



North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION
John Fullwood, Interim Director

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
Roy Cooper, Governor | Susi H. Hamilton, Secretary

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority	2
3.0	Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Revenue Summary	3
T3-1	Table: Deposits and Distribution of Revenues, Fiscal Year 2019-20	3
4.0	Grant Program for Local Governments	4
4.1	Program Description	4
4.2	Description of Applications and Grants	4
T4-1	Table: Matching Grants Awarded to Local Governments, Fiscal Year 2019-20	5
4.3	Examples of Completed Local Government PARTF Projects	5
4.3	Geographic Distribution of Grants	6
5.0	State Parks Program	7
5.1	Land Acquisition	7
T5-1	Table: State Parks System Land Acquisition Projects, Fiscal Year 2019-20	7
5.2	Construction and Renovation	8
T5-2	Table: State Parks System Capital Improvement Projects, Fiscal Year 2019-20	8
5.3	Operating Expenses Associated with State Park Projects	8
6.0	Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program	9
6.1	Program Description	9
6.2	Types of Projects Funded	10
6.3	PARTF Awards Based on FY 2018-19 Deposits and Other Unencumbered Funds	10
T6-1	Table: Communities Awarded or Prioritized for FY 2019-20 Funding Based on Earlier Deposits and Other Available Funds	11
7.0	Dupont Recreational State Forest	11
T7-1	Table: DuPont State Recreational Forest PARTF Expenditures, FY 2019-20	11



Tory Hole Park, Bladen County

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) was established in July 1994 to provide a dedicated funding source for improvements in state parks, matching grants for local parks and public access to the state's beaches and estuaries. PARTF is funded by an annual appropriation as well as revenue from personalized license plates. The Parks and Recreation Authority, a citizen board, was created to allocate PARTF revenue for projects in state parks and for grants to local governments to buy parkland and build facilities for public recreation.

Pursuant to G.S. 143B-135.56, the money from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund is to be allocated as follows:

- Sixty-five percent for the State Parks System or a State Recreational Forest for capital projects, repairs, and renovations of facilities and to acquire land. (Note: Four percent of the total is allocated to DuPont State Recreational Forest.)
- Thirty percent to provide grants to local governments on a dollar-for-dollar basis to create or improve parks and recreational projects.
- Five percent for the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program.
- A maximum of three percent may be used by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) for the operating expenses associated with managing capital improvements projects, acquiring land, and administering the grants program for local governments.

The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund is housed within the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR). DPR transfers five percent of PARTF revenue to the Division of Coastal Management for the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. The Division of Coastal Management administers these funds and offers matching grants to local governments throughout the 20 coastal counties.

