



**2022-2023  
ANNUAL REPORT**



*Lasting*

# Impressions

**A MESSAGE  
FROM OUR  
FOUNDER**

In thinking about how to share our Friends of the Valdese Rec successes over the past year, the overarching theme was "gift."

Our community has given many gifts - those of time, talent, and resources. And, our community has received many gifts - funding from the state, foundations, businesses and individuals, the gift of land, and the gift of new and improved park amenities.

Whether a gift is expected or a surprise, whether you are the giver or the receiver, gifts are a blessing. This report shows all the ways we are blessed by our gifts that will leave a Lasting Impression for generations to come.

With deepest appreciation,  
~Beth Heile



**IMPRESSIONS**

**\$ 285K**

Spent on Park Beautification

**77 28**

Group Hikes

Free Events

**1100+**

Volunteer Hours

**\$ 250K**

Community Donations

**\$ 540K**

State & Local Grants to FVR

*This report covers activity for Fiscal Year April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023.  
Except the Economic Impact report that was completed in May 2023.*



# Economic Impact

## A MESSAGE FROM ZAKK

For several years, I collected scattered visitation numbers for various trails at Valdese Lakeside Park (VLP). As attendance started reaching shocking numbers, I recommended getting complete visitation numbers to analyze the economic impact of the park.

Nine trail cameras used as counters and 507 recorded surveys brought to light the profound impact VLP has as an economic driver on Valdese and the community. The statistical model used will continue to update estimated visitation with the main entrance camera recording data.

Without this park, the downtown businesses would never realize the collective almost one million dollars annually in revenue and the locals who visit would face hundreds of dollars in extra costs (health care or transportation) annually.

For most, the park story is about using the park to get healthy, destress, exercise their dog, socialize and have quality family time. For funders, it is more about the numbers. I enjoyed using my gift of numbers to analyze the data to better position FVR and Valdese in grant applications to receive more gifts for our town.



## IMPRESSIONS

150,000

Annual Visits

\$1.36M

Impact to Valdese

6.5%

Growth per month

*Numbers in this document are from August 1, 2023.*



# Visitation as of 8/1/23

**144,536**

Annual Visits

**411**

Daily Visits

**1487**

Highest Weekend

**757**

Highest Day

Party Size



19.7%



37%



24.9%



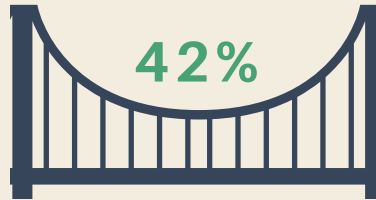
10.2%



8.2%



1:7  
Dog:People



Greenway Users Who Cross the Bridge

The average visitor goes to VLP 44 times a year.

# Impact

FVR volunteers set up at Valdese Lakeside Park on a Saturday, a Sunday and a weekday to interview visitors. The results from over 500 surveys are as follows:



## Visitors come from

- 32.7% Valdese
- 34.0% Other Burke County
- 33.3% Out of County

## Spending in Valdese due solely to the Park (per visit):

- Valdese Resident: \$5.22
- Other Burke County: \$7.33
- Out Of County: \$6.75

## Total Induced Spending in Valdese:

- \$965,395

**Driving Savings** for Valdese Residents: \$134,131

**Healthcare Savings** for Valdese Residents: \$229,784

**Annual Induced Economic Impact: \$1,357,471**

# Visits over Time

28 Day Moving Average



- March 2018 - Land acquired, FVR marked existing trails, created map
- July 2019 - Kellex Picnic tables added
- April 2020 - Web App of Trail Map by FVR
- May 2020 - 0.1 mile Trail to overlook completed by FVR volunteers
- October 2021 - 0.35 section trail off private land built by FVR volunteers
- November 2021 - Parking, restrooms, greenway, overlook
- December 2021 - 1 mile outer loop built by FVR volunteers
- March 2022 - Benches, tables, signage continue to be added
- May 2022 - Dog Park opened
- July 2022 - Suspension Bridge opened
- Aug 2022 - Obstacles and picnic table added to Dog Park
- October 2023 - Steps at McGalliard Falls Greenway added
- December 2022 - Wildcat Way 0.5 mile by FVR volunteers
- March 2023 - McGalliard Falls side greenway improved (crushed cinder)
- March 2023 - Story Book Trail installed by FVR volunteers
- April 2023 - Valdese Lakeside Park greenway improved (crushed cinder)
- April 2023 - New 0.6-mile Lakeside Loop trail by FVR volunteers
- April 2023 - Kayak Launch & Fishing Pier Started

## 10-YR ROI (Economic Impact Return on Investment)

Land: 55% | Phase 1 Construction: 242% | Bridge: 1201% | Greenway: 1375% | Kayak/Fishing Pier: 952%

## Future Amenities, Projected:

5 Miles Mountain Biking: +28474 Annual Visitors, 1009% 10-YR ROI

Picnic Pavilion: +13480 Annual Visitors, 502% 10-YR ROI

*These numbers use the total investment. When one excludes grants and only looks at community investment, the numbers are far higher.*



# Suspension Bridge

The gift of the 160-foot Suspension Bridge provided Valdese with a huge attraction that got people talking, and walking!

