

New River State Park General Management Plan



North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Division of Parks and Recreation

Mountain Region

February 2017

I. MISSION AND PURPOSE

MISSION STATEMENT

Conservation: To protect North Carolina's natural diversity through careful selection and stewardship of state parks system lands;

Recreation: To provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities in the state parks system and throughout the state; and

Education: To encourage appreciation of North Carolina's natural and cultural heritage through diverse educational opportunities; for all citizens of and visitors to the State of North Carolina.

Our purpose: The State of North Carolina offers unique archaeological, geologic, biologic, scenic and recreational resources. These resources are part of the heritage of the people of this State. The heritage of a people should be preserved and managed by those people for their use and for the use of their visitors and descendants.

PARK PURPOSE:

New River State Park was established as a result of a lengthy preservation effort that lasted for approximately 14 years. In 1975, the N.C. General Assembly designated the 26.50-mile segment of the New River as a State Scenic River. The purpose of this designation is to protect both the scenic and natural resources of the river as well as to preserve the local communities, culture, and lifestyle of rural Ashe and Alleghany county residents. The segment was added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1976. The State of North Carolina works to preserve the significant values of the river corridor by encouraging the continuation of local agricultural uses of the land, acquiring key parcels, and advocating local land-use planning.

The mixture of the river corridor includes free-flowing water, rock outcrops, pastoral land, and active agriculture which creates scenery of national significance. The line of sight from the river surface, which offers the best views should be protected to reflect a mixture of pastoral landscapes, active agriculture, and undeveloped woodland areas. New River State Park is an essential element in the protection of these valuable scenic resources.

The New River is one of only two rivers in the country with designations as both an American Heritage River and Wild and Scenic River. Federal designation of the American Heritage River focuses on preserving the cultural history of the river.

The 26.50-mile segment of the South Fork New River is classified by the state of North Carolina as Outstanding Resource Waters due to its recreational and ecological significance, as well as its excellent water quality. Outstanding Resource Waters is a classification intended to protect unique and special waters having excellent water quality and of exceptional state or national ecological or recreational significance. To qualify, waters must be rated as having excellent water quality by the Division of Water Quality and also have an outstanding resource value. The protection of the Outstanding Resource Waters of New River is vital to the purpose of New River State Park.

The New River State Park is significant for its role in protecting a variety of high quality terrestrial and aquatic resources, including over 1,000 documented species along the river corridor. The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has designated four Significant Natural Heritage Areas and tracks 112 rare species throughout the park, 14 of which are federally-listed. Notable examples of the biodiversity of the river include 14 rare fish species, three of which are endemic to the New River; three rare amphibians, including the Eastern Hellbender, which is a federal Species of Concern and is one of the largest salamanders in the world; eight rare mollusk species, including two that are state-listed as endangered; 48 rare plant species, including three with federal listings; and 25 rare bird species.

The isolation of the New River from urban areas has helped to preserve a local culture of resourceful, creative, independent, and self-sufficient residents. The local citizens worked for the protection of the local culture as a fundamental purpose of the state and federal river designations, as well as the establishment of the state park. A purpose of New River State Park is to protect the river and preserve its associated cultural resources.

The New River area also has significant archaeological value due to its location near the intersection of three major sub-areas of the Eastern Woodlands Archaeological Area. It is estimated that sites along the river will provide information on 10,000 years of human habitation in the Appalachians.

As one of the oldest river systems in the world, the New River corridor also contains significant geologic value. The New River formed the headwaters of the ancient Teays River, which was mature by the time the Appalachian Mountains were formed. The South Fork New River flows through some of the oldest rocks in the United States – some of which are estimated at 1.1 billion years old.

The park offers access to valuable paddling, camping, fishing, and picnicking opportunities. New River State Park is also an important resource for interpretive and environmental education activities that teach the archaeological, geological, and biological significance of the area.

New River State Park was authorized as a state scenic river and developed as a state park so that its valuable scenic, biological, cultural, archaeological, geological, and recreational values could be protected. The division is charged with preserving these values and providing park experiences that promote pride in and understanding of the natural heritage of North Carolina.

II. HISTORY

The northwestern corner of North Carolina is New River country. Here, the north and south forks of the New River flow north from headwaters in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Winding more than 100 miles through forested mountains and pastoral valleys, the forks join just a few miles south of the North Carolina-Virginia line. The New River continues its unusual northward flow through southwestern Virginia and West Virginia into the Kanawha and Ohio rivers, its waters eventually reaching the Gulf of Mexico by way of the Mississippi River.

The New River is believed to be one of the oldest rivers in North America. It existed before the mountains through which it now passes and, for millions of years, its waters have followed essentially the same course. Many stretches of the New River flow through remote countryside not easily accessible by road or trail. The designated scenic segment of the river, 26.5 miles in length, includes 22 miles of the South Fork downstream to its confluence with the North Fork and 4.5 miles of the main stem of the river north to the Virginia line.

A view of the New River is a look back in time to primeval eras before man existed, to the days of Native Americans who used the waterway as an avenue for migration and trade, and to the times of early European settlers who came to farm and mine the land, and to cut the forests.

Archaeological investigations in the New River valley suggest the presence of humans in the region for at least 10,000 years. Artifacts such as arrowheads, pottery shards and stone axes indicate that the Canawhay Indian tribe occupied the valley during the pre-colonial period. The valley also was a hunting ground for bands of Creek, Shawnee and Cherokee Indians. Their hunting trails led north along the New River to the Ohio River. Rock shelters near the confluence of the river's forks were used by hunters who camped in the bottomlands. The river was a major route of travel for transient hunters, but there were no known permanent settlements in the area, perhaps due to more aggressive northern tribes nearby.

The earliest Europeans to enter the area encountered a land of wild beauty with dense forests, open meadows, and an abundance of wildlife including bison, elk, black bear, and beaver. The first European to see the river was probably Colonel Abraham Wood, who sought trade with the Native Americans in 1654. Hence, the river became known as Wood's River.

Other than the Native Americans, the only regular visitors to the region before the 1770s were hunters and trappers, men such as Daniel Boone who settled along the Yadkin River near present-day Wilkesboro. The New River was given its current name by Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas Jefferson, who visited the area in 1749 when he surveyed the North Carolina-Virginia boundary through New River country.

Efforts to preserve the scenic qualities of the New River and to keep it free from human alteration began in 1965 when the Appalachian Power Company applied for a license to dam the river and build reservoirs for water storage. Over time, opposition to the proposal arose from citizen groups, and state and federal agencies. Hearings, litigation, and legislative action followed.

In order to protect this historic river and the scenic area surrounding it, the North Carolina General Assembly, on May 26, 1975, declared the 26.50-mile stretch of the river from its confluence with Dog Creek to the Virginia state line a State Scenic River. In April, 1976, the Secretary of the Interior designated the same portion of the river as a part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. This action was reaffirmed by an act of Congress, and construction of the dam and reservoirs was prohibited. Thus, the New River was preserved and a state park established along its scenic corridor.