2019-20 Parks and Recreation Authority Members



Neal Lewis, Chairman
Wilmington



Chad Brown
Stanley



Vinnie Goel
Morrisville



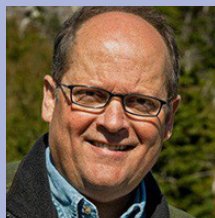
Mavis Gragg
Durham



Woody Gurley
La Grange



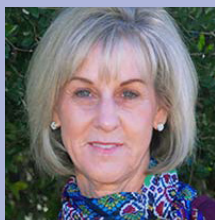
Beth Heile
Valdese



Lewis Ledford
Raleigh



Margaret Newbold
Vilas



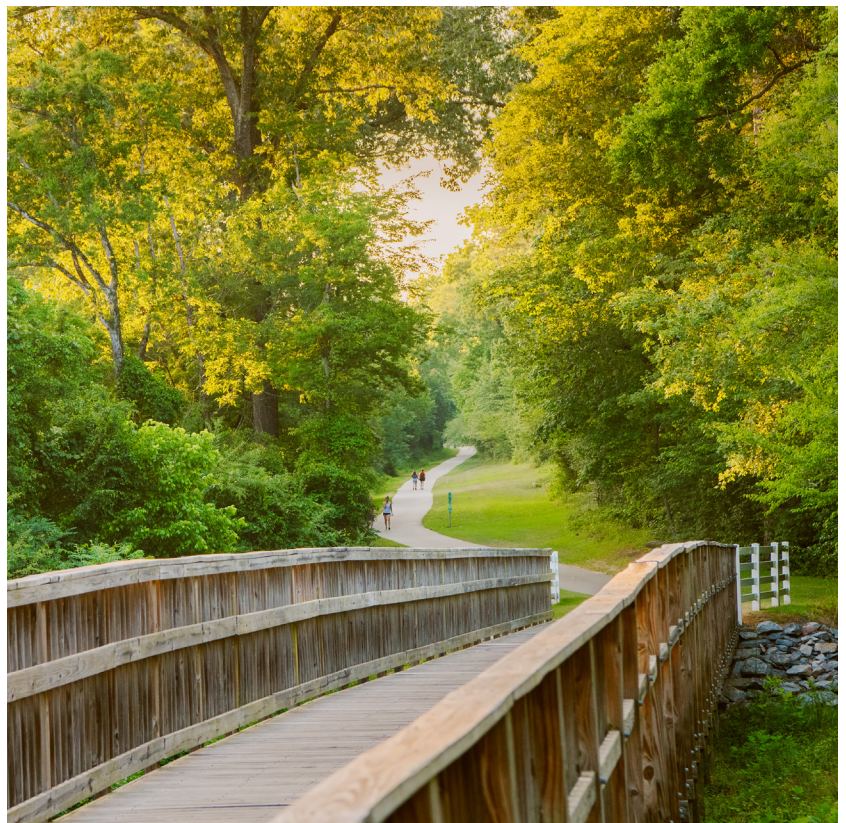
Cynthia Tart
Oak Island

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority, a nine-member board, oversees the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. The Governor appoints five members, including the chairperson. The General Assembly appoints four members, two by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and two by the Speaker of the House.

The Authority is charged with six powers and duties:

- to receive public and private donations and funds for deposit into the trust fund;
- to allocate funds for land acquisition;
- to allocate funds for capital projects;
- to solicit financial and material support;
- to develop effective support for parks and recreation;
- and to advise the Secretary of DNCR on any matter referred to the body.

Members are appointed for three-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. After serving two consecutive three-year terms, a member is not eligible for appointment to the Authority for at least one year after the expiration of the member's last term. The Parks and Recreation Authority held seven meetings during fiscal year 2019-20.



North Clayton Park, Mountains-to-Sea State Trail

3.0 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Revenue Summary

Total PARTF revenue available for state and local parks as well as coastal access projects was \$17,775,723 from appropriations and personalized license plate fees. The state park system received \$11,207,593 (65 percent), the local government matching grant program \$5,172,735 (30 percent) and the Coastal Access grant program \$888,786 (five percent). Reserved for administrative expenses (three percent) was \$506,608 (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1: North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Deposits and Distribution of Revenues Fiscal Year 2018-19

Revenue	Amount
PARTF Recurring Appropriation	\$16,242,884
PARTF Non-Recurring Appropriation	0
Personalized Registration Plates Revenue	\$1,532,839
Total PARTF Revenue	\$17,775,723

Distribution	Amount
State Parks System / Dupont Recreational State Forest	\$11,207,594
Local Governments Matching Grants Program	\$5,172,735
Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program	\$888,786
Administrative Expenses Reserve	\$506,608
Total PARTF Allocation	\$17,775,723



Smithfield Recreation Aquatic Center



4.1 Program Description

The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund program provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments to acquire land for public parks and to build or renovate recreational facilities. North Carolina counties and incorporated municipalities are eligible for PARTF grants. Public authorities, as defined by N.C. General Statute §159-7, are also eligible if they are authorized to acquire parkland or develop facilities for public recreation.

Each year, the Parks and Recreation Authority announces to the local governmental officials the availability of PARTF matching grants and the schedule for applying. A local government can request a maximum grant amount of \$500,000 in PARTF assistance with each grant application.

