



# **Powell River Blueway Trail Action Plan**

**Prepared by the  
Powell River Tourism Committee  
of the Claiborne County Tourism Commission**

**December 2018**





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## **Action Plan**

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The Powell River Blueway Trail is a project undertaken by the Powell River Tourism Committee of the Claiborne County Tourism Commission. This Action Plan describes the resource and opportunities and sets out the purpose, status, current projects, goals, and the means to achieve the goals of the Powell River Blueway Trail project.

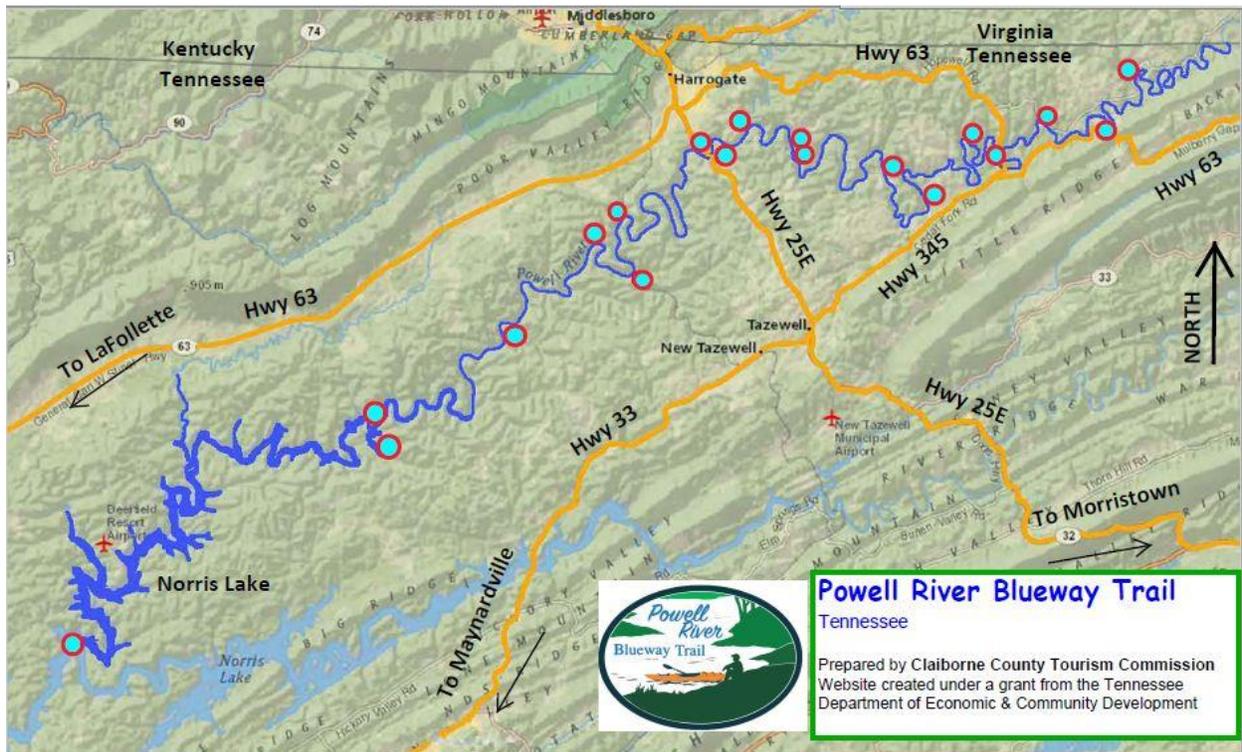
#### **THE POWELL RIVER RESOURCE**

The Powell River is a significant natural resource which flows through Northeastern Tennessee for 114 miles to its confluence with the Clinch River in Norris Lake. Of these 114 miles, 70 miles of the river wind its way through Claiborne County. The Powell River is a prime example of Appalachian natural beauty and rural history. Key attributes of the Powell River are:

- The Clinch River and its main tributary the Powell River, are the two largest undammed rivers in Tennessee.
- Rare and Federally Endangered species of fish and freshwater mussels are present in the Powell River (together with the Clinch River, have the greatest concentration of Endangered fish & mussels of any river in the U.S.)
- Because of its beauty, biodiversity and ecological value, The Nature Conservancy has included the Powell river in its list of “Last Great Places” on earth.
- The Powell River is classified as a “Class 1” river for paddlers, meaning that it is suitable for family recreation. Outdoor Knoxville describes the Powell River as “One of the finest remote float streams in the state, winding through sparsely populated and beautiful country...”
- Sherpaguides.com has described the Powell River as “one of the finest remote float streams in the state, winding through sparsely populated and beautiful country that offers excellent fishing for smallmouth bass and rock bass, as well as bird and wildlife viewing.”
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services estimates that there are over 100 species of fish in the Powell River (for comparison, only 35 species of fish exist in all the rivers combined in the Western U.S.)