## Other key points:

The bridge connects Valdese Lakeside Park to McGalliard Falls Park with a 2-mile greenway trail

The bridge is part of the Burke River Trail (20 miles from Morganton to Hickory in the works running south of the Catawba River)

The bridge provides the loop for the Wilderness Gateway State Trail through downtown Valdese and its parks (main trail - Bakers Mountain to South Mountains to Chimney Rock)

The bridge is a type of suspension bridge with a little bounce – which is lots of fun and a little scary to some (technically a catenary bridge)

The bridge was built by a local company, Beanstalk Bridges



## FUNDING

\$100K

NC RTP Grant

\$51K

House Speaker Moore Assistance

\$50K

Community Donations

\$57.5K

State Grant - Rep Blackwell



# Greenway Upgrade

The entire 2-mile greenway is now 10-foot wide crushed cinder for an easier walk along Lake Rhodhiss and McGalliard Creek.

In 2021, one mile of the former grassy sewer easement was upgraded while the other mile remained grass. In 2022, with the McGalliard Creek Suspension Bridge installation it became obvious upgrading the entire path was the next amenity most desired by park attendees.

While technically only the first mile from VLP is ADA compliant, we have received reports of those with mobility difficulties going the entire 2 miles.

Friends of the Valdese Rec raised \$250K in 6 months for the improvement thanks to funders working together including a \$10K matching drive from Dianne Searcy.



## FUNDING

\$100K

State Grant - Rep Blackwell

\$125K

Rostan Family Foundation

\$25K

Community Donations



# McGalliard Falls *40 years*

In 1979, after a semester of studying McGalliard Falls, science teacher Don Brittain's sixth grade class at Valdese Elementary School wrote a letter to the Valdese Town Council. The students asked the town to "save McGalliard Falls and make the area into a park." At that time, water cascading over the 40-foot-tall and 200-foot-wide rock area contained chemical dye and treated sewage. The exploited land surrounding the falls was a city dump on one side and dug out for fill dirt as needed on the other side. From a council presentation to Mayor Ray C. Fletcher leading the charge, a park was born.

40 years to the minute after the original park dedication on October 5, 1982, Friends of the Valdese Rec held a reception at the Falls to honor those responsible for "saving the falls." Attendees listened as those involved shared their memories. Aply, sixth grade teacher Don Brittain spoke first. He told of the excitement students had as they worked on a real project that could impact their town. That they were "learning" scientific methods while discovering bad, though not illegal, practices being used by the town and businesses. And, then the enthusiasm shown as they moved from being scientists to advocates.

Ruth Fletcher Gage, a student in Mr. Brittain's class and daughter of Mayor Fletcher, had memories from both sides of the story. "My Dad believed that a park was a place that brought people from all walks of life together. He wanted to preserve both the beauty of the falls and the many ways people could enjoy the area for generations to come," Gage reflected during the reception. As one of the sixth grade students who presented to town council in 1979, Gage recalled, "Our class made a board that included everything we would want in a park, from places to play to clean water full of healthy, happy frogs."

Tom Powell, the recreation department maintenance supervisor became the park builder. Carrie Powell, his wife told the crowd that people said only one ballfield could be built on the site and Tom said he would show them - and was able to place two fields. She said their family life was consumed with the project and that is all she heard every evening when he got home. Tom's son Ernie Powell shared, "My father was proud to be selected to build the park and he was a hard worker. He made sure everything was perfect for the town, a town full of proud people." Ernie Powell wanted to make sure Town Recreation Director Bob Greene was recognized for overseeing the project. He said Greene was obsessed with making sure the water wheel for the grist mill was turning. The wheel still turns today on the first Saturday of the month.

Harold "Puse" Passmore, a Valdese town council member during the park decisions, said he was "proud to serve as a council member during that time and to be a part of saving and enhancing an incredible natural resource. I am delighted to see the draw the amenity still is for Valdese today."

FVR President and Founder, Beth Heile said, "It is only fitting that we recognize those in our community who took a stand for a local park long before FVR did. Without McGalliard Falls Park, Valdese Lakeside Park would have been isolated. Now, thanks to people who cared, we have over 360 acres of combined park land for our residents and visitors to explore."



# Lunch & Learn *Free*

In August, 2022, FVR started a free monthly Lunch and Learn Program for Young at Hearts. Every third Thursday of the Month at Noon, FVR provides lunch, time to socialize and a 15–20-minute program for those in the community who are retired or just interested. First United Methodist Church of Valdese is providing the space for the lunch event. Average attendance is 25 people and topics range from general knowledge to happenings in Valdese to nonprofits.