As of July 1, 2016, New River State Park manages 2,911 Acres

III. THEMES AND INVENTORY

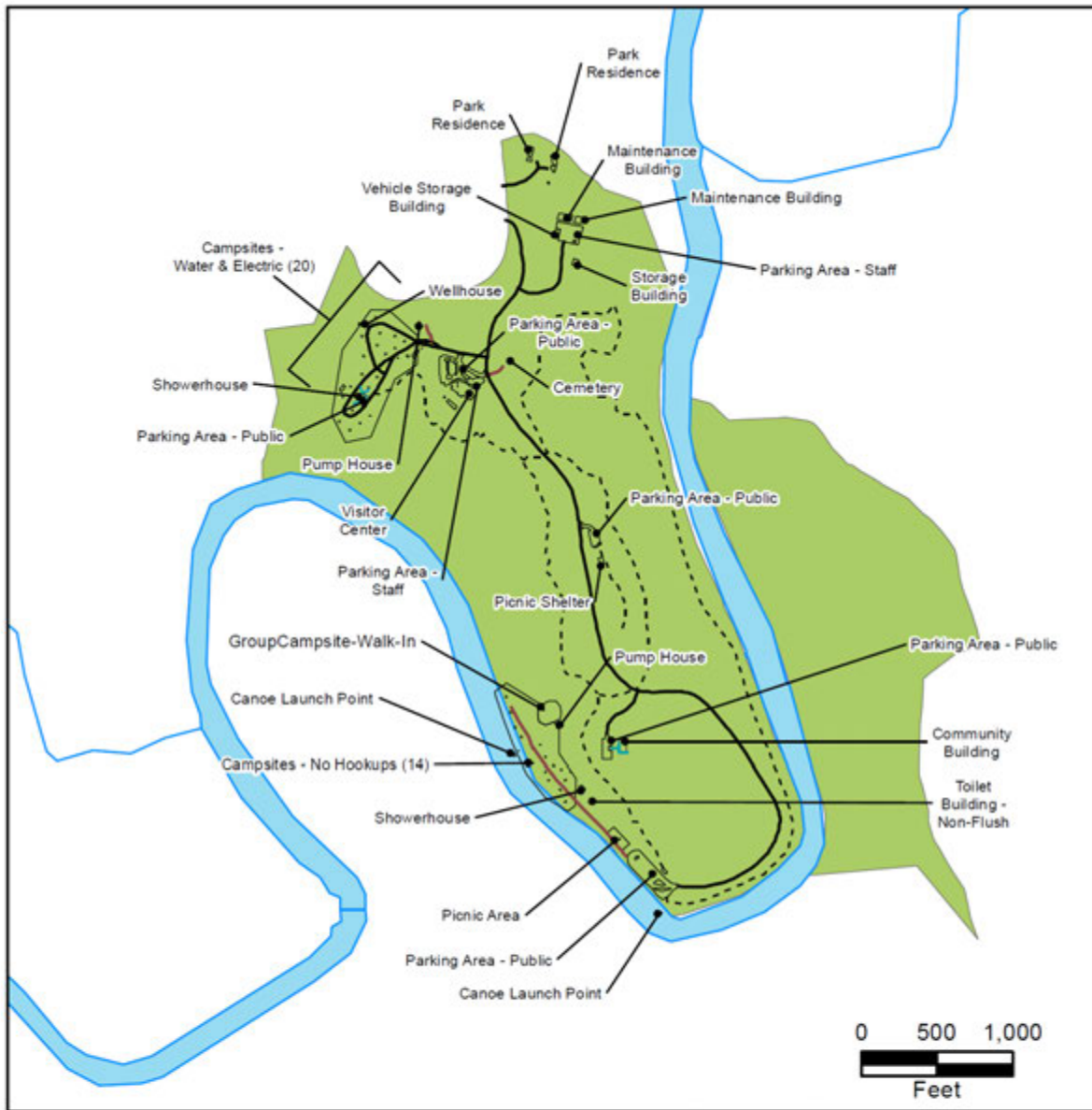
Theme Table for New River State Park

Theme Type	Theme	Significance to New River	State Parks System Representation
Archeological/Historic	Cemetery	High	Adequate
Archeological/Historic	Rural-Domestic	High	Adequate
Archeological/Historic	Transportation	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Burial/Cemetery	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Campsite/Activity Area	High	Adequate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Rock Art	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Shelter/Cave	High	Adequate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Trail/Path	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Village	High	Adequate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Cemetery	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Commercial	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Industrial	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Mills	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Public Works	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Public/Civic/Religious	High	Adequate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Rural-Domestic	High	Adequate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Transportation	High	Moderate
Biological	Low Elevation Cliffs and Rock Outcrops	High	Moderate
Biological	Montane Oak Forests	High	Adequate
Biological	Mountain Cove Forests	High	Adequate
Geological	Cliffs	High	Adequate
Geological	Fluvial Depositional Features	High	Little

Geological	Gorges, Rapids, Waterfalls	High	Adequate
Geological	Metamorphic Features	High	Adequate
Scenic	Caves/Cliffs	High	Moderate
Scenic	Forests	High	Moderate
Scenic	Gorges	High	Moderate
Scenic	Meadows/Grasslands	High	Little
Scenic	Rivers	High	Moderate
Scenic	Rock Outcrops	High	Moderate
Scenic	Scenic Vistas	High	Moderate
Scenic	Waterfalls	High	Adequate
Scenic	White Water Streams	High	Moderate

*See the System wide Plan for references to Theme and inventory terms. Themes have both actual and “potential” future needs.

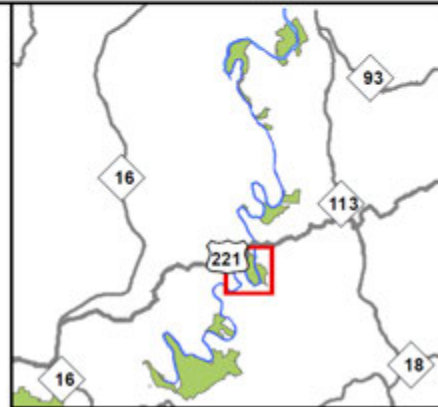
FACILITY INVENTORY-221 ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



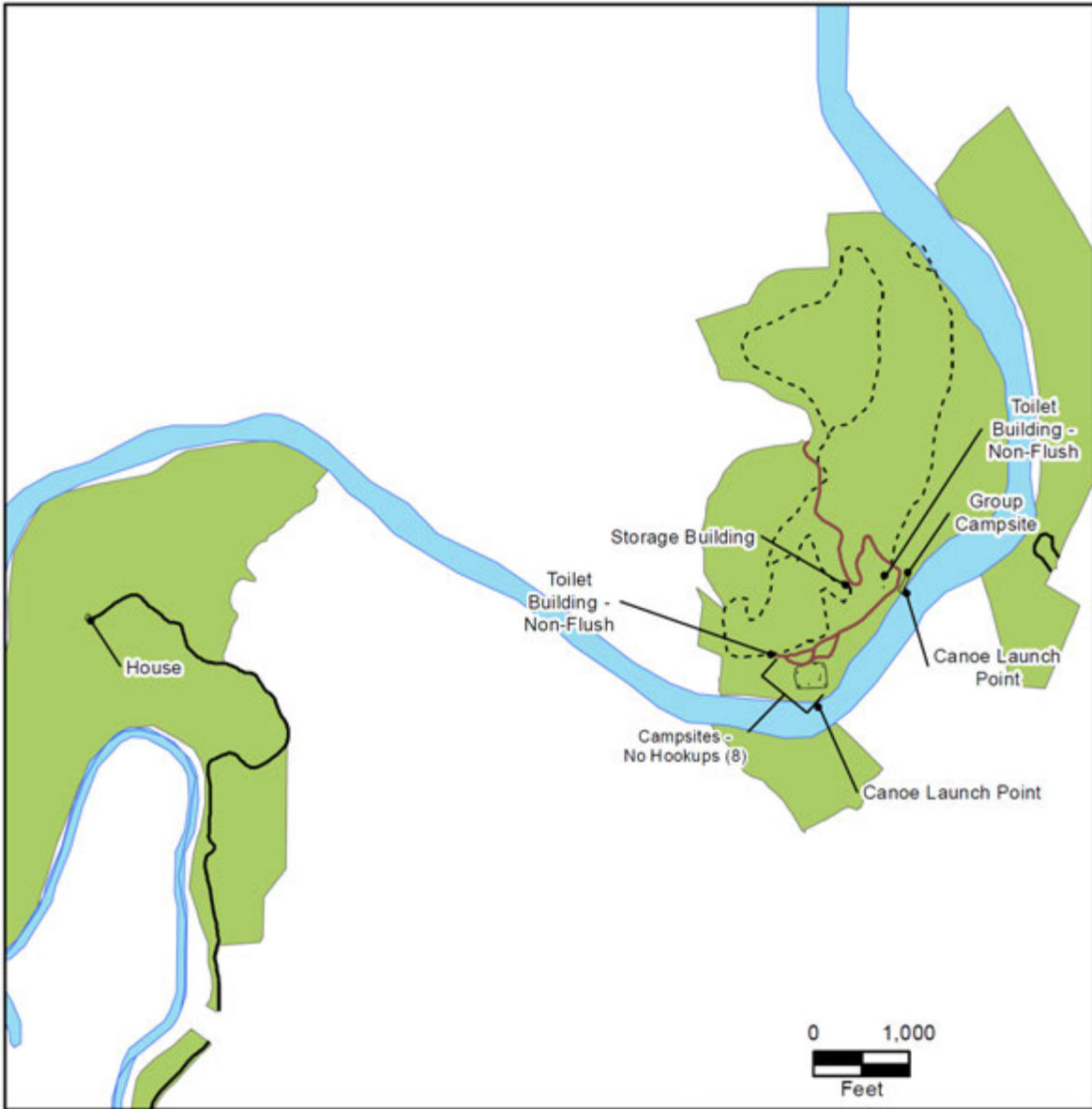
New River
 State Park
 Facility Inventory
 221 Access
 September 2016



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- - - - Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



FACILITY INVENTORY – ALLEGHANY COUNTY ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



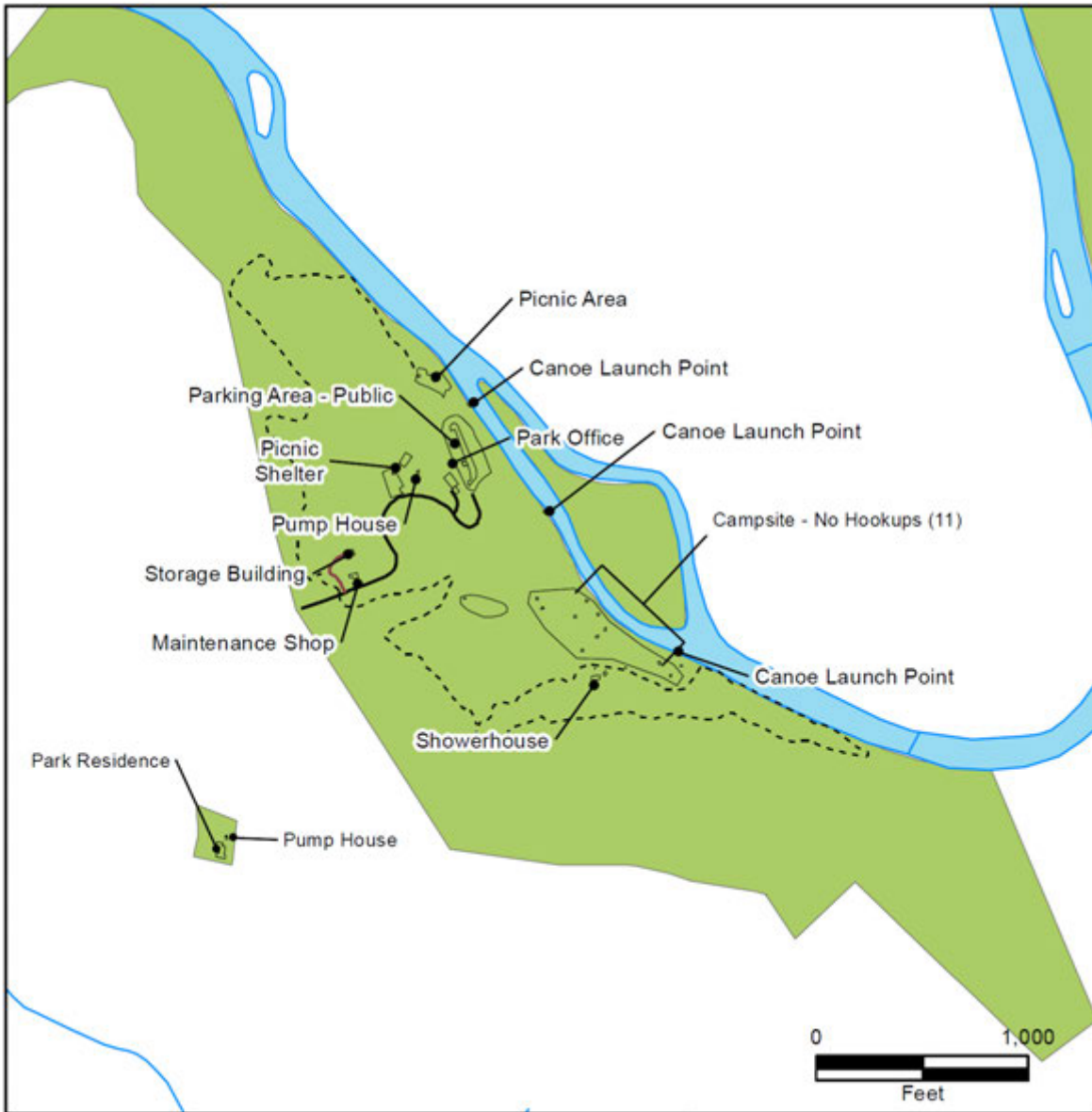
New River
 State Park
 Facility Inventory
 Alleghany County Access
 September 2016



- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



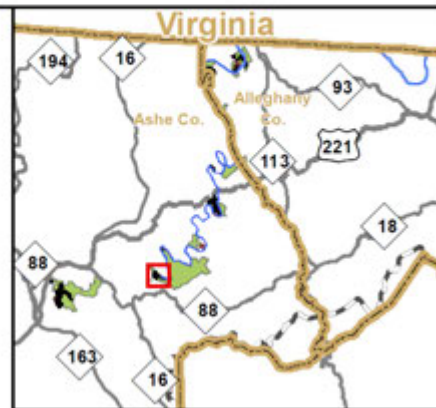
FACILITY INVENTORY - WAGNER ROAD ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



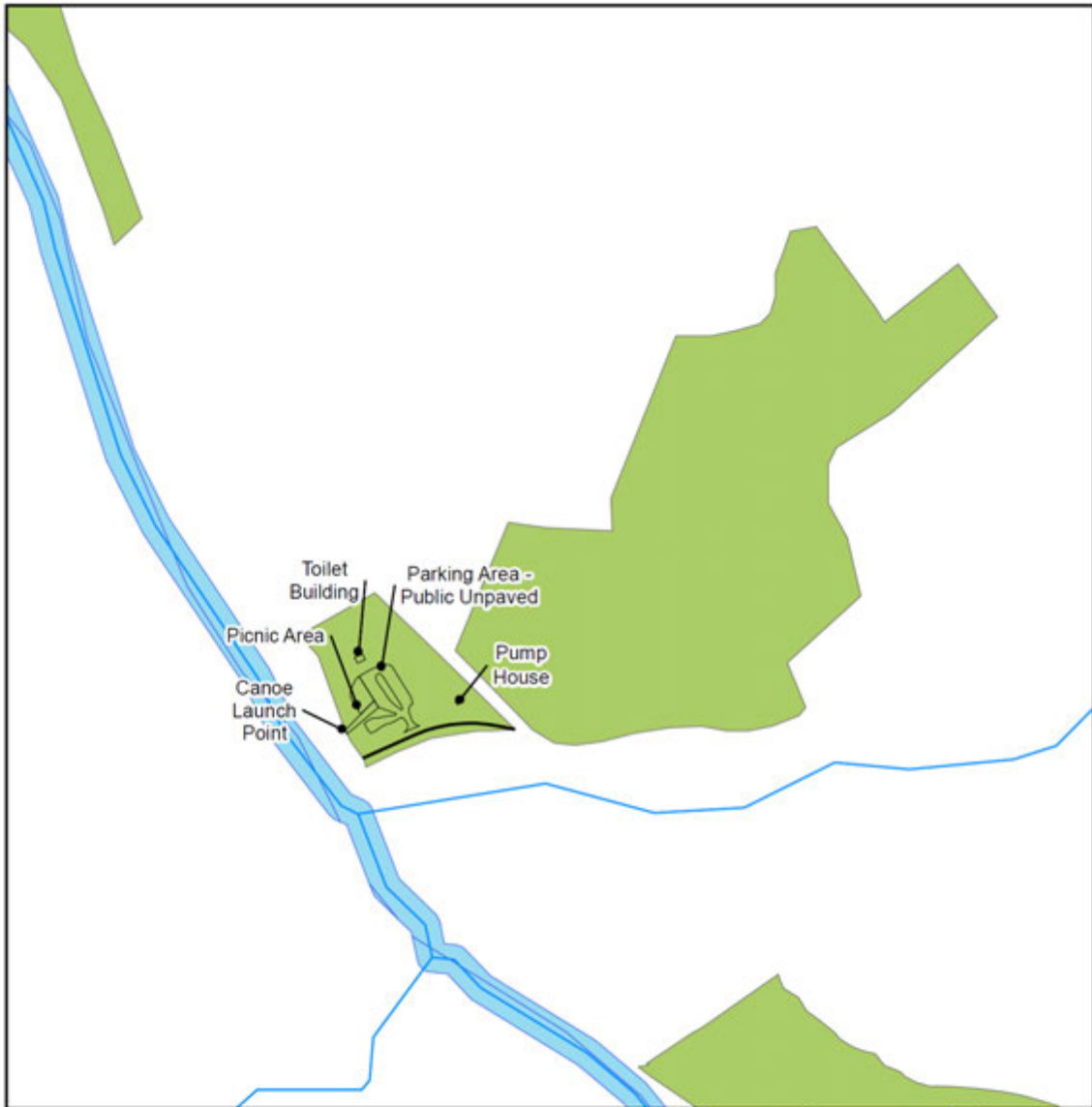
New River
 State Park
 Facility Inventory
 Wagner Road Access
 September 2016



- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



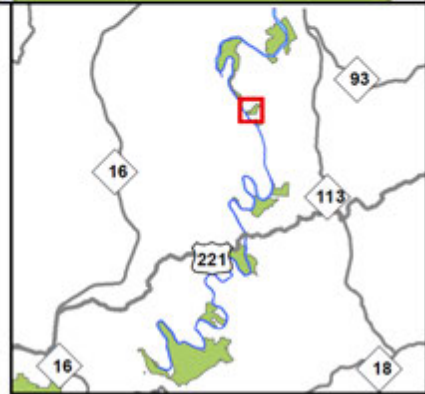
FACILITY INVENTORY – KINGS CREEK ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



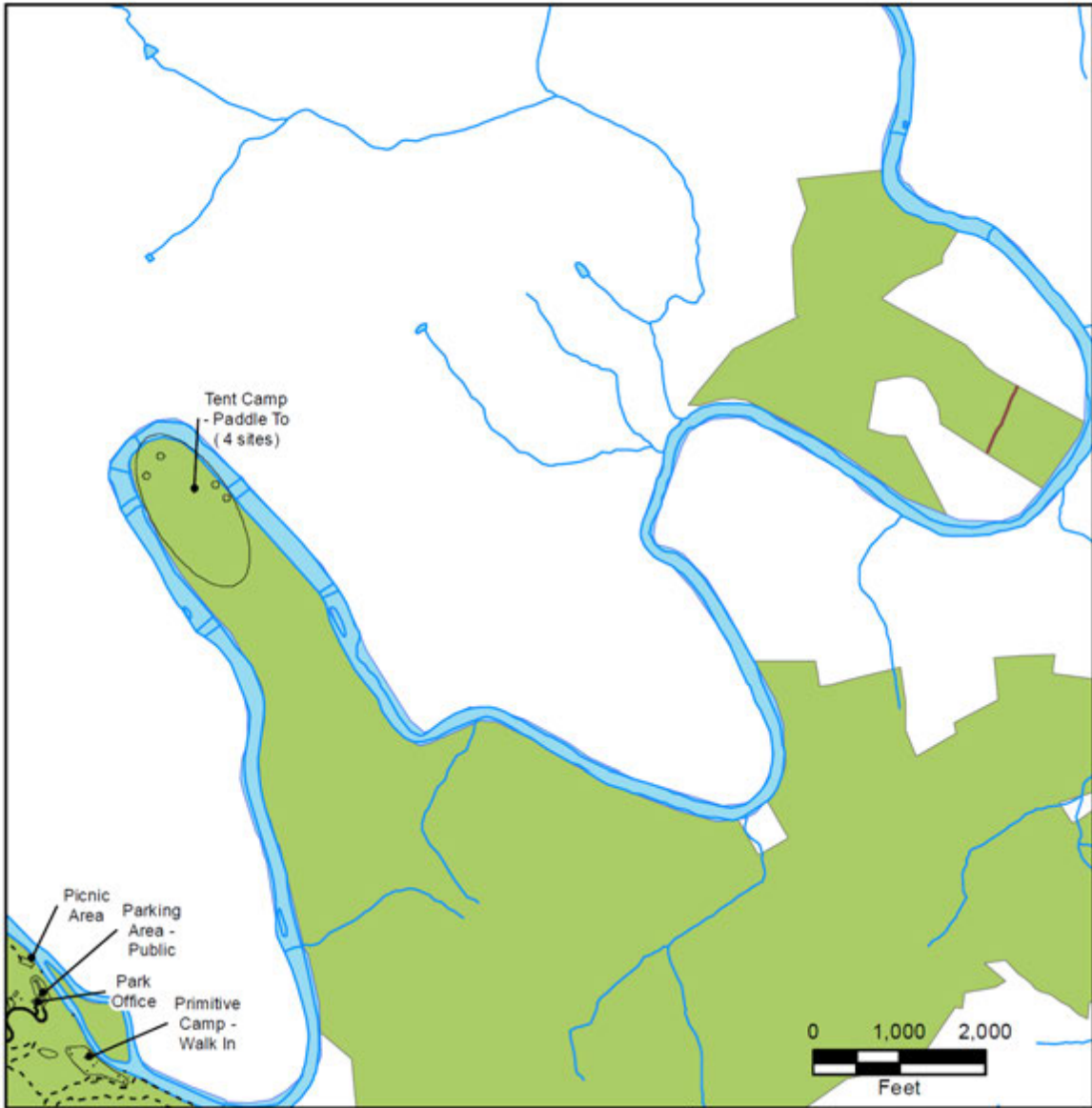
New River
 State Park
 Facility Inventory
 Kings Creek Access
 January 2016



- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



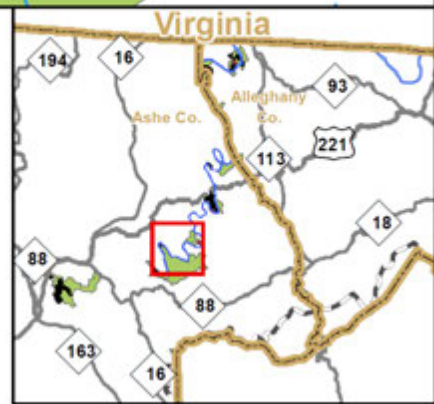
FACILITY INVENTORY - RIVER BEND AREA
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



New River State Park
Facility Inventory
 Riverbend Area
 September 2016



- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- State Parks Unit



TRAIL AND CANOE ACCESS INVENTORY
NEW RIVER STATE PARK

Hiking and Paddle Trails:

Trail Inventory	Hiking	Paddle
Campground Spur Trail	0.28	
Dogwood Trail	0.125	
Farmhouse Loop Trail	1.02	
Fern Nature Trail	0.80	
Hickory Trail	1.04	
Riverview Trail	1.30	
River Run Trail	1.40	
Road to Nowhere Trail	0.50	
Running Cedar Trail	0.96	
New River SP Totals (miles)	7.42	
South Fork Canoe Access Areas		
NC 88 Bridge		5.00
Wagoner Road Access		5.50
Gentry Road		3.00
Fulton Reeves Bridge		2.50
US 221 Access		2.00
US 221 Bridge		7.50
Kings Creek Access		5.00
Alleghany County Access		4.00
South Fork Canoe Totals (miles)		34.50

Hiking Trails:

Wagner Access:

Fern Nature Trail: This moderate 0.80-mile self-guided trail, has a small section running along the river. After it leaves the river, it goes along the side of the ridge above the river, through a second growth forest of mixed hardwoods and pines. This trail connects to the Running Cedar Trail.

Running Cedar Trail: This moderate trail gets its name from the running cedar that blankets the forest floor. It follows along the boundary of Wagoner Access and joins the Fern Nature Trail. This trail will add an additional 0.96-mile to your hike.

U.S. Hwy 221 Access:

Campground Spur Trail: This moderate 0.28- mile trail branches off the Hickory Trail and winds through the forest behind the Visitor Center and connects to the Drive-to Campground.

Dogwood Trail: This easy 0.125 -mile, turnaround trail starts near the picnic shelter. It is handicap accessible and goes to a wooden platform overlooking the river.

Hickory Trail: This moderate 1.04- mile trail begins on the east side of the park and traverses alongside of the ridge above the river. The view is mostly of the contours of the land. This trail crosses the road and follows through a forest of Montane Oak, Hickory, Mountain Laurel and Rhododendron. It connects to the Campground Spur Trail.

River Run Trail: This 1.40- mile moderate trail winds through the forest down the mountainside, past an old home site, and finishes on a grass path by the edge of the river leading to the main river access.

Alleghany Access: (canoe-in only access)

Farm House Loop Trail: This moderate 1.02- mile trail goes through open fields, Rhododendron thickets and Oak/Hickory woodlands for a beautiful view of the cliffs across the river.

Riverview Trail: This moderate 1.30- mile trail goes along the top of the ridge for a beautiful view of the river and scenic vistas.

Road to Nowhere Trail: This easy 0.50 -mile turnaround trail goes through a former agricultural field that has been seeded with pines and sycamores.

Camping: New River State Park offers four access areas that total more than 1, 650 acres. Each area provides a canoe-in primitive campground with tables and grills.

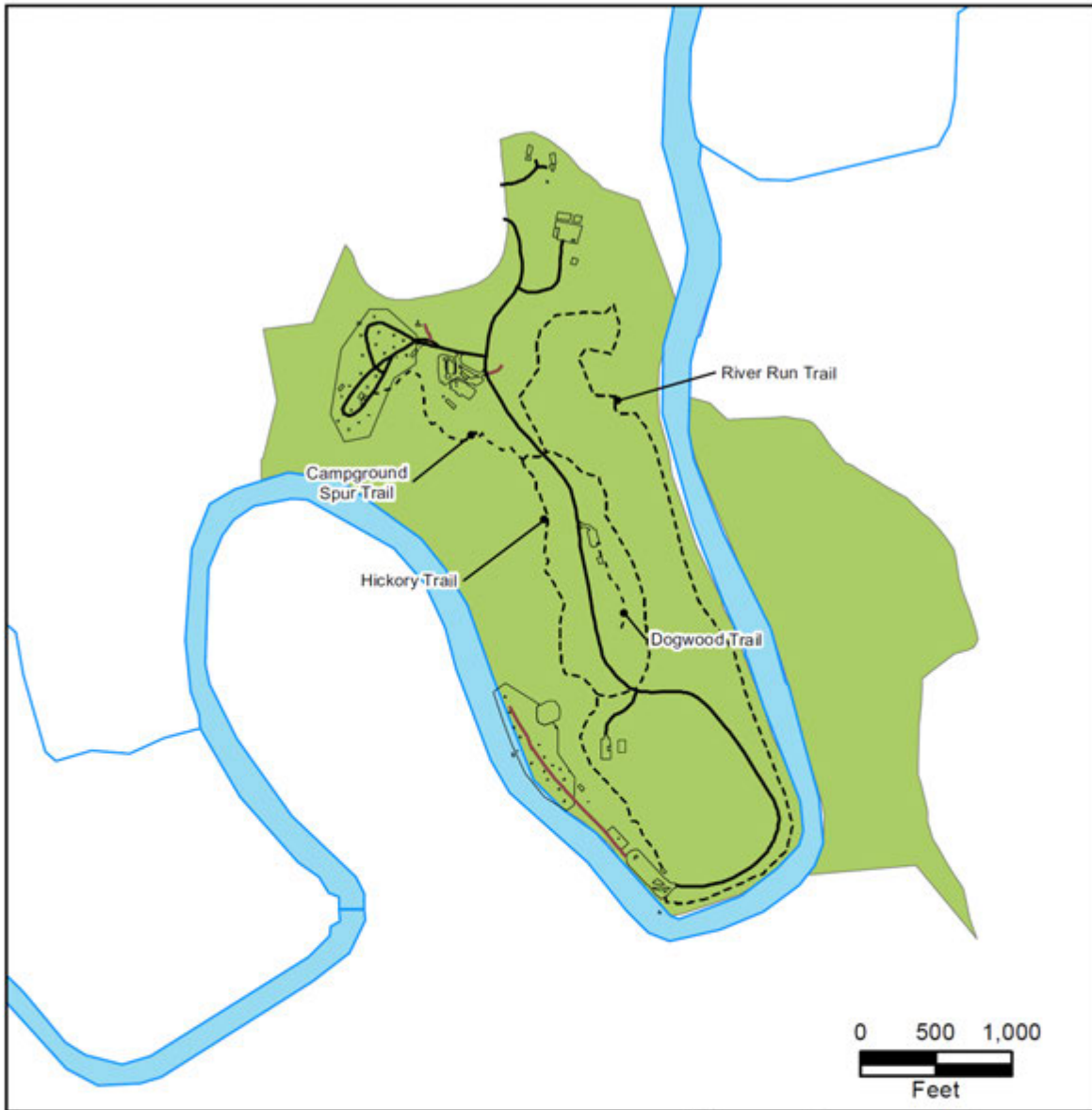
Wagoner Road Access Area offers 11 primitive campsites and bathroom facilities with hot-water showers. At Wagoner Access, campers may park and carry their supplies 250 yards to the campsite, or campers may canoe downstream to a take-out ramp at the campground. A group campsite is also available that can accommodate up to 40 campers.

Riverbend Primitive Canoe-in Camping: Riverbend has four canoe campsites, is accessible only by canoe and has no restroom facilities.

U.S. 221 Access. Campers must park and walk, or canoe to the 14 primitive campsites within two camping areas. Restroom and shower facilities are nearby. A group campsite is also available that can accommodate up to 40 campers. U.S. 221 Access also has a 20 site drive-in campground with a dump station, bathroom facilities and hot-water showers. It can accommodate campers and tents. All 20 sites have electricity and 10 offer full-hookups. Two sites out of the total of 20 sites are handicapped accessible.

Alleghany County Access, which has eight canoe campsites, is accessible only by canoe and has pit toilets and a pump for drinking water. A group campsite is also available that can accommodate up to 40 campers.