- Research by Lincoln Memorial University has established that the water quality is of sufficiently good quality to support the reintroduction of several endangered species mussels into the Powell River in Claiborne County through a combined effort of Virginia Tech University, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.
- Because of the hilly topography of Claiborne County, a person floating the Powell River can go miles seeing only wooded hillside, occasional pastures, dramatic rock cliffs, and perhaps a river otter, beaver or bald eagle.

### The Powell River in Tennessee with Existing Public & Private Access Points



### THE OPPORTUNITY

**Recreational:** As a free-flowing, essentially undeveloped, Class I river, the Powell offers an extraordinary recreational opportunity for both local and visiting paddlers. One can paddle for miles without seeing a cabin, or generally, not even another paddler. Fishing for small-mouth bass and rock bass is excellent. With sufficient access and facilities, the Powell can provide recreational opportunities for day-trips and well as multi-day camping journeys.

**Ecological:** As one of the most biologically diverse rivers in the country, the Powell offers an abundance of Nature for the casual observer, the biologist and for everyone in between. In just a few hours on the river, one will commonly see Blue Heron, Wood Ducks, and Kingfishers and possibly see Bald Eagles, Red-Tailed Hawks, Pileated Woodpeckers, and Green Herons. Beaver and river otter are shy, but present. Grazing deer and wild turkey are common. There is a wide

variety of trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Both rare and common freshwater mussels have made a comeback and are sustaining their populations as the water quality of the river has improved.

Economic: As access and river-based enterprises are established, the Powell River will provide a needed economic boost to Claiborne County and surrounding areas. This project will enhance current businesses and create new business and job opportunities in the form of kayak rentals, fishing tackle sales, fishing guides, cafes and restaurants, motels and cabins, riverside campgrounds, trip suppliers, gift shops, ecotourism, craft sales etc. This project will promote greater awareness of the river, drawing in adventure tourists to the area and providing job opportunities to this economically challenged area.

Social: If access to, and knowledge of, the Powell River is improved, increased usage is likely to result. Having people, especially children and young adults, experience Nature first hand may increase their curiosity about Nature as well as providing a needed means of enjoyable exercise. Health benefits may accrue from more time on the river. River trips will provide an opportunity for family bonding and for group outings.

Inter-State Coordination: The Powell River originates in Virginia. Although the Powell River Blueway Trail project is currently focused on access in Tennessee to the Powell, we are aware of emerging efforts in Virginia. The opportunity clearly exists to coordinate the efforts in both states to maximize the potential of this resource.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

The Powell River winds through the Cumberland Mountain Range with very limited public road access and steep hillsides bordering most of the river. The National Park Services recommends river access points at five-mile intervals. For the 84 miles from the Virginia state line to the Union County Boat Dock (River Mile 30), there would ideally be at least 17 public access locations. Currently (December 2018), the following number of access points by category are:

- 5 Public developed sites in Claiborne County,  
two of which were constructed with ECD Grant funds 7/2017 – 12/2018
- 2 Public developed sites in other counties
- 3 Public sites in Claiborne County under construction
- 3 Public undeveloped sites
- 4 Private boat rental sites
- 2 Possible new access sites (in negotiation)

From this list, it can be seen that the total number of actual and potential sites, public and private, come close to the NPS recommended number of access points when averaged. However, the points are not equally spaced along the river. A few more access points may be possible as willing

landowners may elect to sell or grant public access easements. However, it will be essential to maximize knowledge of, and ease of access to, all of these existing and possible sites if the river's recreational, ecological, economic and social potential is to be fully utilized.

Therefore, the challenge is to develop each available access site to its suitable potential and to provide the funding sources to develop and maintain these sites. Additionally, it is essential that we maintain close coordination with affected government agencies.

## **INVENTORY OF RIVER ACCESS SITES**

Access site locations are shown on the interactive map on the Powell River Blueway Trail website at: <https://www.powellriverblueway.org/access-locations-map>

Access sites are listed by River Mile (RM) at: <https://www.powellriverblueway.org/river-access>. River Mile Zero for the Powell River is where the Powell River joins the Clinch River, a point which is now inundated by Norris Lake near Anderson County Park. The River Miles increase going upstream. Where the Powell enters Tennessee from Virginia is approximately RM 114.