- September 21, 2023 - Valdese ABC Store
- August 17, 2023 - Burke County Public Library - Adult Programs
- July 20, 2023 - Children's Home Society
- June 15, 2023 - Alice Horton, Burke United Christian Ministries
- May 18, 2023 - Morrissa Angi, Valdese Community Affairs
- April 20, 2023 - Beth Heile, Valdese a Trail Town and FVR
- March 16, 2023 - Edyth Potter, Old Colony Players
- February 16, 2023 - Valdese Church Outreach Ministries (4 churches presented)
- January 19, 2023 - Traci Riebel, UNC Health Blue Ridge Project Forward
- December 15, 2022 - Nancy Wood, The Enola Group
- November 17, 2022 - Seth Eckard, Valdese Town Manager
- October 20, 2022 - Willie Pascal & Lisa Miller, Beekeepers
- September 15, 2022 - Jack Moss, Valdese Police Chief
- August 18, 2022 - Mark Stinson, Amoren Hospice



FVR has hosted other activities for senior citizens including completing Living Will paperwork, technology help and picnics. The overwhelming response to the picnics led FVR to move to monthly events for more time together. The program is funded by donations to the FVR general fund and attendees sometimes pitch in with desserts.

To RSVP for lunch, email [friendsofthevaldeserec@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthevaldeserec@gmail.com) the Tuesday before the third Thursday event. You may attend if you do not RSVP, but lunch is only guaranteed for those who reply.





## DOG PARK

\$25K

Community Donations

May 2022 - Dog Park opened thanks to a **\$5,000 grant from the Mull Foundation that was matched with \$5000 from Farris Insurance and \$5,000 from the community.** These funds covered grading, sod, fencing, dog waste can and bag holder. In August, **a grant from the Rostan Family Foundation** provided funds for the picnic tables and obstacles. And, let's not forget the huge bone donated in honor of Whoopi and Barry Crawford. *(Volunteers watered sod, assembled obstacles and picnic tables and installed shade sails.)* **75** Volunteer Hours

## NEW TRAIL

\$2500

Community Donations

Volunteers built a 0.6 mile section of trail during March 2023. The general location of this trail was in the park master plan and NC Trails Staff provided 8 hours of design time to define the route. FVR volunteers took it from there - excavating and hand finishing. Starting off the Meditation Point Trail, Lakeside Loop is close to the parking lot and is perfect for a visitor's first hiking trail with high views of the lake. In addition to trail work, volunteers built and installed three benches and a picnic table for relaxing. **400** Volunteer Hours



## STORY BOOK TRAIL

\$6K

Community Donations

The Story Book Trail is made up of 16 pedestals that hold pages of a book giving visitors the chance to read and be out in nature. The pedestals were made possible with a **\$3840 grant from the Community Foundation of Burke County, a \$1,000 donation from the Pilot Club of Valdese, \$1,000 from FVR** plus 10 volunteers working 4 days to install the pedestals. FVR purchases and updates the book each month. **40** Volunteer Hours



2023  
**YEAR OF THE TRAIL**

Friends of the  
Valdese Rec

**365 Mile  
CHALLENGE**

**NEW YEAR'S RUNS**

January 1, 2019 started our annual 5K & 10K Trail Runs at Valdese Lakeside Park. Last year, with January 1, 2023 being on Sunday, we changed to December 31, 2022 and had the best turn out ever. This year we will stay on Saturday, which is December 30, 2023. Registration is now open through UltraSignup. Thanks to our race directors Mark Rostan and Ray Burris for helping us keep costs down. We average about \$1000 going back into the park each race.

**\$1000**

Raised for VLP



**FVR 365 CHALLENGE**

For NC Year of the Trail, we challenged folks to get out on a Valdese trail one mile each day. 159 signed up and 105 are logging their miles online - currently totaling 24,100 miles. Participants paid \$10 to be a part of the challenge and received a t-shirt. Finishers will receive a locally made pottery award and bragging rights. 30 have already finished.



**WILDLIFE CAMERAS**

**\$500**  
Donations

In March 2020, Beth Heile shared she wanted to get pictures of the otters at VLP. Ruth Fletcher Gage provided funds for a camera. Zakk Heile took on the project and started sharing wildlife videos. Seeing the results online, John Setzler and Steve Martinat donated more cameras. Animals recorded: Deer, Heron, Turkey, Raccoon, Squirrel, Owl, Fox (Red & Gray), Coyote, Bobcat, Canadian Goose, Possum, Nutria, Rabbit, Mouse, Skunk, Rare Black Skunk, Mink, Bear, Otter - See videos at

**300**  
Volunteer  
Hours

<https://zakklab.valdese.info/vlp/wildlife/>



## FISHING-KAYAK PIER <sup>\$200K+</sup>

Community Donations & Grants

The ADA fishing pier combined with the kayak/canoe launch is the final amenity that was part of the PARTF Grant for Phase 1 Construction. **Community dollars matched the PARTF Grant with \$30K going to the pier. NCWRC contributed \$170K** for the design, engineering and construction for the amazing floating pier with Above Board ADA Kayak system. Ribbon Cutting will be Wed Aug 30 at 2pm and is open to the public with educational information, crafts and refreshments.