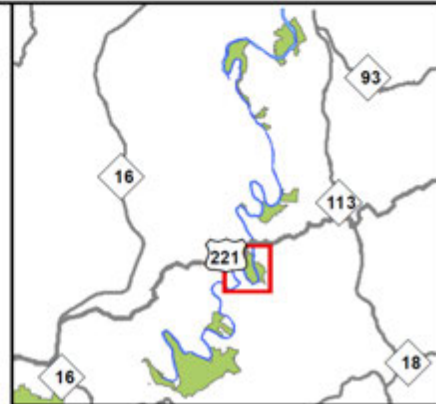
TRAIL INVENTORY – 221 ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



New River
 State Park
 Trail Inventory
 221 Access
 September 2016



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- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



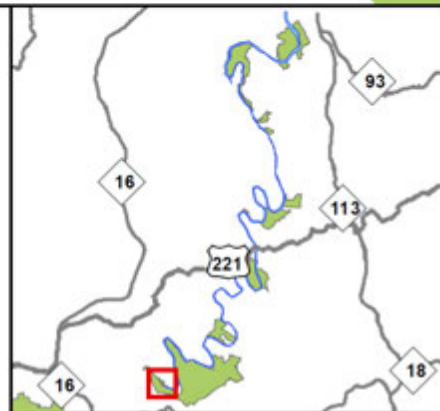
TRAIL INVENTORY – WAGNER ROAD ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



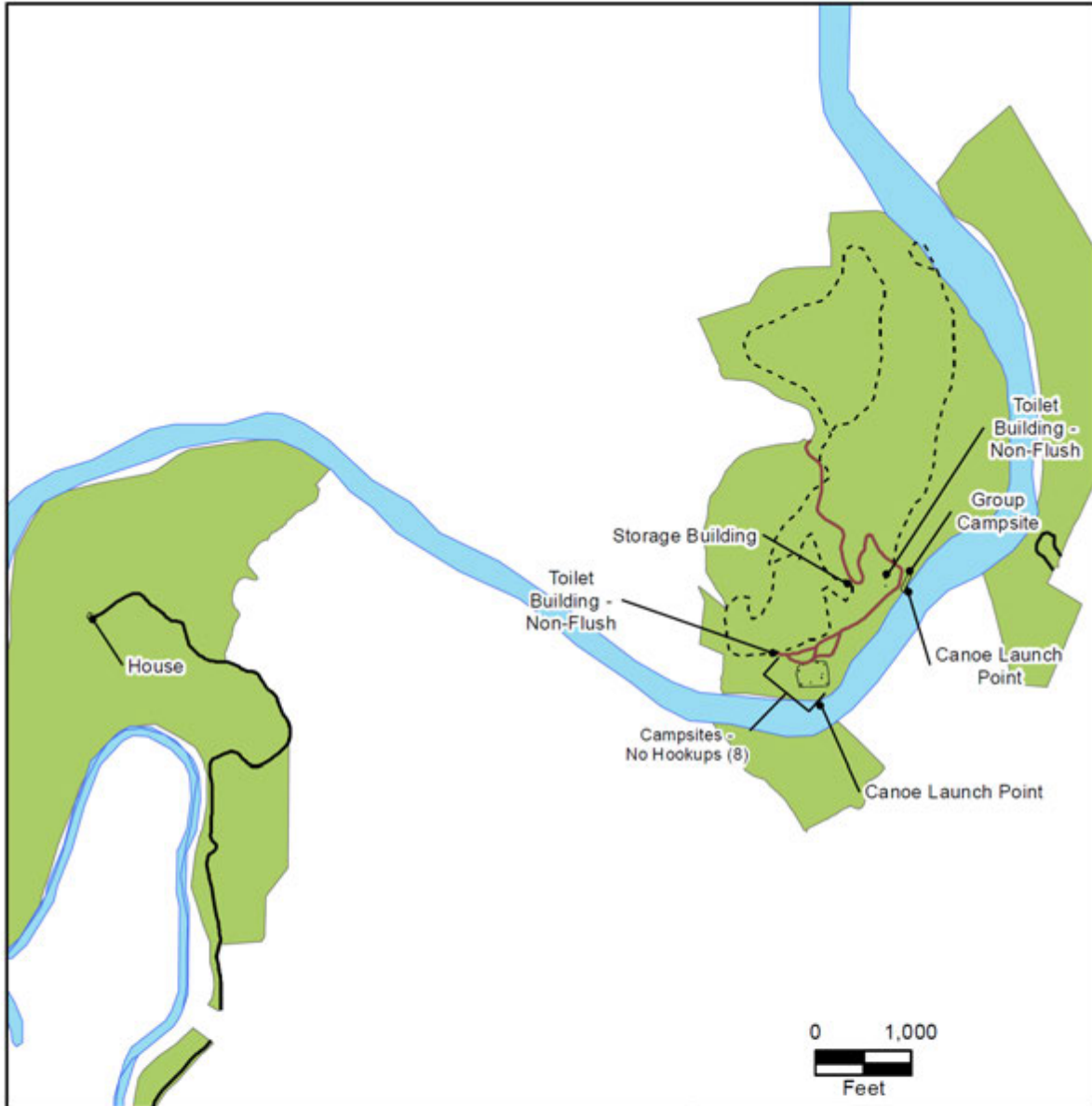
New River
 State Park
 Trail Inventory
 Wagoner Access
 September 2016



- Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Footpath
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



TRAIL INVENTORY – ALLEGHANY COUNTY ACCESS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



New River
 State Park
 Facility Inventory
 Alleghany County Access
 September 2016



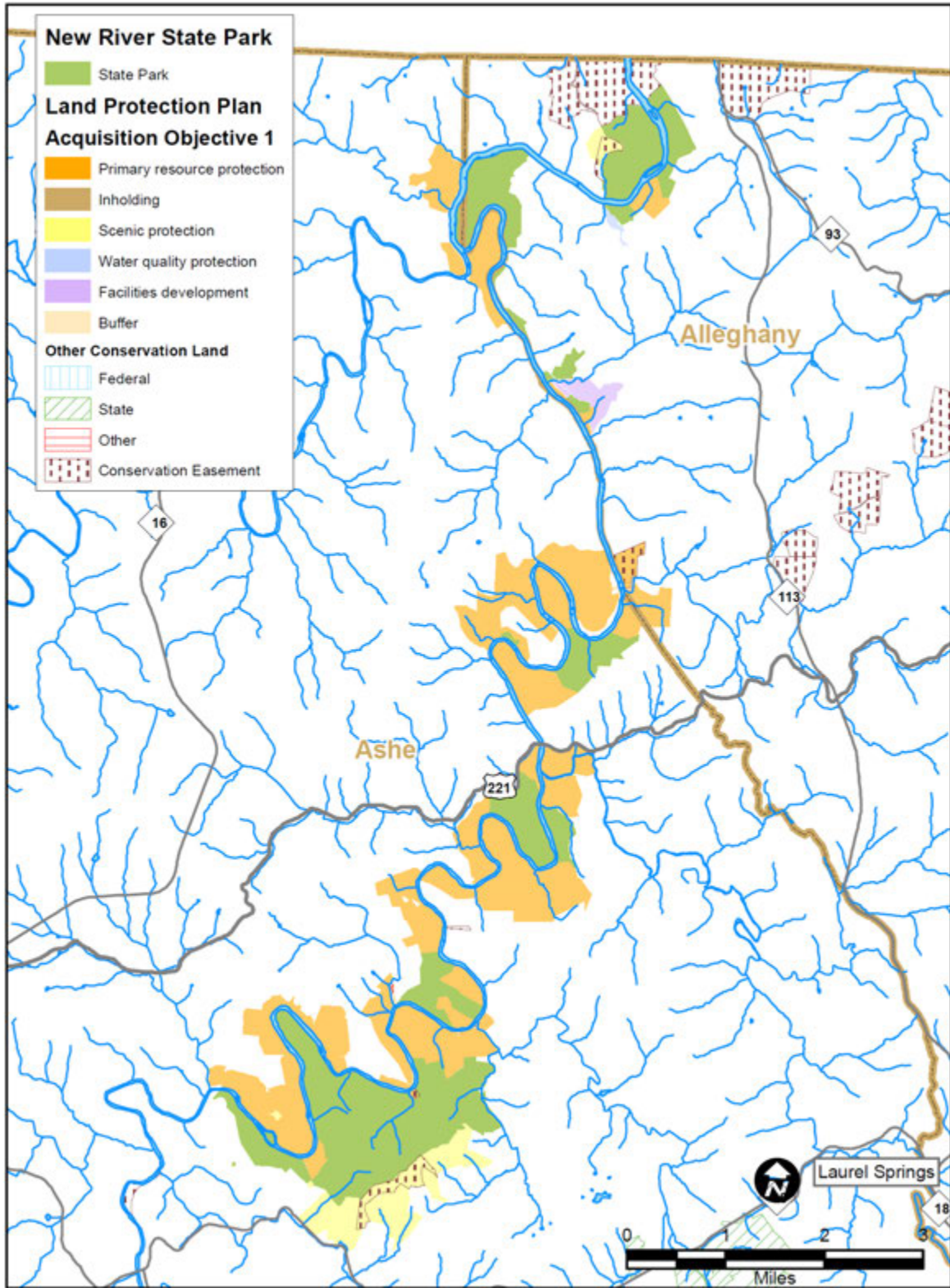
- Existing Trail
- Road - Paved
- Road - Unpaved
- Existing Facilities
- State Parks Unit