The access sites are designated by River Miles and by which side of the river they are on. River Miles are shown on standard USGS (United States Geological Survey) Maps. When paddling downstream, Right is on the right bank and Left is on the left bank. For example, the designation of the Highway 25E Bridge Access is **65R**, which indicates that it is at River Mile 65 on the right hand bank. The reason for designating the sites by River Mile is to allow boaters to easily calculate the boating distance from one access point to another. The reason for designating L or R is that the driving distance between access points may appear close in River Miles but may be at a considerable driving distance if they are on the opposite sides of the river.

On the following listing of current Access Sites, the following abbreviations for the status of each site is used:

PD	= Developed Public Access
PU	= Undeveloped Access in Public Ownership
P	= Private River-Oriented Business
CONST	= Under Construction or Planned Construction as of Dec 2018
POSS	= Possible useful access, subject to negotiation with owner

## Summary of Status of Powell River Access Sites as of December 2018

River Mile	Location Name		Side of River	Road Access	Ownership	Current Condition	Miles
30	Union Co Boat Dock	PD	Right	White Oak/Norton Rd - Hwy 63	TVA	Ferry, Ramp, No Camping	0
30	Old Leadmine Road	PU	Left	Old Leadmine Bend Rd - Hwy 33	TVA	Ferry, Ramp, some parking, No Camping	0
42	Bunch Hollow	PD	Left	Bunch Hollow Rd off Hwy 33	TVA/TWRA	Private Campground Adj, informal parking & access	12
50	Earl's Hollow	PD	Right	Red Hill Rd off Hwy 63	TVA/TWRA	Parking & access ramp; slack water ends	8
52	Lonesome Valley Rd	PU	Left	Lonesome Valley Rd off Hwy 33	TVA/TWRA	Isolated, informal parking & access	2
54	Gap Creek	PU	Right	Gap Creek Rd off Hwy 63	TVA	Access maintained by Claiborne Co	2
65	HWY 25E	Const	Right	At Hwy 25E Bridge	TDOT/TWRA	Under Construction - 2018	11
66	Shelly Belle's	P	Left	Off Carmony Lane	Private	Kayak rentals, New Restaurant as of 2018	1
68	Indian Creek	PD	Right	On Indian Creek	Public easement	ECD Project, Parking & Steps as of 2017	2
70	Powell River Preserve	PD	Right	on Powell River Road	TDEC improvement	Parking, Steps to river, constructed 2016	2
72	Heavy's BBQ	P	Right	End of Powell River River Rd	Private	Food, kayak rentals, Seasonal	2
73	Mt Pass Campground	P	Right	End of Powell River River Rd	Private	Camping	1
79	Riverside Baptist Church	PD	Right	N. Riverside Road	Public by Agreement 2018	Parking, access ramp	6
80	Riverside Rentals	P	Right	End of Caves Springs Rd	Carson Williams (Private)	Kayak rentals, seasonal	1
84	Lock Lane	Poss	Left	Off Cedar Fork Rd at Lock Lane	Public Ford	In negotiation for Parking Easement	4
87	Brooks Ferry	Poss	Left	Off Cedar Fork Rd	Private	On old TVA survey of possible sites	3
92	Well Being Retreat Ctr	P	Left	Off Cedar Fork Rd at Narrows Rd	Well Being Fnd (non-profit)	Good parking, steps, licensed campground	5
95	Cedar Fork Bridge	Const	Right	At Cedar Fork Bridge	TVA	Old LMU site; parking, informal access	3
99	Buchanan Ford	PU	Right	Yearly Rd from Alanthus Hill	Public Road	One lane road access, informal parking	4
104	Mulberry Creek	Const	Left	Hwy 63 in Hancock Co.	TVA/TWRA/Hancock County	Good parking, interim repair completed 2018	5
107	McDowell Shoal	PD	Right	Powell River Rd in Hancock Co	Unknown	Established access, parking & informal launch	3
112	Bales Creek	Poss	Right	Off Powell River Road	Private		5

## ACCESS SITE DESCRIPTIONS

### **30R Union County Boat Dock:**



Union County Boat Dock is a developed publicly accessible site on Norris Lake with parking and concrete ramp to the lake. The private marina has a restaurant, toilet. No camping or overnight parking. A car ferry crosses the lake to 30L Old Leadmine Road.

**Recommendations:** Signage from Highway 63

### **30L Old Leadmine Bend Road:**



This is an undeveloped public site on Norris Lake. Helm's (car) Ferry crosses the lake between this site and Union County Boat Dock. Parking at this site is limited to roadside parking on Old Leadmine Bend Road and boat access to the lake is by hand carry over unimproved rocky, sloping ground. No amenities.

**Recommendations:** Signage from Highway 33

### **42L Bunch Hollow:**



Bunch Hollow is a public access site lying just left of the private Bunch Hollow RV campground. There is ample but informal parking and the gently sloping surface allows trailer boats to access the river. No amenities. Directional signage from Highway 33. TVA owned, TWRA administered site. Slack river.