## PLEIN AIR FEST

For the second year, FVR has partnered with Rock School Arts Foundation and Town of Valdese to host the Plein Air Fest. During the week of September 9-16, artists from around the region come to paint at Valdese Parks. The week ends with a reception to showcase the work, present awards and allow purchases. Go to [ValdesePleinAirFest.com](http://ValdesePleinAirFest.com) to sponsor, register to paint, buy tickets, and learn more about events happening all around town from Chalk Art to Group Walks. **A grant from the Burke Youth Organized Philanthropists will provide painting lessons for 36 kids** on September 9 at our Fun at the Falls event.



## FAMILY FUN AT FALLS

The Annual Free Family Fun at the Falls event will take place on Saturday, September 9 at 10:30 at McGalliard Falls Park. Kids can stop by craft tables, education stations, get painting lessons and a free lunch. Details are being finalized at this time, but plan to attend!

*Free*

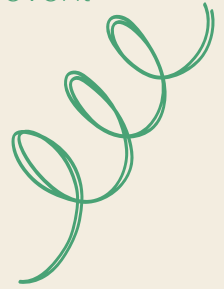


## DUCK DERBY

A Duck Derby will be held during the Free Family Fun event with proceeds going to McGalliard Falls Park beautification.

- \$5 per duck or
- \$25 for 4 ducks, with 1 duck for a child at the Free Fun at the Falls event

**Winner: \$100**



## LAND PURCHASE \$40K

State Grant

The Wilderness Gateway State Trail is coming through Valdese from Mineral Springs Mountain Avenue. To enhance the trail area, **Foothills Conservancy has purchased 5.8 acres** across from Children's Park that can be used for picnicking and walking. Once funding comes from the state to cover the cost, the land will be transferred to the Town for public use. The exact route is still being determined, however targets are Main Street Valdese and the Valdese Greenway.



## 1000 MILE CHALLENGE

As NC Year of the Trail 2023 comes to an end, the Great Trails State Coalition is looking *Free* forward to branding NC as The Great Trails State. Part of that is an annual Great Trails State Day on the third Saturday of October. This year FVR will host the FVR 1000 Mile Challenge at VLP. FVR will be at the park to record attendees' miles walking, hiking, biking, running and/or paddling. No registration necessary, Just show up at the park and FVR volunteers will add your miles to the total. It can be one mile or 20 miles. We can do it!!





## MUSIC ON THE LAKE

On April 30, FVR hosted a free concert at VLP. About 175 people brought their lawn chairs and snacks for a late afternoon enjoying the music of the Shelby Rae Moore Band. Some attendees even enjoyed dancing. FVR paid the band this time, but for future events we will look for a band sponsor. We appreciate Mayor Watts for welcoming the crowd and the Valdese Police Department for being on hand if needed.

\$ 600

## STEPS AT GREENWAY

**Bimbo Bakeries** "stepped up" to the plate to fund steps at the McGallard Falls side start of the Valdese Greenway. FVR and Bimbo worked with Deeply Rooted Landscaping for the design and placement of the steps. In addition, Bimbo employees added had a workday to add landscaping along the steps and along the white fence in the area. They finished just in time for the McGalliard Falls 40th Celebration.

\$ 5000



## RAILING \$ priceless

**Scott and Donna Powell** have been walking the trails at Valdese Lakeside Park for years. As they started walking the completed Valdese Greenway, Scott recognized the need for a railing at the new McGalliard Falls Steps. Being a part of the local company Powell Welding, Scott offered his services - design, materials, and installation. Thanks to Scott for the incredible craftsmanship.