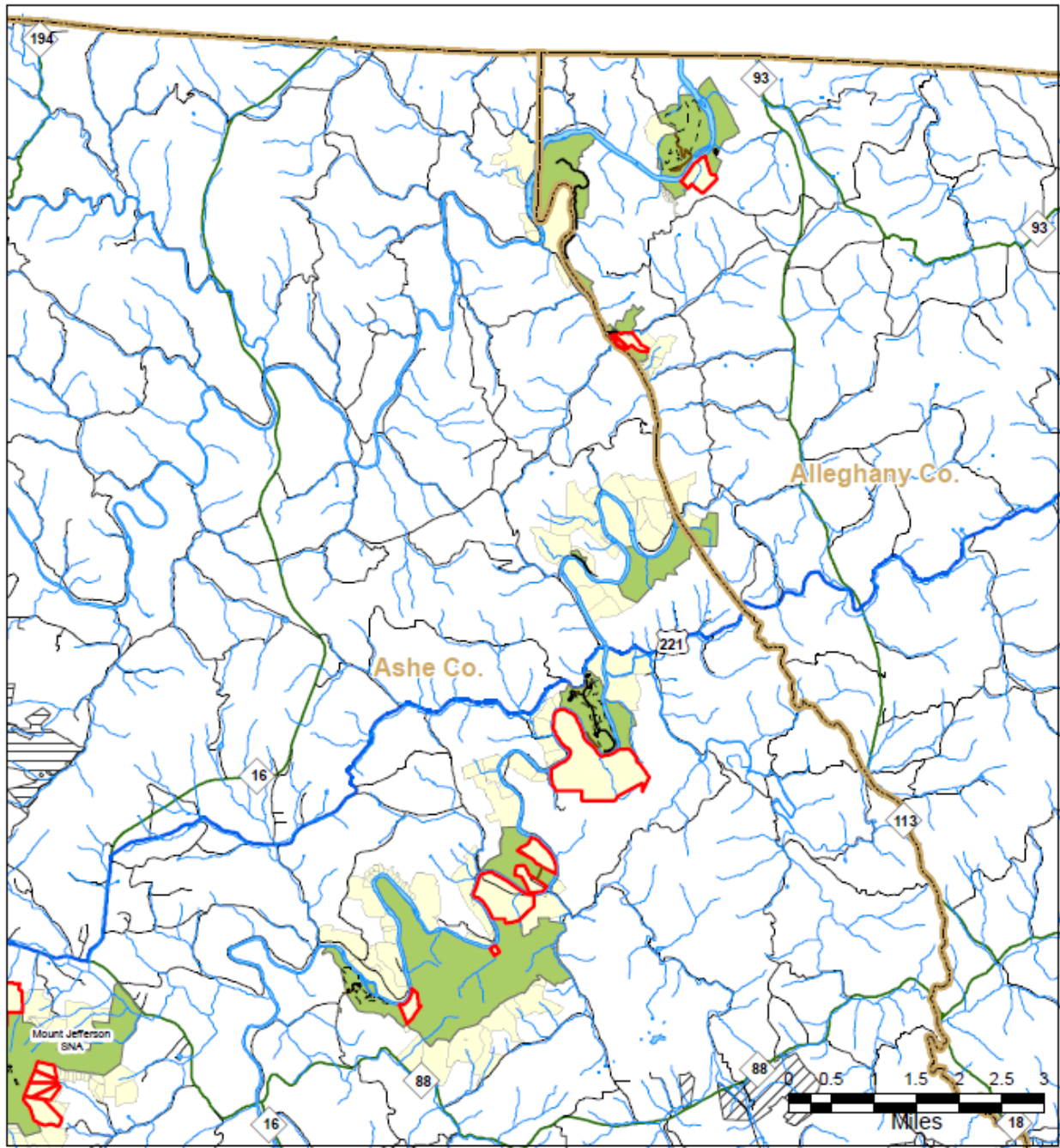
IV. PLANNING



LAND PROTECTION PLAN
NEW RIVER STATE PARK



LAND PROTECTION PLAN – CRITICAL ACRES
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



New River SP

- Critical need
- State Parks Unit
- Land Protection Plan**
- Future Need

- Other Conservation Land**
- Federal
 - State
 - Other



February 2017



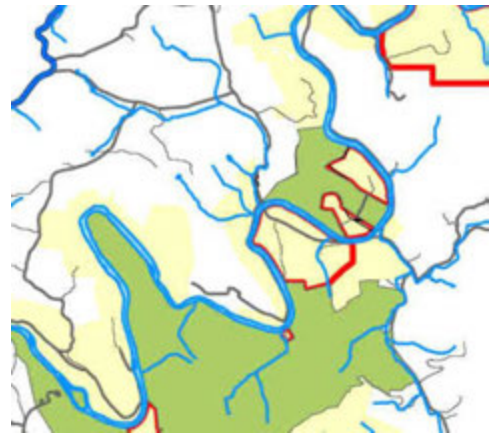
PROJECT EVALUATION PROGRAM LIST
NEW RIVER STATE PARK

Project	Project Title	Cost
1	L-Peaks Property Development	\$ 1,848,465
2	Camper Camps	\$ 410,000
3	L – Kings Creek Expansion (Camping & Day Use)	\$ 1,816,670
4	Perry Tract Canoe -in Primitive Campsites	\$ 75,000
TOTAL		\$ 4,150,135

** Estimated project cost does not include contingencies, design fee, nor escalation.

1. L-Peaks Property Development

The 122-acre Peaks Property named after the highest point of the site, has exceptional recreational value for paddle access and camping. In addition to the substantial river frontage, this property is large enough to provide several miles of hiking trails with backpacking and primitive camping opportunities. This project connects Peaks Property to the Wagoner Road access area with access from S.R. 1595.



This project proposes the construction of primitive paddle-in campsites, backpacking campsites, hiking trails, and a maintenance access road for staff. A dilapidated residence and farm-related structures on the property will be demolished and removed to improve visitor safety.

The bulk of the project cost is in the development of (3) three miles of road construction for staff use and up to (7) seven miles of hiking trails. Seven (7) backpacking campsites will be developed with fire rings, bear-proof lockers, and picnic tables. Six (6) paddle-in campsites will also be developed with similar amenities. An accessible vault toilet will be provided at the paddle-in campground.



Peaks Property

The Division purchased property between the eastern edge of the Wagoner Road Access area and the southwestern edge of the Peaks Property. This property is needed for camping, trail connections and paddle access along the New River.

2. Camper Cabins

Four (4) camper cabins with electricity, but no water or plumbing will be located within the U.S. Highway 221 Access.



Cabins will be installed on top of existing tent sites to minimize costs. Shower house within the tent campground loop will be renovated to current standards. Phase 1 scope of work includes: Installation of (4) cabins on top of sites #25 ,& 26 28 and 30 in phase 1. Phase 2 would include installation of adequate cabins sites.

3. L- Kings Creek Expansion (Camping & Day Use)

Expanding the Kings Creek Access Area, 32- acre tract, will increase the recreational opportunities at the northern half of the park while providing a connection between two existing park areas separated by private campground property.

The site is already developed as a commercial campground. However, most of the property was constructed in a highly visible region from the river. If acquired, the site would be redesigned to minimize the visual impact of development along the river corridor. River buffers along the scenic corridor will be re-established and impervious area will be minimized. Demolition of the existing campsites, restroom buildings, cabin, and storage shed may be required before constructing proposed day-use and campground structures. The existing facilities are not likely to meet State of N.C. Construction Office and N.C. Department of Insurance standards due to age and construction methods. Existing utilities, structures and facilities will be maintained after internal evaluation.



Kings Creek Expansion

The project is land dependent; requiring the purchase of the property directly across the road from the Kings Creek Access Area, presently used as the River Camp USA commercial campground operation.

Proposed development will include a graveled parking area to accommodate 60 cars, widening the entrance bridge to two-lanes, adding an electric gate to provide 24-hours access, information kiosk, an eight-table picnic shelter, scattered picnic sites, and an universal restroom building. A paddle launch area with steps will also be constructed. Campground improvements include: six (6) primitive campsites, two (2) group campsites to accommodate 25 campers each, water line extensions to the campgrounds, universal

flush toilet, wood storage sheds, and typical camp site amenities such as tent impact pads, fire rings, and picnic tables. The group camp will be of a standard size to group camps at other access areas within the park.

