

*In North Carolina, there is a trail for each of us. An open invitation for bikers, hikers, paddlers, and riders. For amblers, explorers, and commuters. These paths are a place of refuge and recreation, connecting us to the very essence of this state. To its storied, winding history. And—with our active use and care—to its future. Because we blaze and sustain trails together: those born and bred here, and those beckoned by its promise as the **Great Trails State**.*

2023
YEAR OF THE TRAIL

November 2022 Update

We are excited to share with you that 2023 is [North Carolina Year of the Trail](#), designated by the NC General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Cooper during the 2021 Long Session. NC Year of the Trail will be a year-long opportunity to showcase, promote, and celebrate the diversity of trails across our state for all the benefits trails provide our communities, as we work together to build the brand for North Carolina as **The Great Trails State**.

We invite you to get involved in this exciting, unique, and historic campaign and make plans to showcase trails in your community to attract more visitors and boost local businesses!

The effort to secure designation for NC Year of the Trail was led by the North Carolina [Great Trails State Coalition](#), a broad-based group of over 50 diverse organizations, agencies, and supporters advocating for increased state investment in all types of trails statewide.

With sponsorship support from Visit NC, NC State Parks and others, the Coalition is leading planning efforts for NC Year of the Trail at the state level, with goals to:

- Inspire people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to try trails,
- Demonstrate the importance of trails to elected officials,
- Boost outdoor recreation tourism across the state,
- Encourage Year of the Trail events in all 100 counties,
- Promote safe and responsible use of trails, and
- Advance diversity and inclusion on trails.

The Coalition is developing a wide range of resources to support these goals and amplify messaging, including a robust website, dynamic and engaging social media content, advertising across multiple platforms (billboards, radio, print, social media), a Call for Artists program, original content development with PBS NC and more.

One of the most important resources of this campaign is the **Year of the Trail Community Toolkit** the Coalition is developing to help communities plan events and build local support for trails. This toolkit will be available on the [Year of the Trail website](#) by late October (currently under construction) and will include Year of the Trail logos, templates, and other useful information. Once complete, the website will also include a page for Year of the Trail events, and we will ask you to upload your local Year of the Trails events so that information can be shared through this statewide platform. **If you need access to the Year of the Trail logos before late October, please let us know and we can share logos with you. Please email info@greattrailsnc.com to request them.**

The Coalition is seeking to raise \$400,000 in additional sponsorship funds to meet our \$1.2 million statewide campaign goal. Would your community consider becoming a NC Year of the Trail Sponsor? Please visit our [sponsorship page](#) and email [Palmer McIntyre](#). Sponsorships of all levels are welcome and greatly appreciated.

As we finalize key components of campaign programming, we look forward to hearing from you. Please let us know if you have any questions or ideas for NC Year of the Trail.

Working together, 2023 NC Year of the Trail will be a tremendous success!

**These are our trails, and this our year:
The Year of the Trail.**

We hope you will join us. Thank you for your support!

Best,

The Great Trails Coalition / Year of the Trail Committee

While we finalize the Community Toolkit, here are some ideas you can try now TO GET READY FOR NC YEAR OF THE TRAIL!

- **Get a team together to start brainstorming Year of the Trail events for your area!** A good place to start is to invite representatives from tourism, parks and recreation, planners, elected officials, health organizations, and community advocates and others. These could be events you are already doing, or something as simple as a series of guided hikes or trail workdays. There will be more information in the toolkit.
- You are invited to attend the [Carolina Thread Trail Forum](#) on Thursday, December 1st, 2022 at the Charles Mack Citizen Center in Mooresville, NC to learn more about NC Year of the Trail and participate in an insider celebratory kick off. Event details will be released in the coming weeks.