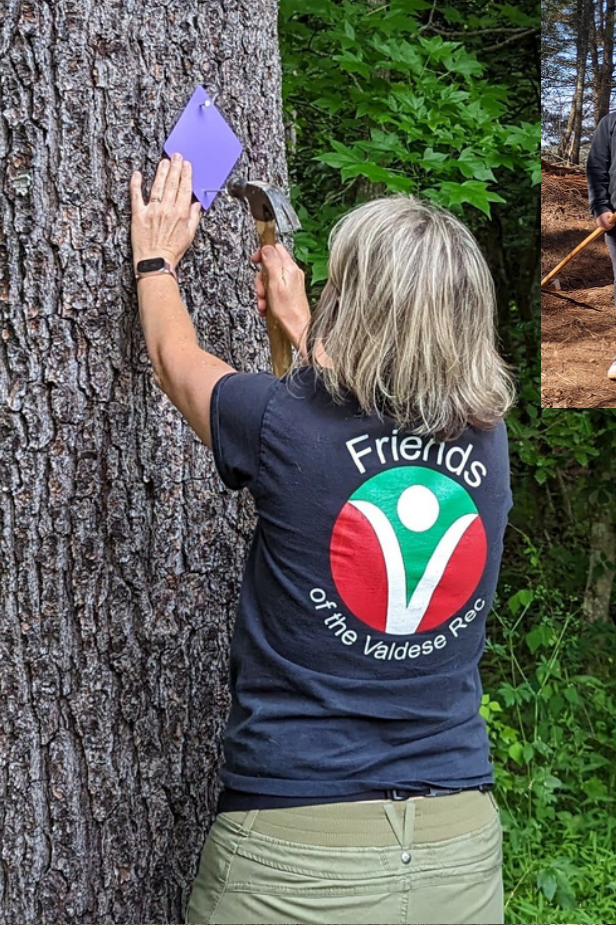
*Volunteers*  
2022-2023

**1000+  
HOURS**

**Trail Builders  
Bench Builders  
Trash Collectors  
Weed Eaters**

**Cooks and Bakers  
Sawyers  
Data Collectors  
Painters & More**





**Many thanks to the gift givers of their time and talents!**



*Donations can be for*  
**General Fund (programs, operations, events)**  
**A Specific Park**  
**A Specific Project**

*DONATIONS LISTED ARE FROM APRIL 1, 2022 - MARCH 31 2023*

RFFF Dog Park \$5000	John Setzler \$100	Spence and Jayne Borden \$500
CFBC Story Book Trail \$3840	Wes Presnell \$100	Walter Petree Support Trust \$400
RFFF Greenway \$125,000	Laura Justice \$25	Animal Hospital East Burke \$500
State Budget Office \$250,000	Ruth Gage \$120	Tommy Miller \$500
	Chip & Tammy Black \$1000	Carl Abernathy \$100
Le Phare Des Alps \$500	Frances Hildebran \$50	Jim Boucher \$70
Dianne Searcy \$5000	Wanda Barrett \$100	Kellie Elliot \$30
Woody Poor \$250	Jeff Wilson \$50	Steve & Debbie Biele \$25
Jimmy Jacumin \$100	Joann McFarlane \$100	Amparo R Alfaro \$300
Anita Barrett \$51	Pam DeLoach \$100	Mary Brooks \$20
Dan Hoyle \$75	Leland Rhame \$500	Laura Klauke \$65
John Waters \$75	Laura Johnson \$50	Kristie Poteat \$25
Deborah Lancaster \$300	Julie Zimmerman \$100	Pam DeLoach \$100
Cutie Kaplan \$100	Dan Hoyle \$200	Debbie Jones \$50
Fans of the Park \$500	Marc & Marie Mitchell \$1000	Donna & Scott Powell \$100
Jeff Wilson - \$50	Jose Perez \$100	Gloria Barrett \$75
Pilot Club \$1000	Gail Nichols \$100	Debbie Shuman \$75
Llyod & Helen Wallace \$1000	Kevin Farris \$250	Tom McKinnon \$100
Mike Darling \$100	Lisa White \$10	John & Laura Lafferty \$250
Regina Mullinax \$50	Evija \$500	Jeanette Norman \$50
Thomas McKinnon \$125	Bryan Beam \$250	David Martin \$100
Morgan-Avery Fund \$500	Karen Clark-Caruso \$50	Farris Insurance \$1250
Dianne Searcy \$10,000	Jane & Johnny Poteat \$100	JoAnn Macfarlane \$175
Gloria Wright \$500	Meredith & Ed Bleyнат \$200	Vickie Cranford \$35
Saft \$300	Jeff Carter \$100	Dennis Parise \$500
Catawba Valley Staffing \$100	Debbie Thompson \$100	Gary Delp \$100
Los Compadres \$100	Jane & Buck Jones \$100	Wes Presnell \$100
Foothills Mulch & Stone \$100	Patricia Zimmerman \$500	Ingram \$20
Mow-Town Landscaping \$100	Rhea Simmons \$200	Laura Klauke \$90
College Pines \$100	Kathleen Mowery \$50	Pam DeLoach \$300
Delayne & CharleMartin \$75	Sam & Barbara Erwin \$150	Betencourt \$250
Beth & Eric Heile \$50	Shirley & Kevin Folan \$100	Sue Skolochenko \$250
Christa Miller \$200	Heritage Funeral \$100	Lisa Miller \$20
Janet West \$20	Ann Dickey \$100	Maxine McCall Fund \$500
Ken Reddick \$25	Steve & Ann Mullis \$100	Shenandoah Furniture \$1000
Vallapa Bumgarner \$1000	The Stitchery \$65	Animal Services Foundation \$100
Valdese Rotary Club \$750	100 Main \$300	Kay and David Draughn \$100

Phyllis & Roy Sweezy in honor of James Sweezy  
Joseph & Gaby Hoyle in honor of Johnny Poteat  
Karen Curtis-Gwynn in memory T.J & Billie Curtis  
Dennis and Anita Parise in memory of Faye Rhyne  
Dr and Mrs Randall Rogan in Honor of Johnny Poteat