The Division of Parks and Recreation assists local governments in several ways. The PARTF staff conducts a workshop where local governments can learn about the program and how to complete an application. The workshop is presented via internet streaming and is recorded for viewing on demand. The Division contracts with North Carolina State University to provide technical assistance to local governments through the Recreation Resources Service (RRS). RRS provides advice to local governments in preparing grant applications with four consultants in regional offices.

The members of the Parks and Recreation Authority select grant recipients. The factors considered by the Authority include, but are not limited to, the criteria contained in the PARTF scoring system, the population of the applicant, the geographic distribution of projects across the state, the presence or absence of other funding sources and compliance with prior grant agreements. Applications were due May 1, 2019. The Parks and Recreation Authority met in August 2019 to award the matching grants.

4.2 Description of Applications and Grants

The PARTF revenue allocated to local grants for fiscal year 2019-20 was \$5,172,735. Fifty-six local governments submitted PARTF applications, requesting \$16.4 million in PARTF assistance. The Authority awarded 18 grants for \$5,819,074 (Table 4-1). The difference between the fiscal year distribution and the amount awarded is \$646,339. This additional revenue is from unspent administrative funds from previous years, cancelled projects, reductions in the scope of work, and projects completed under budget.

4.O Grant Programs for Local Governments

**Table 4-1: North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
Matching Grants Awarded to Local Governments Fiscal Year 2019-20**

Applicant	County	Project	Funds Awarded
Alamance County	Alamance	Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area	\$470,000
Archer Lodge	Johnston	Archer Lodge Town Park	\$500,000
Carteret County	Carteret	Stroud Tract Acquisition on Bogue Sound	\$500,000
Cedar Point	Carteret	Masonic Park	\$500,000
Davie County	Davie	Davie County Community Park (Phase 1)	\$365,000
Erwin	Harnett	Al Woodall Municipal Park Improvements	\$339,678
Gaston County	Gaston	Dallas Park, Phase 2 Improvements	\$250,000
Harrisburg	Cabarrus	Harrisburg Park Redevelopment - Phase 1	\$350,000
Hudson	Caldwell	Optimist Park Redevelopment	\$222,580
Lillington	Harnett	River Park (Phase 2)	\$200,000
Rutherfordton	Rutherford	Kiwanis Park	\$350,000
Rutherford College	Rutherford	Greenway Park Development	\$225,250
Southport	Brunswick	Taylor Field Park (Phase 1)	\$421,224
Sparta	Alleghany	Crouse Park Expansion and Improvement	\$194,572
Transylvania County	Transylvania	Brevard Community Park	\$235,000
Valdese	Burke	Valdese Lakeside Park, Phase I	\$285,000
Warren County	Warren	Magnolia Ernest Recreation Park	\$148,770
Williamston	Martin	Gaylord Perry Park Renovation	\$262,000
18 awards			\$5,819,074

4.3 Examples of Completed Local Government Projects



PARTF assistance has greatly improved the quality of life for our citizens and visitors. Sunset Beach Town Park sees daily use by people exercising, taking in the view, or launching a kayak.



