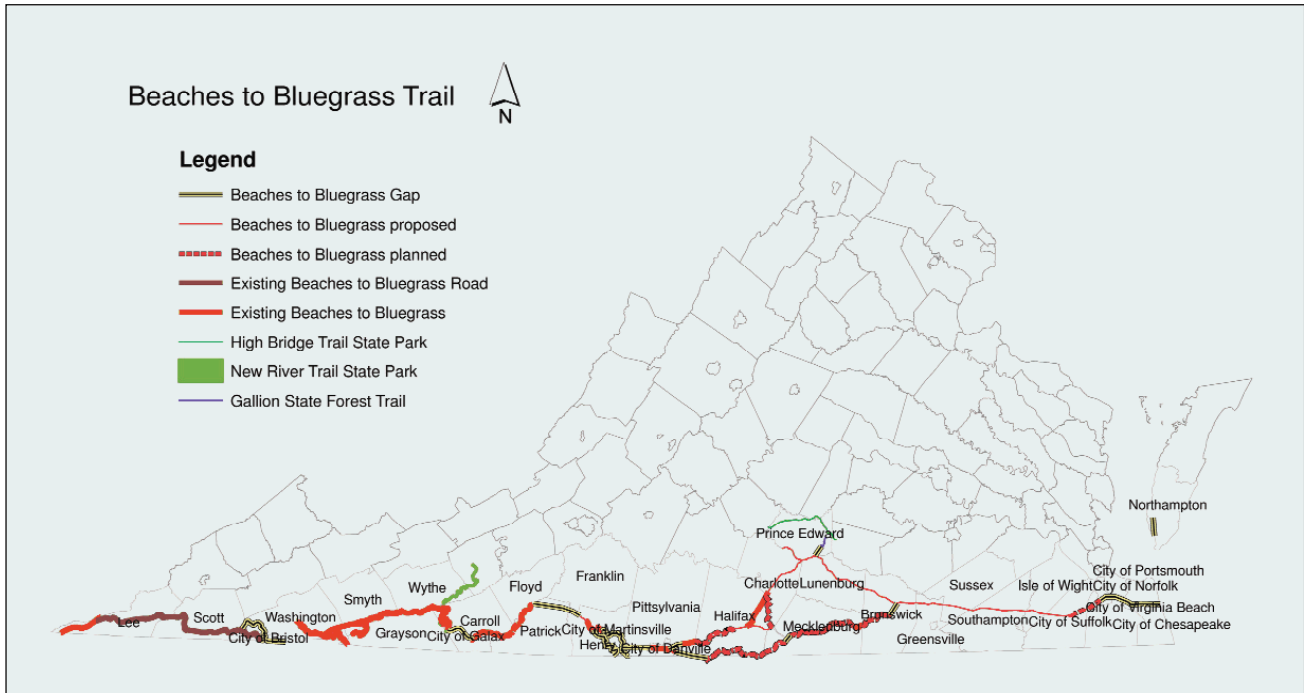


THREE OTHER UNIQUE TRAIL SYSTEMS

BEACHES TO BLUEGRASS TRAIL

A unique concept in trail development, the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail is actually a braided trail system made up of paralleling trails sharing a common direction without serving the same user group. Some trails will be multi-use and non-motorized. Others may include carriage riders or motorized trail users. Some sections will require bicycle riding on paved roads while in other cases, the trail may be too narrow and steep to allow bicycles and only pedestrians will be allowed.



Starting at the Chesapeake Bay in the Tidewater region of eastern Virginia, the trail will traverse westward across the state ending at the Virginia/Tennessee border. Divided into five distinct segments, the western segment travels through the lower portions of both Lee and Scott counties from the Cumberland Gap to the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains following the existing Wilderness Trail (*a nonmotorized trail for biking, hiking and horseback riding*) through a portion of Lee County for the first 10 miles. It then follows the Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail along Routes 23 and 58 through Lee and Scott counties to the Town of Bristol.

RECOMMENDATION: SRR should support the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail initiative, encourage the continued development of the rest of the trail across Virginia, and assist in the marketing and the promotion of the entire route as it is completed. The trail will create a brand that can be marketed throughout the country. Few trails will be able to boast the wide range of historic, cultural, scenic, natural, recreational, entertainment, or artistic assets that will be encompassed within this trail corridor.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: The benefits to the providers of tourism services along the proposed route will be immense. The opportunity for new businesses and new jobs in the tourism and visitor services industries will be significant. It will encourage outdoor exercise and adventure, interpret the historical context of the corridor and promote care for and appreciation of natural resources.

OTHER UNIQUE TRAIL SYSTEMS

ROUND THE MOUNTAIN

There is also the “Round the Mountain” (RTM) Artisan initiative which includes nineteen counties in SW Virginia and four cities. Started in 2005, this nonprofit organization is focused primarily on developing a network of Artisans across Southwest Virginia and *whose mission is to promote sustainable economic development of the region’s communities by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational, and entrepreneurial opportunities*. All seven counties and the City of Norton within SRRA’s study area are participating in this initiative.

RECOMMENDATION: Although not an actual trail or driving tour at this time, we encourage support from SRRA in assisting RTM in identifying and helping to market the initiative and in particularly the artisans identified within the City of Norton and seven-county study area. For more information on this worthwhile project, visit their website at <http://www.roundthemountain.org/>

ANOTHER UNIQUE TRAIL

Known as “Fish Virginia First,” this is not an actual trail at all, but rather a cooperative marketing initiative aimed at encouraging more people to fish the streams in Southwest Virginia. *See Appendix C: Whitepaper on Fish Virginia First for more on this.*

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