***Membership dues pay boring stuff like insurance, PO box rental, filing fees and stamps. But, they are critical to help keep FVR running so we can fulfill our mission.***

**(DATE - WHEN ANNUAL RENEWAL DUE)**

**Lifetime (\$500 - one time payment)**

Mo McCarthy, Cheryl McCarthy, David Mursh & Amy Voss, Mark Buff, Keith & Karen Pittman

**Annual Club/Company (\$120)**

College Pines Health and Rehabilitation (Aug 2023), Bingham Storage (Jan 2024)

**Annual Family (\$25)**

Roy & Sarah Ashkenaz (Aug 2023), Steve & Debbie Biele (June 2024), Meredith Bleynat (Jan 2023), Spence & Jayne Borden (Jan 2024), Don & Joyce Brittain (May 2022), Toby & April Crain (Mar 2023), Richard & Mary Ericson (Aug 2023), David Fletcher (October 2023), Josh Folan (Jan 2023), Shirley Folan (Jan 2023), Beth & Eric Heile (Mar 2024), Steve & Sigrid Hice (Jul 2023), Joy H and Debbie T (Jan 2023), Melanie Hildebrand (Jan 2023), Dan and Sarah Hoyle (Sept 2023), Jared Huffman (Dec 2023), Laura Johnson (Dec 2023), Tom Kenney (Sept 2023), Jann Reece-LaFevers & Carter LaFevers (Jan 2024), Quez Little (Jan 2023), Charles Martin Family (Jan 2024), Lori & David Martin (Jan 2023), Kathy Meyers (Aug 2023), Debbie M & Sam (July 2023), Karen & Keith Pittman (Dec 2024), Woody & Bobbi Poor (Jan 2024), Johnny & Jane Poteat (Aug 2023), John & Lisa Raggio (April 2024), Mark and Leslie Rostan (Oct 2023), Valerie and Clinton Scott (Jan 2024), John & Tonya Setzler (April 2023), Jackie & Gavin Smith (Jan 2023), Robert & Susan Stevenson (Aug 2023), Roy & Phyllis Sweezy (Dec 2023), Jim & Sandy Terrell (Aug 2023), Helen Tueffel (Jan 2023), John & Jude Waters (Sept 2023), Barry & Melinda Zimmerman (Mar 2024)

**Annual Individual (\$10)**

Libby Braswell (Aug 2023), Dianne Buff (Jan 2023), Sarah Butler (Jan 2023), Michael Chatten (Jan 2023), Don Clements (Aug 2023), Vickie Cranford (Jan 2024), Barbara Cuthbertson (March 2024), Pam Deloach (July 2023), Linda Gibbs (Jan 2024), Anita Gulsby (April 2024), Frances Hildebran (Aug 2023), Luke Hildebran (Jan 2024), Barbara Houston (Sept 2023), Jimmy Jacumin (Aug 2023), Tim Johnson (Dec 2023), Cutie Kaplan (Nov 2023), Doug Knight (Jan 2024), Karen Knight (Jan 2024), Quez Little (Jan 2023), Tom McKinnon (Oct 2023), Ann Martin (Jan 2023), Truett Martin (April 2024), Lisa Miller (Jan 2023), Amanda Newman (2023), Rob Nelson (March 2024), Dorothy Nurminen (April 2024), Reba Page (Aug 2023), Christa Pearson (Jan 2023), Wayne Powell (Aug 2023), Toni Reece (Jan 2024), Alice Salthouse (Jan 2023), Stephen Schoeberle (Jan 2024), Dianne Searcy (Jan 2023), Debbie Shuman (April 2024), James Sweezy (Jan 2024), Annette Skidmore (Jan 2023), Debbie Thompson (July 2024), Wendy Ward (Dec 2023), Pat Zimmerman (Jul 2024)

**Board Members**

Beth Heile, Spence Borden, Don Brittain, Gavin Smith, Quez Little, Val Scott, Kevin Farris, John Setzler, Roy Sweezy, Zakk Heile, Roy Ashkenaz



Check our website for other events that may pop up.  
[FriendsOfTheValdeseRec.org/calendar](https://FriendsOfTheValdeseRec.org/calendar)

## RECURRING

- **Weekly Group Hikes at Valdese Lakeside Park**

Tuesday - 6 pm, Wednesday - 9:30 am, Saturday 9 am

Meet at the restrooms and the group will decide the 2-4 mile route.

Friday at 8:30am is a slow one mile total down the greenway

- **1st Sunday Group Walk on the Valdese Greenway**

Meet at the Valdese Lakeside Park restrooms at 2pm

- **Lunch & Learn - 3rd Thursday at Noon**

Free lunch and speaker for adults at First United Methodist Church Valdese.

RSVP for lunch by 3rd Tuesday (not required if you do not want to eat)

- **FVR 365 Mile Challenge for Year of the Trail**

In January, 159 people signed up to hike a mile a day. As of July 15, 25 have finished.