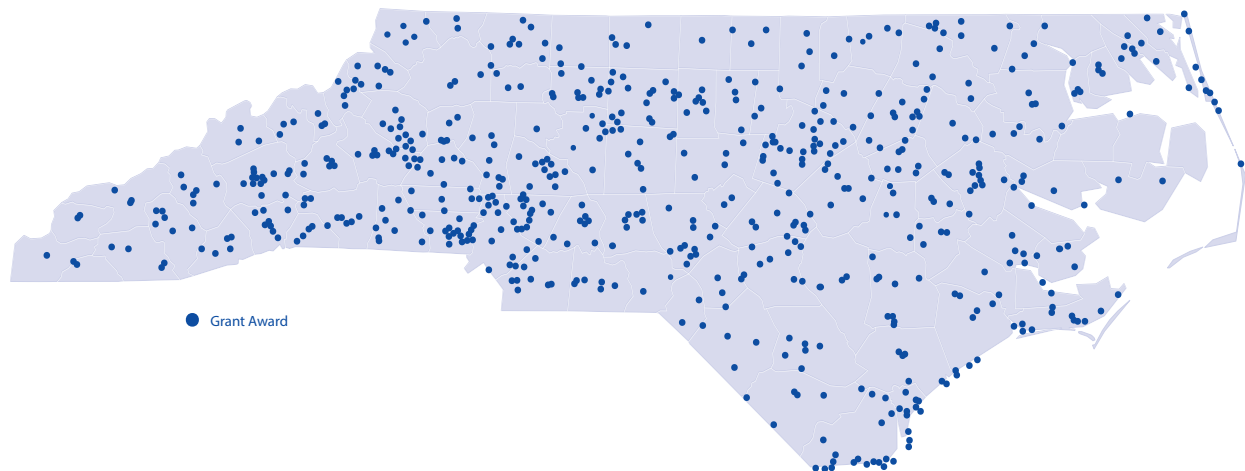
PARTF has been a huge factor in the growth of our parks and recreation department and arguably our city over the last ten years.

J Burt Gillette Athletic Complex – Wilson, NC

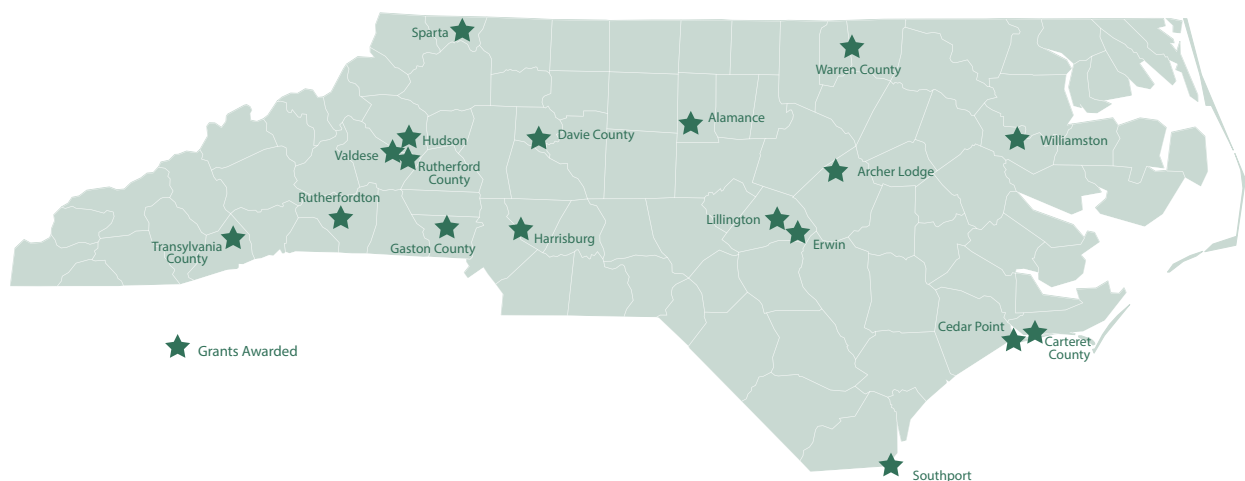
4.4 Geographic Distribution of Grants

Since 1995, the Authority has selected 918 grant recipients in all 100 counties across North Carolina for grant awards totaling \$211 million.

Distribution of PARTF Grants by County 1995-2019



Distribution of PARTF Grants by County from 2019-20 Grant Cycle



5.0 State Parks

The Parks and Recreation Authority allocates PARTF revenue to capital improvement and land acquisition projects for the state parks system. DPR develops priorities for the state parks system and recommends projects for the board's approval. The PARTF revenue for state park projects for fiscal year 2019-20 was \$11,207,593. An additional \$252,108 was available from unspent administrative funds for the previous fiscal year.