**Recommendations:** Install Kiosk with environmental & TWRA information.

### 50R Earl's Hollow:



Earl's Hollow is a developed public site with extensive informal parking, gentle sloping ground to the (slack) river suitable for trailered boat access. Directional signage from Highway 63. TVA owned, TWRA administered site. No amenities.

**Recommendations:** Install Kiosk with environmental & TWRA information. Request Sheriff patrol.

### 52L Lonesome Valley Road:



Lonesome Valley Road is an undeveloped public site with extensive informal parking (except if lake is in flood stage) and informal sloping access to the river. Slack water, trailered boat access is possible. TWRA administered site. Reported vandalism of left vehicles.

**Recommendations:** Install Kiosk with environmental & TWRA information. Request patrols by Sheriff's Department.

### 54R Gap Creek:



Gap Creek is an undeveloped public access to the river. Slack water, limited parking and maneuverability, narrow road access. Access road and site inundated at lake flood levels. Directional signage from Highway 63. Owned by TVA.

**Recommendations:** Install Kiosk with environmental & TWRA information. Request sheriff patrol. Request TWRA administration.

### 55R Upper Gap Creek



Located 3/4 mile upstream from 54R, it is on TVA land and is now used informally for fishing. TVA has surveyed the property line and is favorably inclined to have Upper Gap Creek developed for public use. The informal parking area would require grading and gravel, a minor drainage issue would need to be addressed and steps or a ramp to the river would need to be permitted and constructed.

### 65R Highway 25E Bridge:



Highway 25E Bridge site is a new developed public access currently under construction (Dec 2018) with excellent access from Interstate 25E, ample parking and turnaround area under the bridge. Hand carry boat access to river. Flowing river (downstream take-out required). TDOT owned & TWRA administered.

**Recommendations:** Install Kiosk with environmental & TWRA info. Request sheriff patrol.

### 66L Shelly Belle's



Shelly Belles is a private kayak & tube rental establishment and a new restaurant on the river. This site is not available for public boat launch. Restaurant open year-round. Kayak & tube rental is seasonal.

**Recommendations:** None

### 68R Indian Creek:



Indian Creek is a new (2017) developed public site located on Indian Creek about 150 yards upstream from its confluence with the Powell River. Parking lot, steps to creek, kiosk with environmental & TWRA information.

**Recommendations:** Add sign on Powell River. Convey public easement to Claiborne County Chamber of Commerce.

### 70R Powell River Preserve



Powell River Preserve is a developed public access with large delineated parking area, constructed steps to river. Highway 25E signage. TWRA signage at site. Joint project of TDEC, TWRA and The Nature Conservancy. Constructed 2016.

**Recommendations:** None

### 72R Heavy's Barbeque

A seasonal private restaurant on the river with kayak rentals. Not available as a public launch site.

### 73R Mountain Pass Campground



Mountain Pass is a private, year-round campground located on the banks of the Powell River. Full RV hookups, bathrooms, showers. Not available for public boat launch except for paying guests.

**Recommendations:** None

### 79L Riverside Baptist Church:



Riverside Baptist Church is a new (2018) developed site open to the public under written agreement between Riverside Baptist Church and the Claiborne County Chamber of Commerce. Shared paved parking area, gravel ramp to river, and kiosk with environmental information. Closed on Sundays and during weddings & Baptisms.

**Recommendations:** Directional signage from Highway 25E

### 80R Riverside Rentals:



Riverside Rentals is a private canoe and kayak rental business and the Finish Line for the Annual 12-Mile Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta. Seasonal. Gravel parking area, sheltered picnic area, boat transport. Not available for public launch except by prior paid arrangements.

**Recommendations:** None

### 84L Lock Lane



Lock Lane is an unimproved remnant public ford. No current parking, ramp needs repair, current public right of access is uncertain. Negotiations underway to create parking and solve right of access issue.

**Recommendations:** Seek to acquire public parking easement (or purchase), construct parking area, seek public easement (or purchase) of right of access to river, regrade and gravel ramp to river, install kiosk with environmental info.

### 87L Brooks Ferry

A privately owned location that was identified on an old TVA survey as a possible acquisition site for river access. Would require easement acquisition, road construction, permitting, and river access construction.

**Recommendations:** Research and negotiate possible access.

### 92L Well Being Retreat Center



Well Being Retreat Center is a private, non-profit organization with step access to the river, large parking area, licensed campground, bathrooms with showers, camping shelters, rental cabins. Available for groups by prior arrangement. Kayak rental and transport. Start of Annual Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta.

