



**ROANOKE VALLEY GREENWAYS
ANNUAL REPORT
2009**



Liz Belcher
Roanoke Valley Greenway Coordinator

Roanoke Valley Greenways 2009 Annual Report

Roanoke Valley Greenways
1206 Kessler Mill Road
Salem, Virginia 24153

540.387.6060 phone
540.387.6146 fax
lbelcher@roanokecountyva.gov

www.greenways.org

Greenway Commission Members

City of Roanoke
Jim Lee, Secretary , Mark Lucas & Danielle Rhine

City of Salem
Butch Elam, Mac Johnson & Mark McClain, Treasurer

Roanoke County
Bob Blankenship, Chair, Charlie Blankenship,
Don Witt, Vice-Chair

Town of Vinton
Ken Bowen, Matt Hare & Janet Scheid

Metropolitan Planning Organization
Lee Osborne

City of Roanoke Staff
Steve Buschor & Tim Carr

City of Salem Staff
Lisa Garst & Ben Tripp

Roanoke County Staff
George Simpson & Lon Williams

Town of Vinton Staff
Anita McMillan & Karla Turman

Pathfinders for Greenways
Tim Cribbs

Ex-Officio Members

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission
Shane Sawyer

Western Virginia Land Trust
Roger Holnback

Western Virginia Water Authority
Sarah Baumgardner



When the Greenway Commission was established in 1997 by the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Roanoke County, and the Town of Vinton, the Intergovernmental Agreement included a 12-year sunset clause. In 2009 the four localities had to decide whether to continue the organization. On January 29, 2009, the leaders of those localities signed a Revision to the agreement continuing the Commission and its role.

The Commission was expanded to include staff from each locality, in addition to the citizen representatives, in recognition of the increasing responsibilities of local staff in managing and maintaining the network. The Commission subsequently revised its Bylaws to reflect these changes. Both documents are available on the website www.greenways.org.

Letter from the Chair of the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission

"It's alive!" I'm reminded of that movie line when discussing the greenways of the Roanoke Valley. During the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, the term "staycation" was coined and our beautiful greenways became the centerpiece of many staycations. During our worst winter in twenty-five years, the greenways were even used for cross country skiing. 2009 was a year of great accomplishment, and everything is in place for 2010 to be even better.

Much cooperation and support has been generated for the 169 miles of greenways in the Roanoke Valley. Volunteers have assisted working on the wide variety of trails we enjoy.

Our local and state leaders are acting both independently and cooperatively to ensure the continued development of the greenway system prioritized by the citizens of the Roanoke Valley. During 2009, the Pathfinders performed 4,450 hours of volunteer work on greenway construction and maintenance. That equals \$91,000 worth of sweat equity benefit provided to the Roanoke Valley. During the last three years, Valley Forward has donated \$95,000 to the Pathfinders for the Greenways from the annual Gallop 4 the Greenways event. During the same three year period, Novozymes Biologicals has donated \$150,000 to the greenways working with a different locality each year to complete challenging projects. In 2009, Carilion Clinic donated \$145,000 to help finance the Hamilton Terrace link of the Roanoke River Greenway. Since 1996, local governments in the Roanoke Valley have contributed a total of \$691,000 to the Greenway Commission's operations and received over \$17 million in State and Federal grant money related to greenways.

So, for a little more than \$50,000 a year average investment over the last thirteen years, the Greenway Commission has returned over a million dollars a year of benefit to the Roanoke Valley from non-local funding sources. Greenways are very good business for our local community. Our communities are more connected, we are healthier and happier, and property values as well as tourism dollars increase every time we add more greenway.

On behalf of the Greenway Commission I would like to thank all of the volunteers, corporate sponsors, government leaders, and citizens of the Roanoke Valley who place such a high value on green space and the natural beauty we are connecting.

Sincerely,



Bob Blankenship, Chair

Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission

Trails in the Roanoke Valley Greenway System- 169 Miles

Paved Trails	Mileage	Cinder Surfaced Trails	Mileage	Natural Surfaced Trails	Mileage
Lick Run Greenway	3.0	Hanging Rock Battlefield		Appalachian Trail	37.2
Mill Mountain Greenway	3.1	Trail	1.7	Blue Ridge Pkwy Trails	16.0
Mudlick Creek Greenway		Wolf Creek Greenway	2.2	Carvins Cove Natural	
at Garst Mill Park	0.5	Murray Run Greenway	3.0	Reserve Trails	46.0
Roanoke River Greenway		Total	6.9	Explore Park Trails	12.3
City of Roanoke	5.9			Gladetown Trails	0.6
Roanoke River Greenway		Bicycle Paths		Green Hill Park Trails	2.9
at Green Hill Park	0.8	Bike Lanes	3.2	Mill Mountain Park Trails	10.0
Roanoke River Greenway		Bike Routes	14.3	Poor Mtn. Preserve Trails	1.4
in Salem	1.7	Total	17.5	Read Mountain Park	1.9
Tinker Creek Greenway	1.2			Total	128.3
Total	16.2				