## ACTIVE EVENTS

- **Saturday, September 9, 2:00 pm**

Group walk/hike starting at McGalliard Falls Park for Public and Artists

- **Tuesday, September 12, 7:00 am**

Coffee and Conversation on the Greenway, meet at VLP

- **Saturday, October 7, Noon**

Geocache Basics - Class and Hunt - at VLP

- **Saturday, October 21, All Day - Great Trails State Day**

1000 Mile Challenge at VLP

- **Saturday, December 30, 9:00 am**

New Year's Resolution 5K & 10K at VLP

## **SOCIAL/EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

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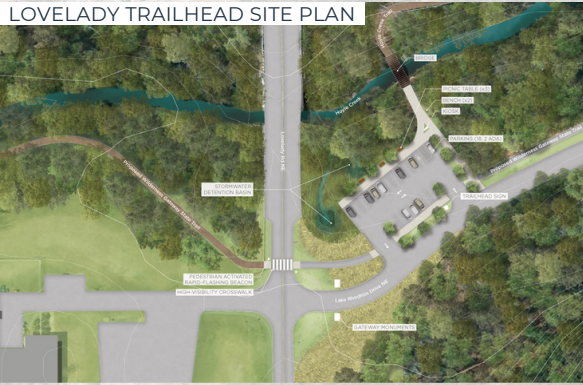
- **Saturday, August 12, 8:00-11:30 am -**  
Booth at Valdese Waldensian Festival - 204 E Main St
- **Wednesday, August 30, 2:00 pm**  
Ribbon Cutting Event for Fishing Pier & Kayak Launch at VLP
- **Saturday, September 9, 10:30 am**  
Free Family Fun at the Falls - Duck Derby Fundraiser
- **Thursday, October 12, Noon -**  
Community Covered Dish Lunch at McGalliard Falls Park
- **Thursday, October 19, 6:30pm -** Celebration Among Friends at Old Rock School, FVR Annual Meeting, reception, recognizing volunteers

## **WORKDAYS - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

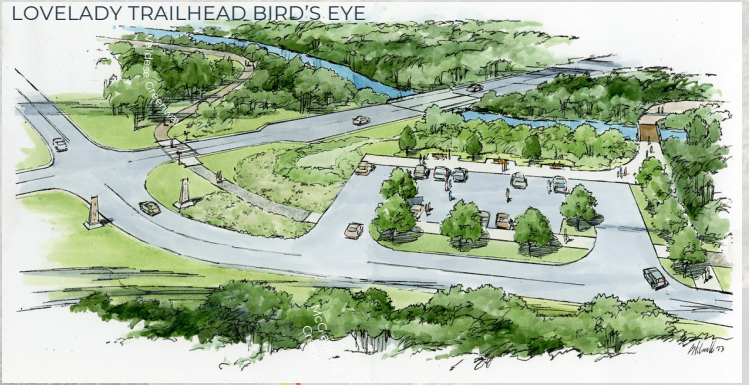
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- **Saturday, August 26, 8:00 -10:00 am**  
Spruce Up McGalliard Falls Park Volunteer Workday
- **Monday, August 28, 8:00 -10:00 am**  
Cove Clean up at VLP
- **Saturday, September 30, 8:00 -10:00 am**  
Spruce Up Children's Park Volunteer Workday

LOVELADY TRAILHEAD SITE PLAN



LOVELADY TRAILHEAD BIRD'S EYE



LAKE RHODHISS DR NE SIDEPATH  
ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN

DESTINATION BY DESIGN



# Lovelady Trailhead

## & LAKE RHODHISS DR SIDEPATH

Many people use the Lovelady Road and Lake Rhodhiss Drive intersection as a "trailhead" to walk the road or to access VLP's Hoyle Creek Trail.

Plans have been developed to create a larger and safer Wilderness Gateway State Trailhead. Parking would be shifted to one side of the road and a pedestrian bridge added.