**Recommendations:** None

### 95R Cedar Fork Bridge



Cedar Fork Bridge is a partially developed public access site on State Highway 345 (Cedar Fork Road). TVA owned. Formerly under lease to Lincoln Memorial University. Gravel parking area, mowed “lawn” to river, vegetated low bank to river.

**Recommendations:** Seek TWRA admin of site, regrade and add ramp/steps to river, install kiosk with environmental & TWRA info.

### 99R Buchanan Ford



Buchanan Ford is a public access by virtue of a public road (Yeary Road) bordering the Powell River for a short distance. Very limited parking at the edge of the river, flooded during high water events, narrow access road, no amenities

**Recommendations:** Install kiosk with environmental information; improve access road.

### 103L Mulberry Creek



Mulberry Creek is a developed public access site with a large gravel parking area adjacent to the Alanthus Hill bridge. TVA owned & TWRA administered. In 2018, the broken concrete ramp was removed and interim gravel ramp constructed. TVA plans a permanent improvement for 2020.

**Recommendations:** Communicate with TVA on permanent improvement; install kiosk with environmental & TWRA info.

### 107R McDowell Shoal



McDowell Shoal is a public, somewhat improved access site with ample roadside parking, a gravel drivable ramp to a small turnaround area next to river. Boat carry access to river. No amenities.

**Recommendations:** Install kiosk with environmental information; install roadside river access sign.

### 112R Bales Ford

Bales Creek is an unimproved remnant ford very near the Virginia state line where the Powell River enters Tennessee. Owner may be willing to grant access to access site and has been in contact with The Nature Conservancy in that regard.

**Recommendations:** Seek to obtain right of access and, if granted, construct access, parking and ramp/steps to river. Install informational kiosk.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017 – 2018 UTILIZING ECD GRANT FUNDS

In July 2017, Claiborne County (via the White Lightning Trail Festival – Regatta Account) was awarded a \$50,000 Asset Enhancement Grant from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. With this grant, the following river enhancements were achieved July 2017 through December 2018:

- Directional road signage was installed with TDOT and County approval for seven river access sites
- River Mile Marker signs were installed for 35 miles of the Powell River (RM 65 to RM 99)
- A new public access site was created and improved at 68R Indian Creek with a parking lot and steps to the river
- Public use of an existing private access site was negotiated with the (79R) Riverside Baptist Church. Access ramp was regraded and graveled.
- The broken concrete access ramp at 103L Mulberry Creek was removed (with TVA permission) and the ramp was regraded and graveled. Coordinated with TVA to schedule permanent ramp improvement for 2020.
- Permission was gained from TDOT through TWRA to replace the existing driveway access under the Interstate 25E bridge. New driveway was designed, surveyed and constructed (completed December 2018). (Critically important access site due to vehicular visibility and distance to next downstream access.)
- Provided deed information to TVA demonstrating that TVA owned the right of public access to the Powell River at 54R Gap Creek. Coordinated with Claiborne County Road Superintendent to repair and maintain access road.
- Installed information kiosks at 68R Indian Creek and at 79R Riverside Baptist Church.
- Installed a safety convex mirror at 95R Cedar Fork Bridge and enlarged gravel parking area. Requested TWRA administration of site.
- Initiated negotiations for acquisition of public parking and access at 84L Lock Lane.
- Created website for the Powell River: [www.PowellRiverBlueway.org](http://www.PowellRiverBlueway.org) with information on the annual Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta and river access.
- Created and published Powell River Blueway Trail brochures and high-quality color tear-off 11" x 17" maps of the Blueway Trail.
- Organized 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta on April 21, 2018 which attracted 88 boats, 18 participants from other states and 59 participants from Tennessee counties other than Claiborne. Sixty-eight volunteers help to produce the event.

In 2018, the Powell River Blueway Trail project received two awards:



The Excellence Award from the East Tennessee Development District.

The 2018 Excellence in Communication and Outreach Award to protect aquatic biodiversity from the Tennessee River Basin Network. A \$5,000 grant accompanied this award.

## **FUTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The following future capital improvements have been identified:

1. 65R Highway 25E Bridge Access. Add paving to access driveway. Estimated cost: \$12,000.
2. 84L Lock Lane: Purchase half acre public parking easement plus access easement to river, grade & gravel parking area, grade and gravel access ramp. Estimated cost: \$14,000
3. 95R Cedar Fork Bridge: Obtain aquatic permit and add more formalized access (steps or ramp) to river. Estimated Cost: \$9,000
4. 55R Upper Gap Creek: Design improvement, install thru-site stormwater drainage, grade and gravel ¼ acre parking area, utilize TVA resources to gain aquatic permits, construct step access to river. Estimated cost: \$21,000
5. 112R Bales Creek: Purchase right-of-way public easement, construct access road, construct parking area, obtain aquatic permits, construct ramp/steps to river. Estimated Cost: \$25,000.

