Garden City Recreation Center, with a potential connection to the Blue Ridge Parkway trails. Construction of this greenway was mentioned often by the public in development of the 2005 Garden City Neighborhood Plan. In 2014 Roanoke City received Safe Routes to School funding to begin the project, generally as an on-road widened sidewalk. When the roundabout at the intersection of Bennington St. and Rt. 116 was built, a path connecting from Garden City Boulevard to Roanoke River Greenway was included. In 2016 pedestrian crossings to the trail segment built with the roundabout and a bridge across Garnand Branch were installed at the Riverland Road/Garden City Boulevard stoplight; wide sidewalks were included when the corner property was developed. In January 2018 construction began on the lower off-road portion of the greenway, utilizing properties purchased with flood mitigation funds. This greenway is a major improvement to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities of this neighborhood and, when complete, can provide important connections from Roanoke River Greenway through the neighborhood to the trail networks of Mill Mountain Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway.



Garden City Greenway provides for safe travel through the neighborhood.

4.2.17. Gish Branch Greenway, Map #17, Category 4

Gish Branch is a tributary of Mason Creek, and the corridor includes several historic structures related to the Valley Railroad. This greenway could link Salem neighborhoods to the Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail and the Exit 140 Park-n-Ride.

4.2.18. Glade Creek Greenway, Map #18, Category 2

Glade Creek is a tributary of Tinker Creek, with headwaters in eastern Roanoke and Botetourt Counties near US 460. The floodway for the creek is quite wide, and numerous homes in the Town of Vinton were lost during the flood of 1985. For many years corporate sponsor Orvis, Roanoke County, and other partners have worked on various ways to protect the creek from sedimentation and erosion and to improve fish habitat. In 2017 the Town completed construction of the first section of this greenway from Tinker Creek at Virginia Avenue to Walnut Avenue. The Town is designing the next section from Walnut to Gus Nicks Boulevard, through Gearhart Park, in 2018, with expected construction in 2018-19, and is including the greenway in plans for redevelopment of Gish's Mill. From there the projected alignment along the creek will include a difficult crossing under a Norfolk and Southern trestle, where the greenway will enter Roanoke County's Vinyard Park. Beyond Vinyard Park the greenway could connect to developments in the City of Roanoke or to the Blue Ridge Parkway near Stewarts Knob. The portion in Vinyard Park is a priority for Roanoke County in its Parks master plan.



The first section of Glade Creek Greenway was completed in 2017.

4.2.35. National Forest Connections, Map # 35, Category 4

With the inclusion of Botetourt County, there are many miles of National Forest trails providing destination nodes for trail users. In most cases these trails are not accessible without a car, even if relatively close to communities. This route recognizes the need for such connections from communities such as Buchanan, Arcadia, Daleville, Cloverdale, and Eagle Rock. Any connections would require Forest Service approval contingent on assessment of location, environmental impacts, and sustainability.

4.2.36. Perimeter Trail, Map # 36, Category 4

The Perimeter Trail will be a multi-use trail, on and off-road, circling the Roanoke Valley and connecting existing public lands. Existing trail networks to be connected include Carvins Cove, Havens Wildlife Management Area, Green Hill Park, Spring Hollow, the Blue Ridge Parkway, Explore Park, and the Jefferson National Forest. This greenway would provide a long distance trail for hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

4.2.37. Poor Mountain Trails, Map #37, Category 3

[Poor Mountain Preserve](#) is a 933-acre site managed by the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage (Department of Conservation and Recreation) to protect the world's largest population of the globally rare piratebush. This shrub is dependent on the opportunity to entwine its roots with those of Table Mountain pine or hemlock. A small parking lot provides access from Twelve O'clock Knob Road. Pathfinders' Mid-Week Crew has assisted the Division by building the Piratebush Loop, Overlook and Canyon Trails, with the Cascade Trail built under contract. Division plans call only for these four miles of trail, but additional trails within and beyond the Preserve could provide connections to Poor Mountain Road and Harborwood Roads.