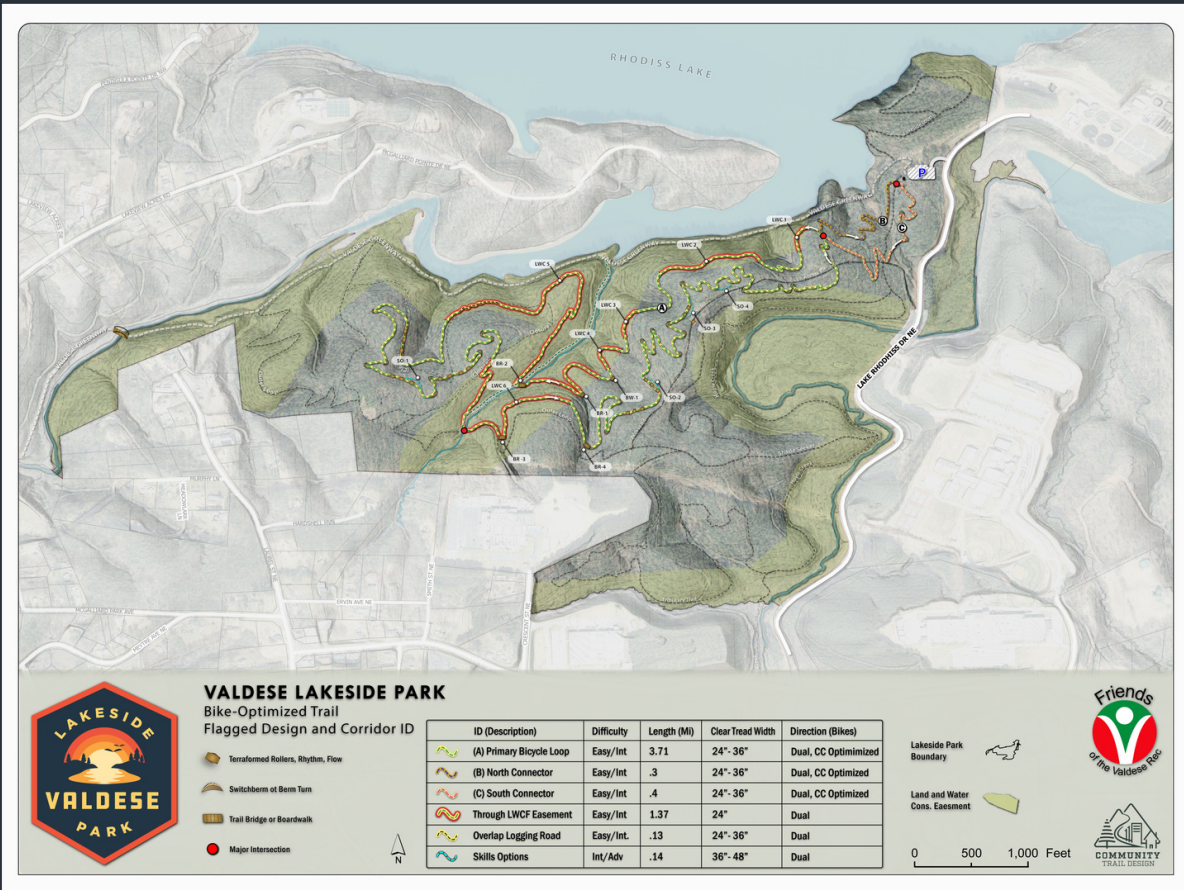
In addition, there would be an ADA side path between the road and creek with creek overlooks and creek crossings.

Funding opportunities are being investigated at this time.



A new trailhead is the reason we have held off on a larger, more prominent sign at Lovelady Road.

Also, we appreciate NCDOT planting the wildflowers in 2022 that came back just as strong this year!



# Mountain Bike Trails

Phase 2 of the Valdeese Lakeside Park Master Plan is all about Mountain Bike Trails.

Due to the NCLWF grant, preapproval of the trail route is needed. Thanks to a state grant, FVR was able to contract with a mountain bike design firm to lay out the trails.

We are going through the approval process now and will be looking at contractors. The route plan also estimates the approximate 5 mile loop to cost \$250K.



**FUNDING NEEDED**

*\$200K*

**FUNDING IN HAND**

*\$50K*





# Gathering Pavilion

With 300 acres at VLP, there is plenty to explore, but no place to gather for organized programming or spontaneous convening.

The Pavilion will serve as a gathering space for the community to take part in classes, meals, awards, exercise, meet ups, entertainment (movie, music, drama) and shelter (from rain and sun). The flexible design will allow for picnic tables to be placed on the slightly raised platform for a community meal or removed for an educator or local theater performance to be center stage with the picnic tables scattered around the grassy lawn. This heart of the park will unify visitors seeking comfortable seating within the natural forested environment with a lake view.

Having an established space will encourage more organizations, including FVR, to offer free programming at the park. It will also be available for family reunions, company picnics and weddings!



**FUNDING NEEDED**

**\$ 210K**

**FUNDING IN HAND**

**\$ 30K**


*Donor recognition at Pavilion for donations of \$1000 or more*


We couldn't have  
done it without your  
generous *gifts*




Thank you

to all our donors  
and volunteers.

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**Please help us to continue to beautify our parks  
and add more programming by donating.**

**Donate to:**

\$\_\_\_\_\_ General Fund - programs, events, projects

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Pavilion at VLP

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Mountain Bike Trails at VLP

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Specific Park - Circle:

Valdese Lakeside Park, McGalliard Falls/Fletcher, Children's Park

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Join/Renew:**

Joining is a type of donation, too. Membership dues pay boring stuff like insurance, PO box rental and stamps. But, this is critical to help keep the organization running so we can fulfill our mission.

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$10

\_\_\_\_\_ Family \$25

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporate/Civic \$120

\_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime \$500