6. River Mile Signs: Install signage for River Miles 30 – 64.

Estimated Cost: \$1,500

7. Construct kiosks and add informational signage at the following sites:

50R Earl's Hollow

52L Lonesome Valley Road

54R Gap Creek

65R Highway 25E Bridge

95R Cedar Fork Bridge

99R Buchanan Ford

Estimated cost: \$2,500.

Summary of Estimated Future Capital Costs

	<b>Future Capital Projects</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>
1	65R Highway 25E Bridge Access - Paving	\$12,000
2	84L Lock Lane - Acquisition & Improvement	\$14,000
3	95R Cedar Fork Bridge - Steps/ramp	\$9,000
4	55R Upper Gap Creek - Improvement	\$21,000
5	112R Bales Creek - Acquisition & Improvement	\$25,000
6	Install River Mile Signs	\$1,500
7	Install six informational kiosks	\$2,500
	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>

## Anticipated Timeline for Capital Improvements

	<b>Capital Projects</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
1	65R Highway 25E Bridge	\$12,000		\$12,000		
2	84L Lock Lane	\$14,000	\$14,000			
3	95R Cedar Fork Bridge	\$9,000		\$9,000		
4	55R Upper Gap Creek	\$21,000			\$21,000	
5	112R Bales Creek	\$25,000				\$25,000
6	Install 34 River Mile Signs	\$1,500	\$750	\$750		
7	Install six kiosks	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$1,250		
	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>	<b>\$23,000</b>	<b>\$21,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>

## **ONGOING ANTICIPATED MAINTENANCE EXPENSE**

Ongoing maintenance is expected to consist of the following annual items:

- Trash removal at access sites: (by volunteers in coordination with the annual Norris Lake Clean-up effort and/or Sheriff's Department) (Claiborne County Sheriff's Department has previously committed in writing to extend their trash cleanup program to include river access sites.
- Gravel repair and replacement at the following sites:
  - Gap Creek
  - Highway 25E Bridge
  - Indian Creek
  - Riverside Baptist Church
  - Lock Lane
  - Cedar Fork Bridge
  - Mulberry Creek

Estimated Annual Cost: \$2,500

- River Mile Marker sign replacement as signs may be damaged by floating debris or flood waters.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$600

- Replace any damaged or vandalized kiosk signs

Estimated Annual Cost: \$400

- Unanticipated Contingency Items

Annual Contingency: \$1,000

**Total Annual Estimated Maintenance Costs: \$4,500**

It is projected that the annual maintenance obligations for the Powell River Blueway Trail (\$4,500) will be funded from Non-Grant Income as described in the following section.

**NON-GRANT ANNUAL INCOME**

Reliable sources for Non-Grant Income to offset annual maintenance obligations are (1) a budget line item from the Claiborne County Tourism Commission, and (2) net income from the Annual Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta.

Claiborne County Tourism Commission (CCTC): The CCTC collects a hotel/motel tax in Claiborne County which funds its activities. In recent years the CCTC has committed \$2,000 per year to the Powell River Regatta and Blueway Trail efforts. Since the funding source is ongoing and the Tourism Commission unanimously supports the Powell River work as one of its primary endeavors, this level of funding commitment is reasonably expected to continue.

Annual Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta: The upcoming Powell River Kayak & Canoe Regatta on April 20, 2019 will be the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Regatta. The Regatta is a 12-mile race (or recreational paddle) beginning at the Well Being Retreat Center and ending at Riverside Rentals. Income for the Regatta is from community/corporate cash sponsors and from Regatta entry fees. Current entry fees are \$35 for a single boat and \$55 for doubles. Cash prize money is awarded: \$150 for 1<sup>st</sup> place and \$50 for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in each of 8 race categories. In the 2018 Regatta, there were 88 boats entered and 13 sponsors.

The Regatta has been net profitable every year since its inception:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Net Profit</b>
2015	\$1,852
2016	\$3,304
2017	\$3,219
2018	\$2,857
<b>4 Year Average</b>	<b>= \$2,803</b>

During these early years of the Regatta, there were a number of one-time purchases that reduced its (cash basis) net income, namely:

- Three specialty kayak trailer superstructures each holding up to 12 kayaks for transport back to start line from the race finish line
- Five sturdy 10' x 10' pop-up tents for race registration, timing and awards areas.
- 15 Camp Chairs for race registration, timing and awards areas.
- Two antennae and cell phone signal boosters for start & finish line communication
- Large Road Directional signage
- Two large (25 foot and 35 foot) banners announcing race date and sponsors

Despite the impact of these initial start-up costs, the average annual net profit from the first four years of the Regatta has been \$2,803.