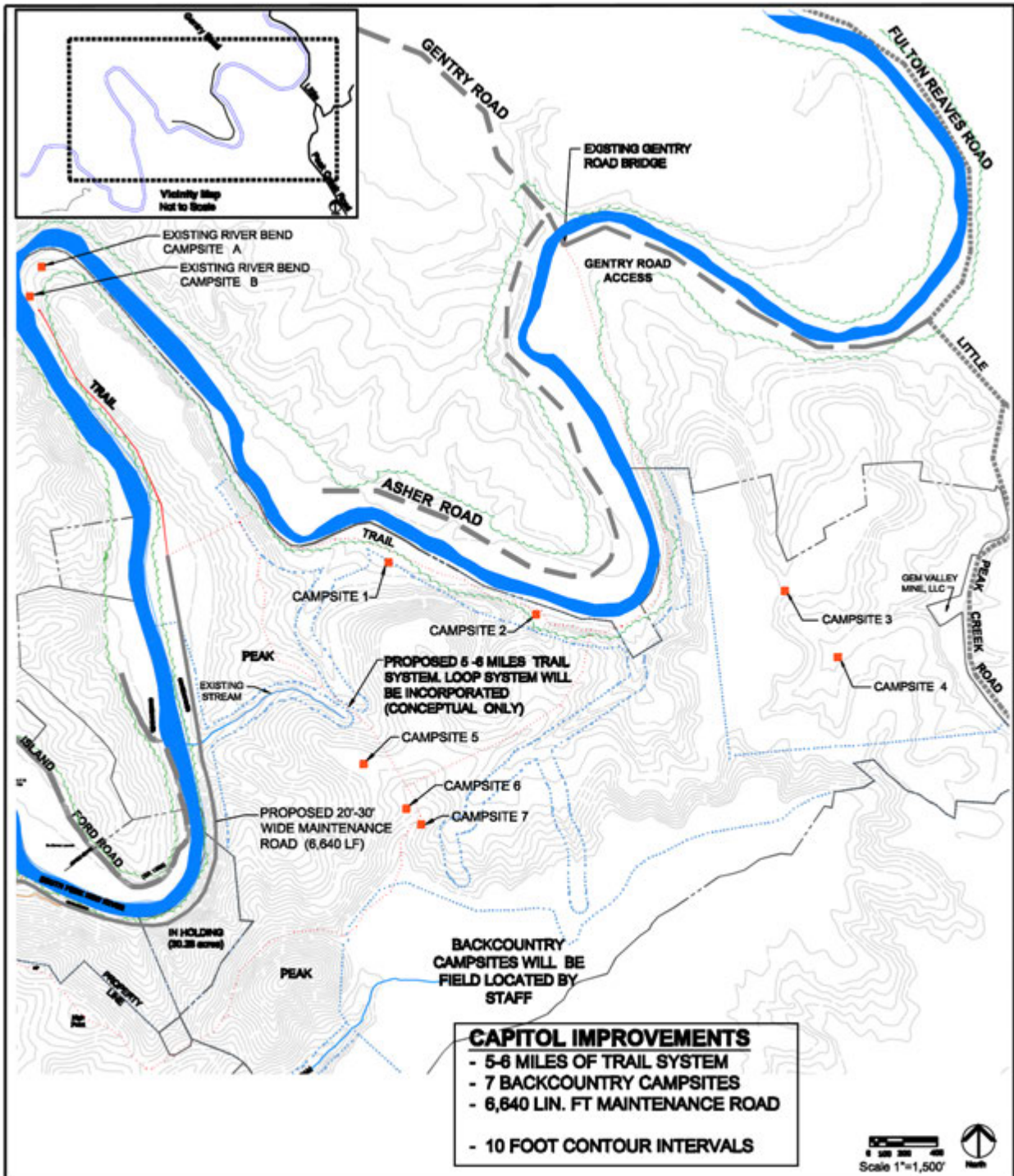
A ranger residence will be developed or acquired either on-site or in close proximity to the proposed Kings Creek expansion area for operations and security purposes. The park parcel adjacent and south of the River Camp USA parcel will be included in the comprehensive site plan design.

4. **Perry Tract Canoe-in Primitive Campsites**

Install four (4) canoe-in only primitive campsites similar to the ones at River Bend area. These campsites would allow for a multi-day paddle experience utilizing primitive camping areas. We currently have these options available at River Bend and Alleghany. However, there is a need for another location between these two sites for an adequate distance paddle between sites.

Scope of work includes: four (4) primitive campsites, universal vault toilet, trash can, picnic tables, and amenities. Currently this has a managed access by a one lane, gravel, farm road. An adequate paddle launch area will be constructed if necessary.

PROJECT #1: PEAKS PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



Revised 2017-01-12
 Date: 2016-October
 Drawn By: _____

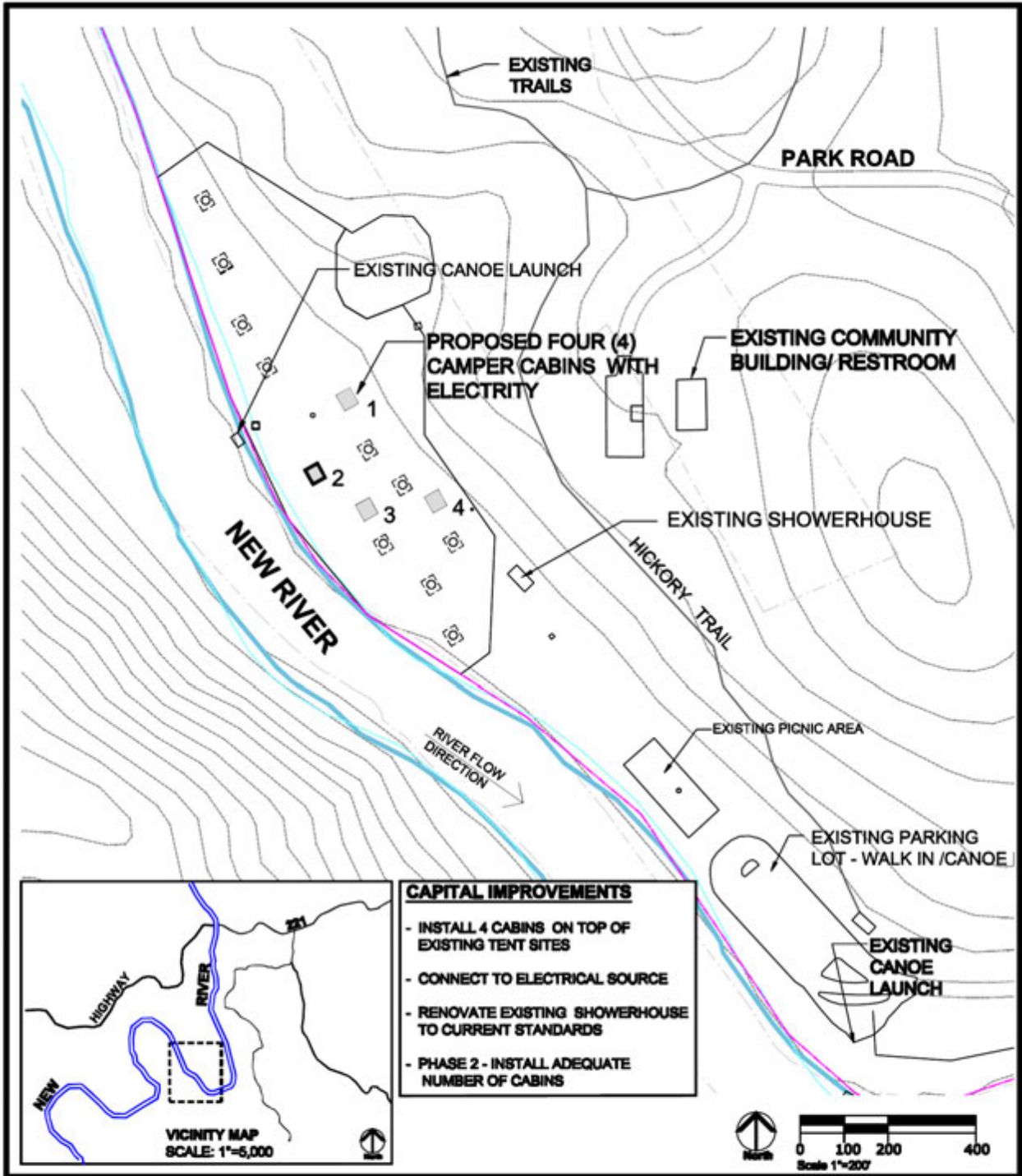
New River State Park
 Peaks Property Development

 N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
 Mail Service Center 1615
 Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1615

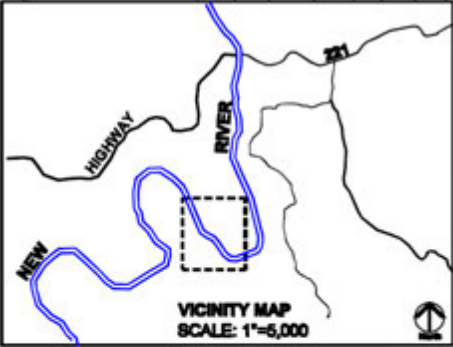
PROJECT #1: PEAKS PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
NEW RIVER STATE PARK



PROJECT #2: CAMPER CABINS
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**
- INSTALL 4 CABINS ON TOP OF EXISTING TENT SITES
 - CONNECT TO ELECTRICAL SOURCE
 - RENOVATE EXISTING SHOWERHOUSE TO CURRENT STANDARDS
 - PHASE 2 - INSTALL ADEQUATE NUMBER OF CABINS