The Parks and Recreation Authority allocated \$458,388 to Dupont State Recreational Forest (\$ 143B-135.56 (b)(1)). The total amount available to state parks in FY 19-20 was \$11,358,313 including \$357,000 in projects from previous years completed under budget or cancelled.

5.1 Land Acquisition

**Table 5-1: North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
State Parks System Land Acquisition Projects Fiscal Year 2019-20**

Unit	Acres	PARTF Funds	Description
Chimney Rock State Park	50	\$250,000	Carlisle tract: This critical inholding cited as a priority acquisition in park's land protection plan.
Elk Knob State Park	69	\$203,000	Jones tract: This critical tract to provide access to the Peak and potential connection between Elk Knob and the Peak. Identified in the park land protection plan.
Lumber River State Park	1,360	\$1,620,000	McClure Tract: This tract will allow for potential infrastructure development and provide critical access to the river and an existing paddle access.
Mayo River State Park	80	\$80,000	Lester tract: This tract protects the main stem of Hickory Creek in its entirety and provide a potential for a new 2-mile hiking trail. Part of the Mayo River land study area plan.
Pisgah View State Park	205	\$1,000,000	Phase I: Initial acquisition at Pisgah View State Park.
Salmon Creek State Natural Area	299	\$400,000	Bal Gra tract: Second acquisition at Salmon Creek with several proposed matching sources. Property will connect existing properties with County-owned tracts. Tract will provide location for additional facilities.
South Mountains State Park	7	\$22,800	Hoyle tract: Critical inholding cited as a priority acquisition in park's land protection plan.
Totals	2,070	\$3,575,800	

5.2 Construction and Renovation

**Table 5-2: North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
State Parks System Capital Improvement Projects Fiscal Year 2019-20**

Park	Project	Cost
Carolina Beach State Park	Campground improvement	\$200,000
Chimney Rock State Park	Road/ Parking lot repair	\$1,600,000
Eno River State Park	Quarry safety planning	\$200,000
Gorges State Park	New campground	\$1,108,505
Hammocks Beach State Park	Teachers Building design	\$300,000
Hanging Rock State Park	Visitor center renovation	\$900,000
Jones Lake State Park	Campground renovations	\$110,000
Lake James State Park	Visitor center and Cove Bridge	\$1,172,000
Lake Norman State Park	Campground renovations	\$225,000
Mount Mitchell State Park	Septic system repairs - Summit	\$163,000
Mount Mitchell State Park	Septic system repairs - Restaurant	\$150,000
Raven Rock State Park	New campground	\$75,000
Systemwide Maintenance	Multiple	\$1,579,008
		Total \$7,782,513

5.3 Operating Expenses Associated with State Park Projects

In allocating PARTF funds to the state parks system, the Parks and Recreation Authority considered the operating expenses that may be associated with the projects (G.S. 143B-135.56 I). The Division of Parks and Recreation estimated these costs and presented them for the board's consideration when the projects were proposed for funding. The estimated costs are based on conceptual plans for each project.

State Park	Project	Minimal Level	Optimal Level
Gorges State Park*	Campground	\$188,428 Ranger Maintenance Mechanic	\$211,323 Ranger Maintenance Mechanic Education Specialist
Lake James State Park*	Visitor Center and Cove Bridge	\$233,676 Park Ranger I Maintenance III Admin Specialist	\$381,346 Park Ranger I Maintenance III Admin Specialist Education Specialist
Raven Rock State Park	Campground	\$210,814 Park Ranger II Maintenance III	\$210,814 Park Ranger II Maintenance III

*Costs associated with Connect NC Bond Projects, which PARTF funds are supplementing.

6.1 Program Description

North Carolina's Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program was established by the General Assembly in 1981. The program began receiving five percent of the revenues from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund during the 1996-97 fiscal year. The program's enabling legislation (GS 113A-134.1) states that public interest would be served by providing increased access to coastal waters, public parking facilities, or other related public uses.