From the Claiborne County Tourism Budget and the anticipated net profit from the Regatta, the estimated annual maintenance costs for the Powell River Blueway Trail will be covered as summarized:

<b>Non-Grant Income Sources</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Distribution from the Claiborne County Tourism Commission	\$2,000
Average Four-year Regatta Net Income	\$2,803
<b>Total Non-Grant Net Income prior to Maintenance Expense</b>	<b>\$4,803</b>
<b>Estimated Annual Maintenance Expense</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>
<b>Expected "Excess" Income (over Maintenance Expense)</b>	<b>\$303</b>

**Conclusion:** Annual maintenance expense will be covered by reasonably anticipated non-grant income. Therefore, Future Capital Improvements will depend on Grant sources, which will be addressed in the following section.

## **GRANT FUNDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

In the last two years, the Powell River Blueway Trail project has been fortunate to receive grant and award funds from the following sources:

Tennessee Healthy Watersheds Initiative: \$15,000 for the Powell River

The Tennessee Healthy Watershed Initiative (THWI) began as a collaboration of federal, state and nonprofit organizations committed to maintaining and improving water resources in Tennessee watersheds. The THWI was launched in 2011 under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed by The Tennessee Department

of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), The Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and West Tennessee River Basin Authority (WTRBA). The MOU signatories recognized that many groups, both governmental and non-governmental all have an interest in and a role in the health of Tennessee watersheds. This initiative provided a structure to bring those interested parties together.

Today, under the leadership of TDEC, the THWI continues to be a strong collaboration of those founding THWI partners. They are utilizing this initiative to continue to provide a forum for communication, collaboration, and thoughtful planning among a broad partnership of agencies and interests.

The Powell River Project (administered through the Clinch-Powell RC&D) will address the following activities:

- (1) Correct non-point source pollution problems associated with agricultural uses by utilizing THWI grant resources (and leveraging other partner funding) to enhance implementation of agricultural BMPs by establishing protective vegetated riparian buffers.
- (2) Raise community conservation awareness, through outreach programs with rural landowners and local leaders to share information about the tools and support programs available to protect healthy watersheds in Tennessee.
- (3) Develop Blueway trails on both the Clinch and the Powell Rivers. Activities will include: 1) mapping of existing public river access points, camping locations and points of interest for canoeists, paddle boarders and kayakers, 2) identify locations for new river access points, 3) initiate the process of developing one new river access points

Tennessee River Basin Network: \$5,000 award in recognition for the Powell River Blueway Trail project as the 2018 TRBN Education and Outreach Organization of the Year.

The Tennessee River Basin Network is a partnership of states, cities, counties, federal agencies, academic organizations, business, and other non-governmental organizations. The Network is comprised of two Communities of Practice (Science & Management, Communication & Outreach) to promote engagement and collective learning. By bringing members of shared expertise and experience together regularly, partners are given the opportunity to help one another and share information and resources, thus enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation efforts.

Their mission is to inspire and empower the people of the TRB to effectively steward the region's aquatic biodiversity by:

- Providing forums for collaborative work on identified issues;
- Promote resource sharing (i.e. data, tools, outreach materials) across the Basin and sectors to address common issues;
- Track conservation action and derived products of partners; and
- Identify and expand opportunities for a common communication strategy (outreach and awareness)

Tennessee Economic & Community Development Department's 2017-18 Asset Enhancement Grant: \$50,000

The ECD grant has been a major boost to the Powell River Blueway Trail project and has enabled most of the improvements which have been completed to date. The grant is to enhance an existing County resource, in this case the Powell River, through physical improvements and public outreach with the objective of improving the economic, recreational, environmental and social utilization of the Powell River.

The grant funding ran from July 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018 with a 5% match from Claiborne County. All tasks and objectives of the grant were met. In fact, due to donated equipment time and volunteer labor, additional river-based work was completed, primarily the Highway 25E Bridge project.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GRANT FUNDING & SUPPORT**

The following organization are expected to continue to support the work of the Powell River Blueway Trail project.

Tennessee Economic & Community Development Department's Asset Enhancement Grant: There may be the possibility of additional future grant funding from ECD based on the cost efficiency with which the 2017-18 projects were completed.

The Nature Conservancy: Staff support for the Powell River Blueways Trail

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Their vision is a world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives.

TNC goals:

- Through the dedicated efforts of our diverse staff, including more than 600 scientists, all of whom impact conservation in 72 countries.
- With the help of our many partners, from individuals and governments to local nonprofits and corporations.
- By using a non-confrontational, collaborative approach and staying true to our core values.