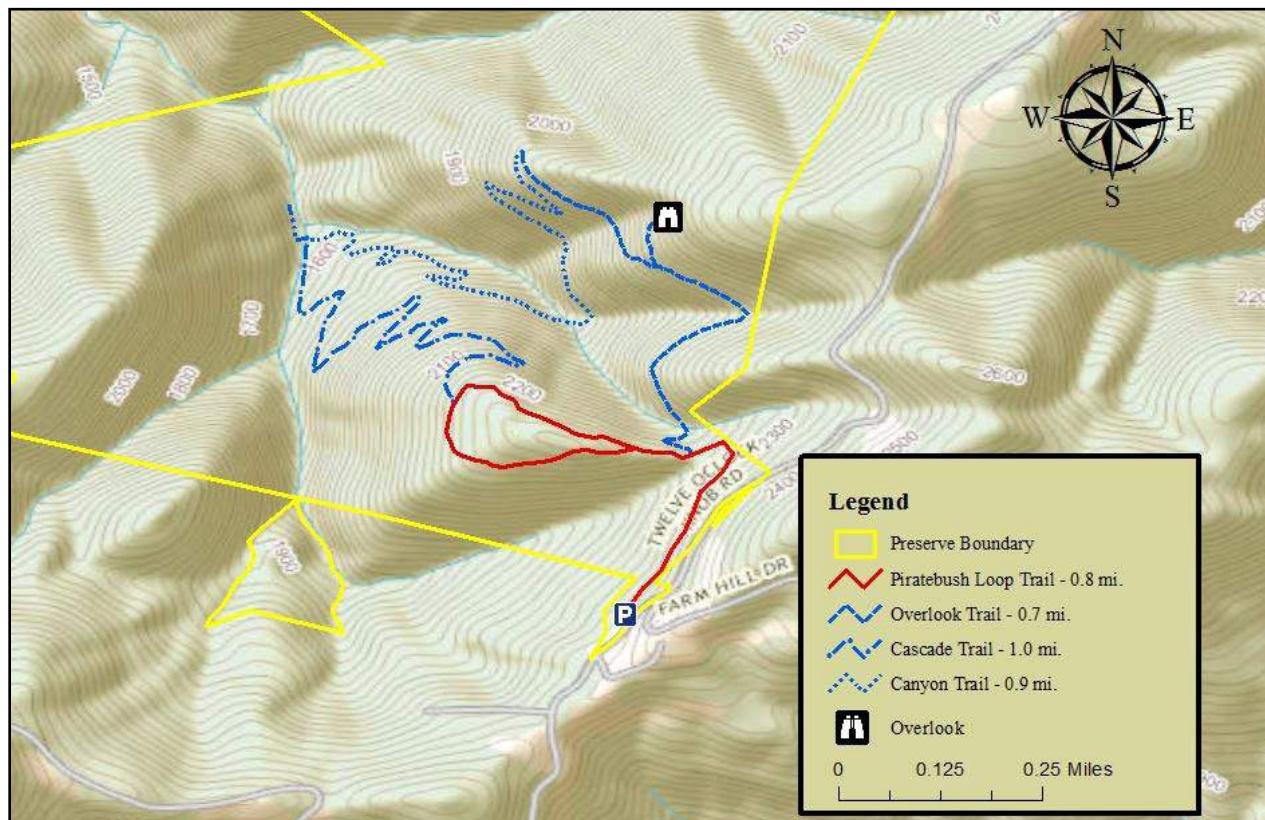


Figure 4-15: [Poor Mountain Preserve Trails](#)

4.2.38. Read Mountain Greenway, Map #38, Category 3

Read Mountain Greenway will be a connection from Tinker Creek Greenway at Mason Mill Park to Read Mountain Preserve in Roanoke County. With additional development and employment at the City of Roanoke's Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT), demand has increased for connections to nearby trail opportunities. This greenway is projected to go from Tinker Creek Greenway to businesses at RCIT, then up to the CCC Trail at Roanoke County's Preserve. In 2018, City and County staff are working on a preliminary alignment, feasibility plan, and easements for this stretch of greenway.