The program, administered by the Division of Coastal Management (DCM), offers matching grant funds primarily to local governments throughout the 20 coastal counties. Since 1981, over 300 public access sites have been acquired or improved at a cost of over \$37 million in grant funds. Local governments are responsible for construction, operation, and long-term maintenance of the facilities. While most of the early projects were located along the oceanfront, more projects are now designed to improve access to estuarine shorelines, coastal rivers, and urban waterfronts.

The Division of Coastal Management sends pre-application requests for proposals (RFPs) to local governments in the 20 coastal counties annually. Criteria developed by the Coastal Resources Commission are used to select grant recipients. Local governments are given eighteen (18) months to complete projects. Extensions may be granted for unforeseen events and delays, such as hurricanes, with a three (3) year maximum life of a contract.

Local governments are required to match from 10 percent to 25 percent of the project costs based on the type of project being funded and the communities' economic status per the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Tier designations, as outlined by (G.S. 143B-437.08). The required cash match may include Federal and other State funds provided these funds are not already being used as match funds for any other state or federal program.



Durham Avenue Beach Access, Town of Atlantic Beach, Funded in 2019-20

6.2 Types of Projects Funded

Communities can apply for five different types of water access sites: local, neighborhood, regional, multi-regional and urban waterfront redevelopment projects.

- Local access sites include public access points offering minimal or no facilities. Pedestrians who reside within a few hundred yards of the site primarily use them. Generally, these access ways are a minimum of ten feet in width providing only a dune crossover or pier. Vehicle parking is generally not available at these access sites. Bicycle racks may be provided as well as litter receptacles and access signs.
- Neighborhood access sites are public access areas offering parking, usually for five to 25 vehicles, a dune crossover or pier, litter receptacles and public access signs. Such accesses are typically 40 to 60 feet in width and are primarily used by individuals within the immediate subdivision or vicinity of the site. Restroom facilities may be installed.
- Regional access sites serve the public throughout an island or community including day visitors. These sites normally provide parking for 25 to 80 vehicles, restrooms, a dune crossover, pier, foot showers, litter receptacles, and public access signs. Where possible, one-half acre of open space in addition to all required setback areas should be provided for buffering, day use, nature study or similar purposes.
- Multi-regional access sites are generally larger than regional access ways but smaller than state parks. Multi-regional facilities provide parking for 80 to 200 cars, restrooms with indoor showers and changing rooms, and concession.
- Urban waterfront and working waterfront redevelopments are projects that improve public access. Such projects include the establishment or rehabilitation of boardwalk areas, shoreline stabilization measures such as the installation or rehabilitation of bulkheads, and the placement or removal of pilings for public safety and/or increased access and use of the urban waterfront.

Additionally, as part of rule changes that took effect in 2007, boat ramps and motorized boating facilities may be included as part of any of the above types of access provided that pedestrian access is also part of the project.

6.3 PARTF Awards Based on FY 2018-19 Deposits and Other Unencumbered Funds

State appropriations are allocated to DCM through PARTF. The amount transferred from the PARTF to DCM during fiscal year 2019-20 was \$888,786. The amount budgeted for grants in addition to this allocation include funds unused from previous fiscal years and returned funds from previous grants. Table 6-1 provides the list of local governments that have been awarded grant funding or have been invited to submit a final application for funding.