The Nature Conservancy has been very supportive of the Powell River Blueway Trail project and has been instrumental in exploring grant and award opportunities, preparing grant applications and obtaining grant funding.

Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation and Development Council: Staffing & resource support for the Blueways Trail

Clinch-Powell has been actively serving the Clinch-Powell Watersheds since 1989. Their efforts help to conserve local resources and protect the environment around us, they also recognize that the needs of our communities are as diverse and evolving as the ecosystems we strive to preserve. Their mission is to build strong, sustainable communities by investing in people, housing, ecotourism and conservation of natural resources. This is accomplished through partnerships, direct investments, financial education and counseling, and by providing housing solutions, primarily in Tennessee.

Clinch-Powell Clean River Initiative: Support for the Powell River Blueways Trail through various state and federal agencies.

The Clinch-Powell Clean Rivers Initiative (CPCRI) protects and restores water quality in our nation's most important river system for imperiled freshwater animals by:

- conducting cutting-edge science and river monitoring;
- using science and monitoring results to help people, communities, governments, and industries take better care of the river;

- fostering increased coordination among state and federal agencies responsible for protecting water quality in Virginia and Tennessee;
- making strategic investments in freshwater conservation and restoration projects;
- raising awareness of the Clinch Powell River system as a national model for collaborative and effective environmental management.

The initiative unites a broad array of local, state, federal and private groups and agencies working in both Tennessee and Virginia. Working as partners with shared goals and commitments, these agencies, non-profit organizations, and industry leaders have an unprecedented opportunity to help conserve and connect people to these rivers.

Other Partnering Agencies and NGO's include:

Tennessee Dept. of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Department of Agriculture – Forestry Division, Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality, Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Dept. of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, US Environmental Protection Agency Regions 3 & 4, US Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey, US Army Corps of Engineers, Tennessee Valley Authority, The Nature Conservancy, Upper Tennessee River Roundtable, Virginia Tech, Virginia Water Resources Research Center, Clinch Powell RC&D, Lincoln Memorial University, Well Being Foundation, and the Claiborne County Chamber of Commerce.

Organizational Comment: Currently, the Powell River Blueway Trail project has been pursued by the Powell River Tourism Committee of the Claiborne County Tourism Commission. The Claiborne County Chamber of Commerce has provided liability insurance and has been the organization that has entered in agreements for the construction and maintenance of the Riverside Baptist Church site and the Highway 25E Bridge site. This organizational structure has worked well to accomplish the objectives of the Powell River Blueway Trail. The organizational structure has only two visible limitations: (1) the Tourism Commission is not a non-profit entity and therefore not directly eligible for most grant opportunities, and (2) although Claiborne County includes the bulk of the Powell River in Tennessee, there may come a time when it becomes beneficial to work more extensively and cooperatively in other reaches of the Powell River as well as in Claiborne County. Although there is no immediate need to do so, the possibility exists at some time in

the future of the Powell River Blueway Trail effort incorporating as a non-profit 501(c)3 entity.

**Conclusion as to the Possibility of Future Grant Funding:** While it is not now known which of the above possible grant sources (or other sources not listed) may be willing to provide grant funding or in which years that funding may become available, we are optimistic that such funding will be forthcoming based on:

- Our proven ability to accomplish the tasks for which previous grants have been awarded
- Our proven ability to leverage available funds efficiently through extensive engagement of volunteer labor and donated equipment time.
- The vast possibilities for improved visibility of, and access to, the Powell River
- The emerging interest in joining blueway trail efforts for the Powell in both Tennessee and its headwaters in Virginia
- The significant public benefit in having a linear blueway trail linkage of campgrounds for multi-day family trips
- The impactful economic benefit of ecotourism and recreation to Claiborne County and surrounding areas.

The above named Future Capital Improvements total \$85,000 over a four-year period. This equate to under \$22,000 per year on average, which seems attainable given the interest in this project. However, even if future capital improvement funding is delayed, the accomplished access improvements, website, brochures, maps, signage provide a cohesive recreational offering that has been significantly improved over the last two years.

**Active Members of the Powell River Blueway Trail Committee** are:

Karyn Clark, CEO, Claiborne Economic Partnership

Don Oakley, Committee Chair (Well Being Foundation)

Ronald Lambert, The Nature Conservancy & the Clinch-Powell RC&D

Steve Cottrell, retired TVA biologist

Kim Bolton, Dean of Walters State Community College, Claiborne Campus

Steve Roark, retired State Forester

Carson Williams, owner Riverside Rentals

Patty Bottari, Well Being Foundation

Adopted December 5, 2018 by unanimous vote of the Powell River Tourism Committee of the Claiborne County Tourism Commission.

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Don Oakley, Chair