



## Yadkin River State Trail Plan: 2022-2027

### Yadkin Riverkeeper, Inc.

■ **Planned Length:** 162 miles

■ **Complete the Trails Funds:** \$210,375

■ **Miles Designated:** 130\*

■ **Capacity Funds:** \$49,500

*\*All accesses still need to be designated*

### Capacity Building Funds:

Yadkin Riverkeeper will use the capacity building funds to work with public and nonprofit partners to:

- develop and implement a plan to allocate a portion of the Complete the Trail Funds (CTF) to access area improvements,
- develop grant proposals for access area land acquisition/improvement projects,
- facilitate the placement of mile markers and access area signage, and
- promote the YRST through YRK's website, social media and Historic Paddle Series.

Direct costs will include program staff costs for implementing the listed tasks, staff travel and marketing, as well as a contract with the Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments to update the online YRST map periodically.

### Specific deliverables during FY 23 will include:

1. Access area designation applications submitted and approved for at least eight of current access areas on the upper YRST. Placement of access areas signs at officially designated access areas.
2. Identification of 8–10 new access area locations on the River to achieve the goal of having a public access at least every 4-6 miles. Includes an assessment of the current owner and their willingness to sell.
3. Finalized plans/contracts with local government and nonprofit partners to utilizing CTFs for priority projects.
4. Develop additional marketing materials (brochure/website) to promote the YRST through YRK's Historical Paddle Series.
5. Periodic updates to the on-line YRST map.
6. Assessment of adding new segment of trail from Ferguson or Patterson to the Kerr Scott Reservoir.
7. Placement of 10 mile marker signs on the River.

### Trail Development:

1. Top priority is to provide CTF funds to ensure all current 17 access areas are designated as part of the state trail. Complete the Trail Funds will assist in making this happen and will leverage resources from local governments and nonprofit partners. Most access areas need ramp, road and parking improvements and restroom facilities.
2. Second priority is development of the Ararat River access on Pilot Mountain State Park land in Surry County to close a current gap of nearly 17 miles between the Yadkin Shore Access and the Shoals Access.
3. YRK will work with NC State Trails to procure and place access areas signs, once those sites are designated.
4. Development of new Rockford access in Surry County (NC Land and Water Fund application submitted by Piedmont Land Conservancy. CTFs would potentially be used for access infrastructure (i.e. put in ramp/steps)
5. Development of Shallow Ford State Historic Site on the River in Forsyth County with riverside camping, picnic areas, hiking trails, parking, kayak demos (\$425 K in the FY '22 budget)
6. Working with private landowners and local emergency response agencies, YRK will continue its efforts to place mile markers along the YRST, starting on the Yadkin County side of the River, for which we have separate funding.
7. Work with local government agencies and nonprofit partners such as the Elkin Valley Trail Association, The Conservation Fund, Blue Ridge Conservancy, Piedmont Land Conservancy, and the Three Rivers Land Trust to identify, acquire and develop at least three new access areas where needed to reduce the distance between access areas to 4-6 miles.

### Segment 1: Kerr Scott Dam to Elkin (30 miles)

1. Improve ramp at Smoot Park North Wilkesboro.
2. Expand parking and improve emergency response access at Ronda access area.
3. New ramp at Roaring River access area.
4. Safety hazard removal between Roaring River and Ronda accesses (Mile 143).

### Segment 2: Elkin to Clemmons (56 miles)

1. Access road improvement and site development on the Ararat River, near its confluence with the YRST on Pilot Mountain State Park land.
2. Site/ramp improvements to the Huntsville access in Yadkin County.
3. Dam portage safety improvements at Winston-Salem's water intake dam between Donnaha and Old 421 Access. (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities is currently doing dam maintenance and will be improving the portage around the dam, along with signage within the next year. No CTFs required).

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4. Parking, river access, riverside camp sites on Shallow Ford tract soon to become a state historic site. \$425,000 in FY '22 state budget for infrastructure improvements at the site. Property in process of being transferred to State Historical Sites.

### Segment 3: Clemmons to Spencer (39 miles)

1. Dam portage safety improvements at Idol's Dam near Mile 72. (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities is currently doing dam maintenance and will be improving the portage around the dam, along with signage within the next two years. No CTF required.)
2. Ramp improvements and additional gravel at Highway 64 access area.
3. Access area improvements at Tanglewood Park, Forsyth County.

### Segment 4: Spencer to Morrow Mountain State Park (37 miles)

1. Cube Hydro Yadkin Generation has constructed three riverside campsites at the York Hill Access Area/Yadkin River Park and three lakeside campsites at the High Rock Dam along the portage trail. They will be constructing new nonmotorized boat campsites throughout the Yadkin Lakes, which can be used by paddlers taking the trip across the lakes. No state funding is anticipated to be needed for the development of these campsites.
2. The City of Lexington is developing a blueway trail along Abbotts Creek and may be interested in applying for a Connecting Trails Grant for access areas improvements on along Abbotts Creek, which connects with the YRST through the Abbotts Creek arm of High Rock Lake.

### Complete the Trail (CTF) Projects:

1. Access area improvements (\$125 K): Will request/document matching funds/in-kind donation from local partners. Access area must apply for designation to be eligible for CTFs.
  - Ramp improvements at Smoot Park in North Wilkesboro.
  - New ramp construction at Roaring River access in Wilkes County.
  - Expanded parking and improved emergency response access at the Ronda access in Wilkes County.
  - Gravel and road grading for Yadkin Shore access in Yadkin County.
  - Ramp improvements at Bob Pate/Huntsville access in Yadkin County.
  - Access improvements at Tanglewood access in Forsyth County.
  - Ramp improvements/gravel at US-64 access in Davidson County.
2. Access road improvements and site development on the Ararat River near its confluence w/ the YRST on Pilot Mountain State Park land with possible match in State Park funds. (\$40,000)
3. Rockford access (NC Land and Water Fund application submitted by Piedmont Land Conservancy on behalf of Surry County.) CTFs would potentially be used for access infrastructure (i.e., put in ramp or steps). (\$25,000)
4. Purchase YRST mile marker signs. (\$10,000)
5. Contract with Piedmont Triad Regional Council to update and maintain YRST on-line map. (\$5,000)
6. Website/brochure development, design, and printing. (\$5,000)

### Future CFT Fund needs:

1. Funding for compostable or vault toilets at 8 existing access areas (\$240,000)
2. Land/infrastructure for at least 10 new access areas (\$1,000,000-\$100,000/per access area). Leverage funds from the NC Land and Water Fund, Recreational Trails Program, CTF land acquisition funds and Connecting Trail Funds.

### 2023 Year of the Trail Celebrations Planned/Anticipated:

1. Ribbon-cutting at Shallowford historic site marking transfer to public ownership.
2. Year of the Trail promotion as part of YRK's Historic Paddle Series, highlighting CTF projects.
3. T-shirt commemorating the Year of the Trail with YRST focus.
4. Information on YRK website and monthly social media postings during 2023 highlighting sections of the YRST supported by CTF.

### Needed technical/other assistance needed from State Parks:

1. Final access area sign design/production.
2. Two (one at entrance road, one on the river) customized access area signs for each designated access area.
3. Obtain guidance/approval from NCDOT on placing road names on river bridge crossings and roadside directional signs.
4. Facilitate discussions with State Historical Sites to develop and implement a Master Plan for the Shallow Ford Tract.
5. Facilitate discussion about establishing new access area on State Park land on the Arara