6.O Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program

Table 6-1: Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Program Communities Awarded or Prioritized for FY 2018-19 Funding Based on Earlier Deposits and State Appropriations

Local Government	Project Description	Total Project Costs	Grant Amount
Town of Nags Head	Islington Street Public Access	82,909.55	47,232.15
Pasquotank County [†]	Pasquotank River Boardwalk Phase III	88,611.00	79,750.00
Town of Atlantic Beach	Durham Avenue Public Beach Access	101,000.00	50,500.00
City of Washington [†]	Wetlands Boardwalk Reconstruction Phase I	482,560.00	280,560.00
Town of Carolina Beach	310 Canal Drive Land Acquisition	230,000.00	195,500.00
Town of Kure Beach	Beach Access #1004.5 Improvements	134,488.00	100,866.00
Town of Oak Island	Middleton Park Project	198,000.00	148,500.00
Town of Varnamtown	Varnamtown Water Access Land Acquisition	150,000.00	95,620.00
Totals		\$1,467,569	\$998,528

[†] Denotes communities that are Tier 1 jurisdictions. \$571,171 or about 57.2% of the grant awards are proposed for Tier 1 counties.

The above project list does not include any direct partnerships with other State agencies. The only non-award use of the funds is providing access site signs made by the State Division of Corrections. Signs are provided to local governments for new sites and for replacement of weathered signs.

7.O DuPont State Recreational Forest

In FY 2019-20 the Parks and Recreation Authority, in keeping with N.C.G.S. 143B-135.56 allocated four percent (4%) of the annual appropriation for State Parks for capital projects, repairs, renovations and land acquisitions at DuPont State Recreational Forest (DSRF). The amount transferred was \$458,388. In fiscal year 2020, State Forest staff made progress on capital projects supported by PARTF funds, expending a total of \$74,394. Table 7-1 provides a summary of expenditures.

Location	Expense
Old Camp Summit Cabin - Repair and Renovation	\$10,000
Hooker Falls Trail Repair and Renovation	\$63,033
Continental Divide Property- Legal and Recording Fees, Closing Costs	\$1,361
Total	\$74,394

Old Camp Summit Cabin - Repair and Renovation



This building had been unoccupied since its acquisition in 2000. It was once part of the Camp Summit facilities and still provides recreational benefits and office space for DSRF operations including the equestrian facilities near Bridal Veil Falls and the Ranger Headquarters near Lake Julia. Renovation plans for the ~40-year old building include improvements to electrical systems, heating and cooling systems, water supply systems, and the removal of hazardous trees in proximity to the building. This facility will support the operations of DSRF's Law Enforcement Program.

Hooker Falls Trail Repair and Renovation

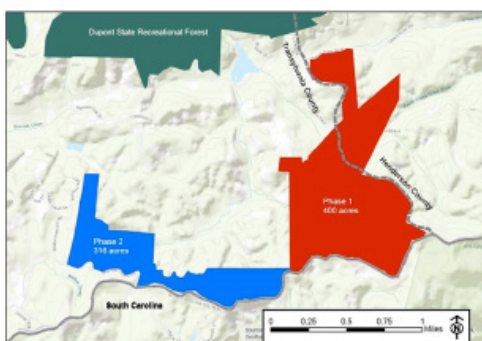


Since 2000, the primary trail to Hooker Falls was a road located in the floodplain of the Little River. This setting was problematic during rain events that would carry significant amounts of sediment into a stream system that supports fisheries and associated recreational activities. The trail condition was further impacted by the foot traffic of hundreds of thousands of visitors using the Hooker Falls Access Area. Examples of such impacts were the trampling of riparian vegetation critical to protecting water quality and persistent littering by visitors into the Little River.

The Forest staff located a more sustainable trail corridor to Hooker Falls. PARTF funds were used to construct a trail of similar length designed to support a high volume of traffic and withstand Transylvania County's abundant amount of annual precipitation. In addition to the new trail location, the project also constructed a new river access area for visitors that mitigated some impacts on streambanks and offers a short walk to the Little River for limited mobility users. The new trail and river access opened on March 15, 2020 —when the Forest re-opened after a two-month break related to COVID-19.



Land Acquisition - Closing Costs for the Continental Divide Property



In fiscal year 2020, the State paid residual closing costs for the acquisition of Phase I of the Continental Divide Property acquired through PARTF funding in fiscal year 2019. This area to the south of the State Forest protects a valuable corridor for wildlife habitat and will offer some additional recreational opportunities for visitors.