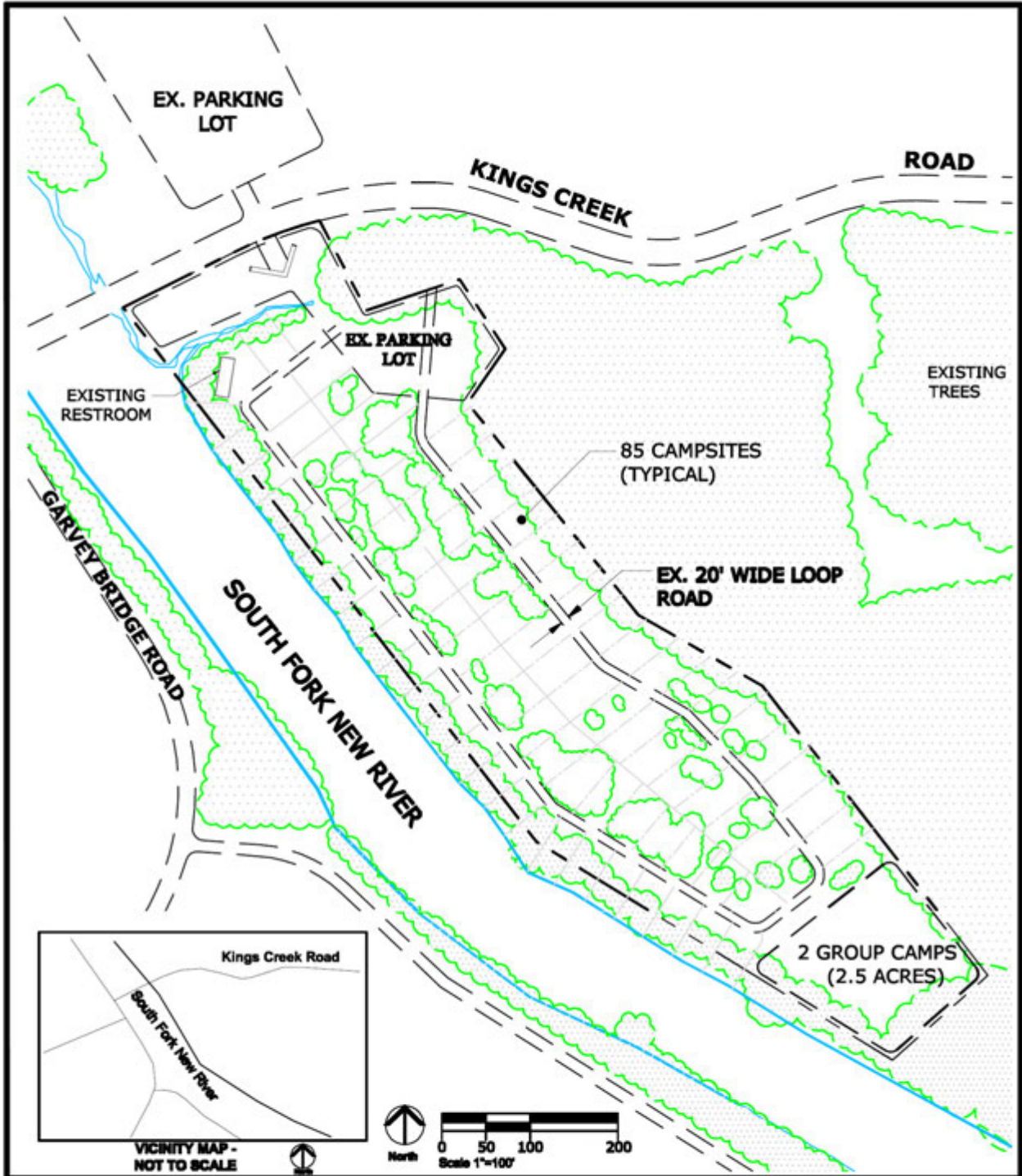


Date: 2018 _____
 Drawn By: _____

New River State Park
 Camper Cabins U.S. Highway 221 Access

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
 Mail Service Center 1815
 Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1815

PROJECT #3: L- KINGS CREEK EXPANSION CAMPING & DAY USE
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK

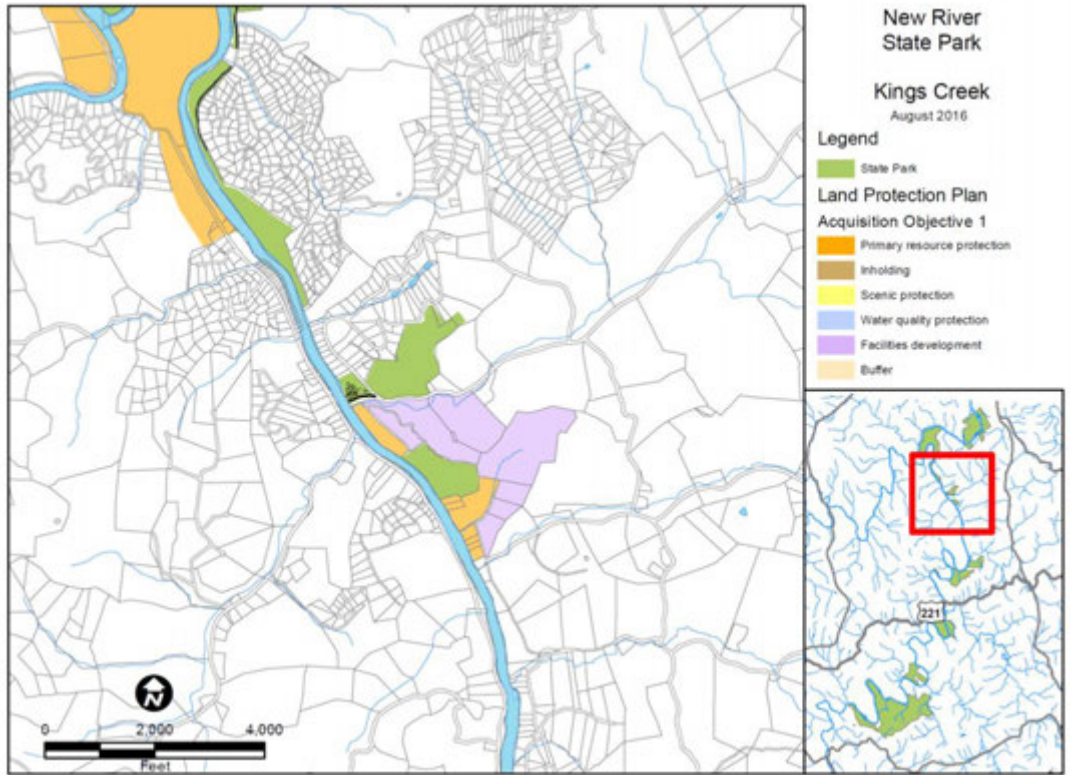


Date: 2018
 Drawn By: _____

Name of Park: New River State Park
Title: Kings Creek Expansion (Camping and Day use)

 **N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation**
 Mail Service Center 1015
 Raleigh, N.C. 27609-1015

PROJECT #3: KINGS CREEK EXPANSION
NEW RIVER STATE PARK

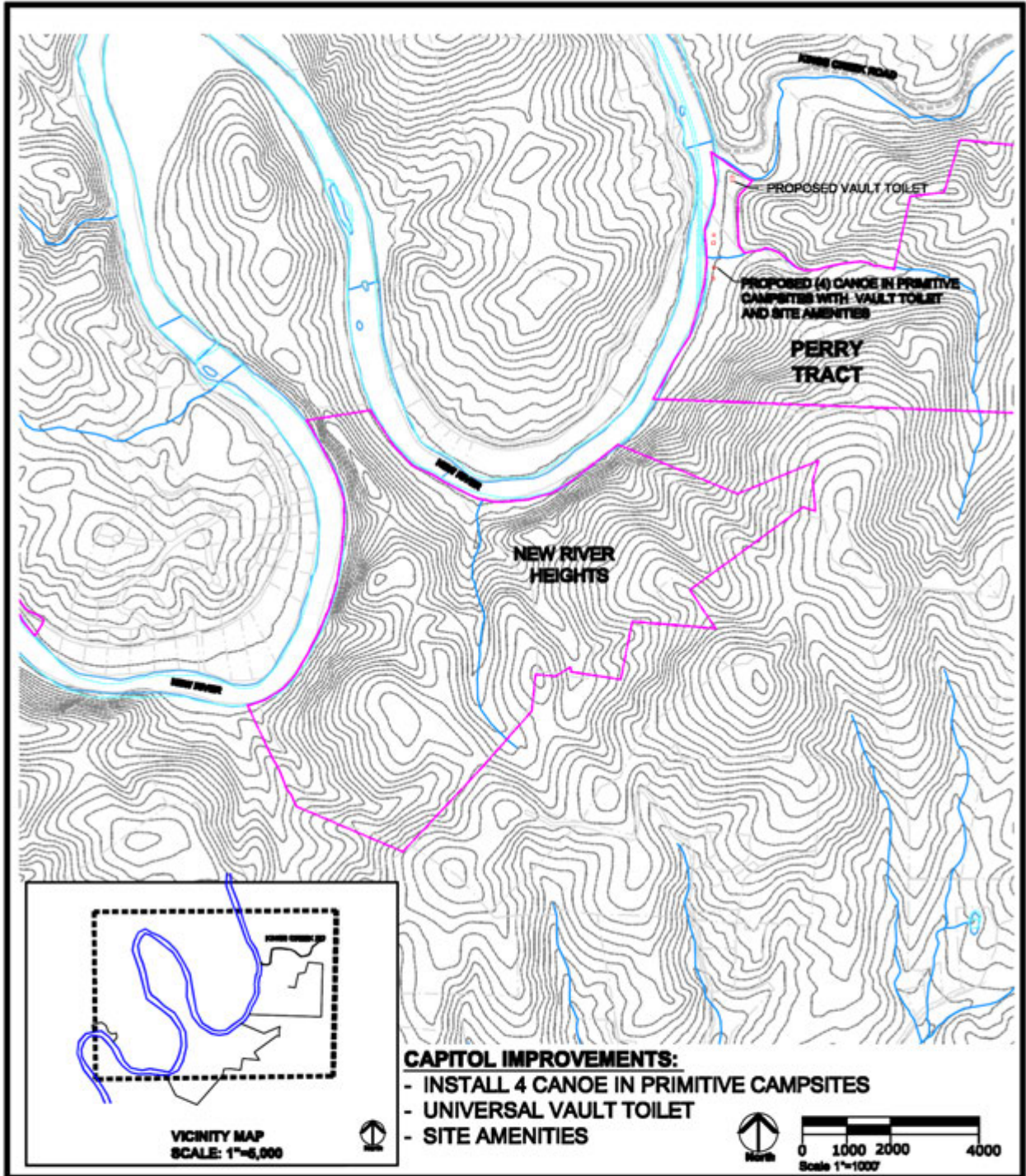


CONTEXT MAP



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT #4: PERRY TRACT CANOE-IN PRIMITIVE CAMPSITES
 NEW RIVER STATE PARK



Date: 2018 _____
 Drawn By: _____

Name of Park: New River State Park
Title: Perry Tract Canoe In Primitive Campsites

 N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
 Mail Service Center 1615
 Raleigh, N.C. 27600-1615

PARK MAP
NEW RIVER STATE PARK