4.2.39. Read Mountain Trails, Map #39, Category 3

Read Mountain lies between US 460 and Old Mountain Road and is undeveloped on its upper slopes. In 2000 a grassroots group called Read Mountain Alliance was formed to protect the mountain from ridge line development. The Alliance has worked with property owners to secure easements and to explore and build trails on the mountain, with assistance from Pathfinders' Mid-Week Crew. In November 2006 a developer donated 125 acres to Roanoke County to be part of a new park and in 2008 the Read Mountain Preserve was opened to the public as a County park. In addition to trails on the mountain within the Preserve, there is opportunity for a connection to Tinker Creek Greenway and RCIT, via the Read Mountain Greenway, and to Botetourt County and ultimately the Jefferson National Forest through new trails to the north.

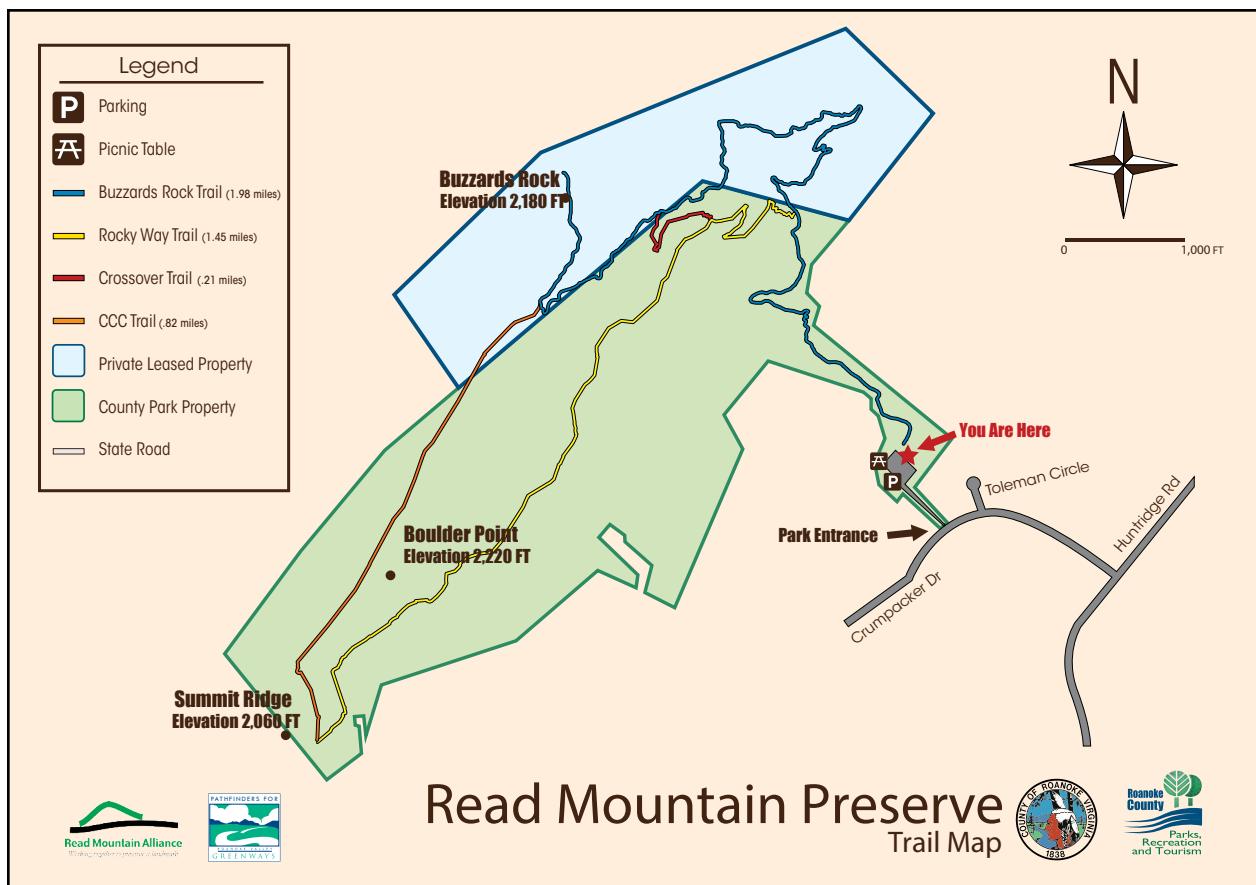
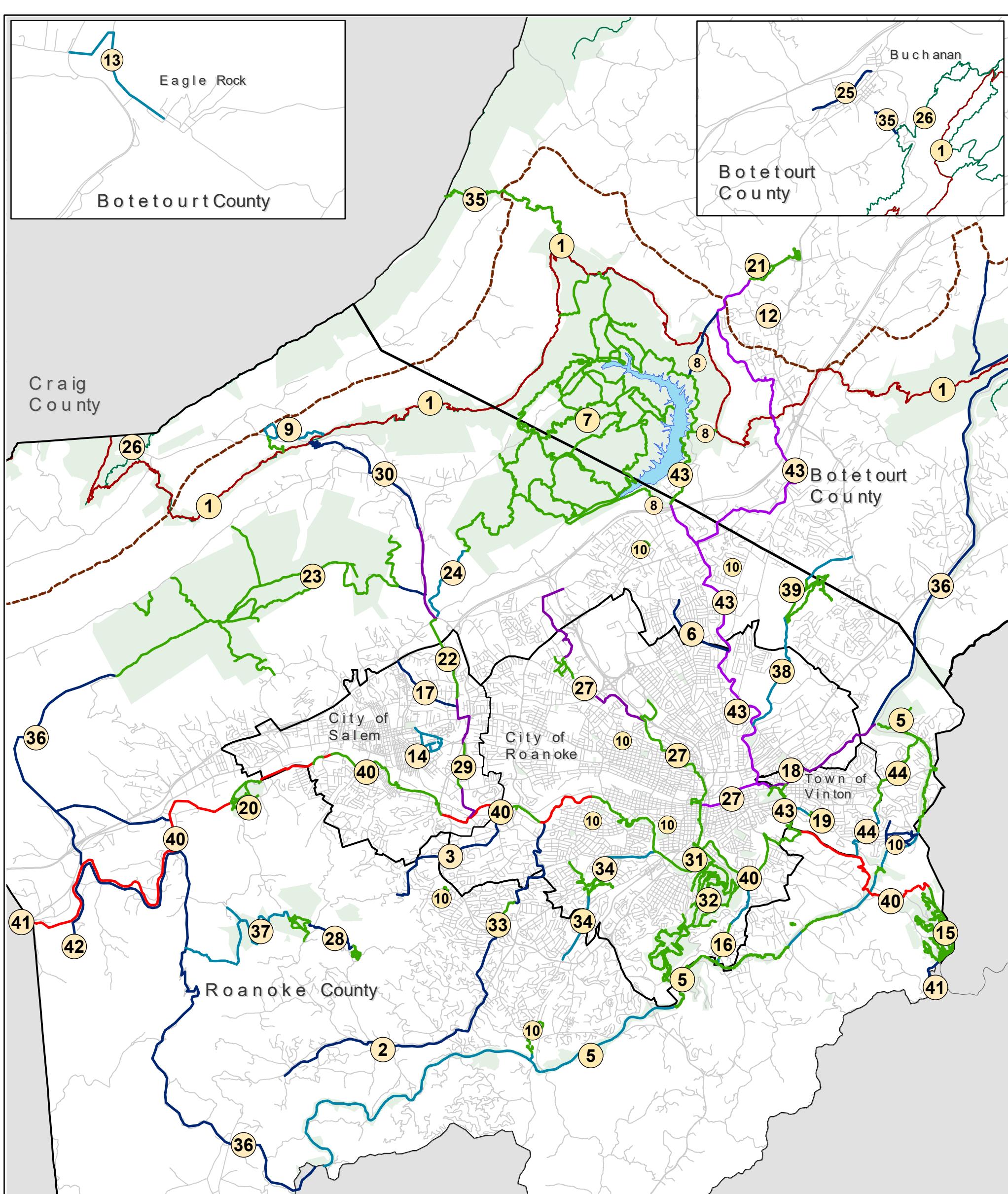


Figure 4-16: [Read Mountain Preserve Trails](#), all built by volunteers



2018 Greenway Plan Network Map

Prepared by the
REGIONALcommission

- 1 - Appalachian Trail
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*Please see Appendix E for more information about the alternative alignments for Tinker Creek and Daleville Greenways.

0 0.75 1.5 3 4.5 6 Miles