New Funding for Roanoke River Greenway

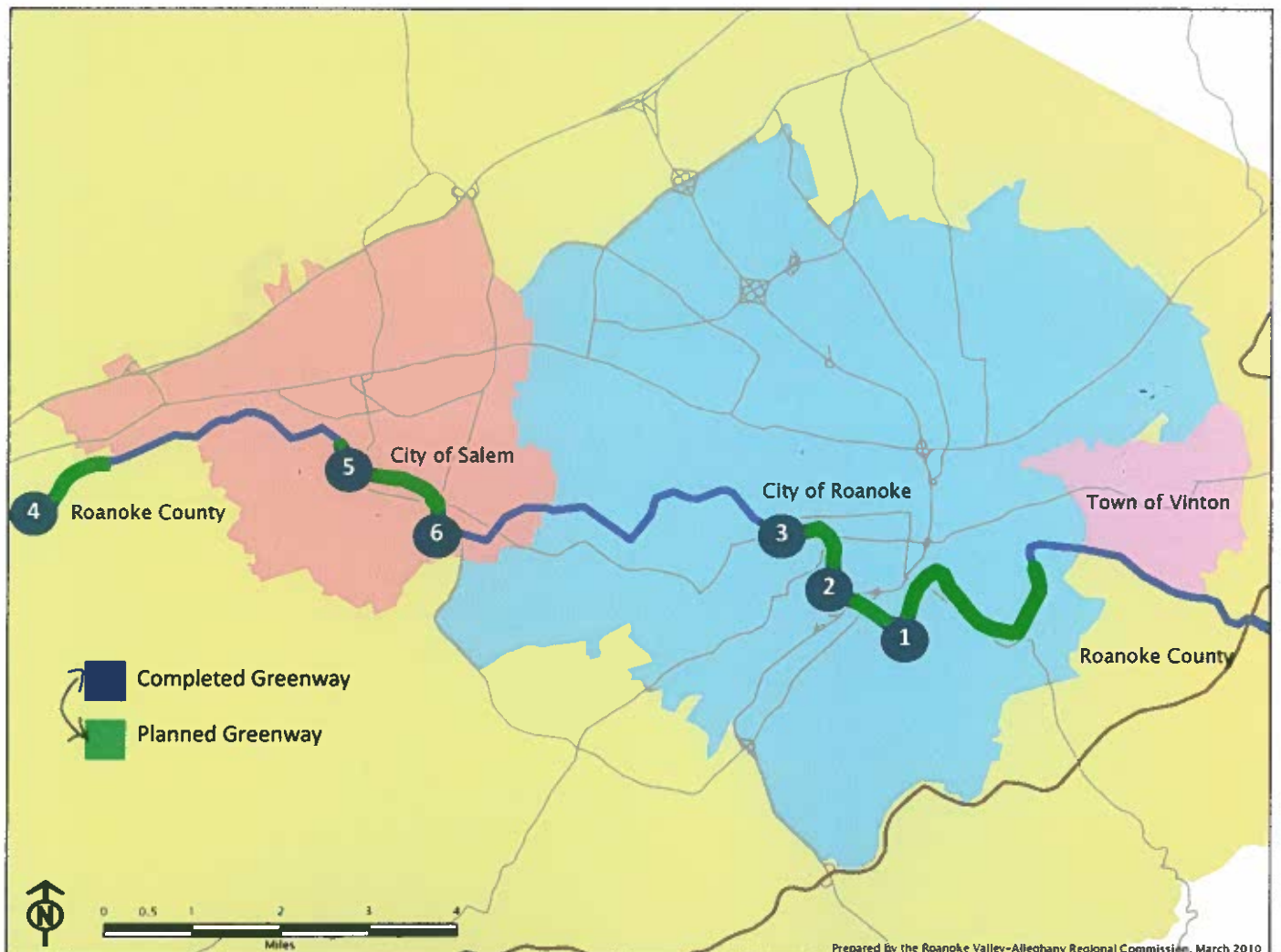
In 2009 , additional money became available to supplement local capital funds for construction of the Roanoke River Greenway. These new funds have allowed the localities to move forward with engineering and design. Construction on each of these sections should be completed over the next two years.

Funding Source to Supplement Local Governments	Amount	Locality	Greenway Section & Projected Construction
Private – Carilion	\$ 145,000	City of Roanoke	Near Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital - Completed
Private – Novozymes	\$ 50,000	City of Roanoke	Near Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital - Completed
Private – Pathfinders & Gallop 4 the Greenways	\$ 42,000	City of Roanoke	Near Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital - Completed
Stimulus – ARRA	\$1,400,000	City of Roanoke	Bridge from Roanoke River Greenway to Tinker Creek Greenway 2010
Stimulus – ARRA	\$ 600,000	City of Salem	Mill Lane to Eddy Avenue 2010
Enhancement	\$ 80,000	Roanoke County	East end, Explore Park 2012
Private – Novozymes	\$ 50,000	City of Salem	Mill Lane to Woodbridge 2010

Progress on the Roanoke River Greenway

With the update to the Greenway Plan in 2007, the Greenway Commission, at the encouragement of citizens and businesses, set a goal of finishing the Roanoke River Greenway in five years. The localities, to the extent funds have been available, have been pursuing this goal. Construction in 2009 included:

- 1 City of Roanoke: Construction of the greenway in front of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital
- 2 City of Roanoke: Replacement of the low water bridge between Wasena and Smith Parks
- 3 City of Roanoke: Construction of a portion of the greenway in Vic Thomas Park (formerly Hannah Court)
- 4 County of Roanoke: Construction of trailhead facilities for the greenway in Green Hill Park
- 5 Salem: Construction of the greenway on the Colorado Street bridge
- 6 Salem: Construction of the greenway from Colorado Street to Rotary Park, approximately 1.2 miles





Pathfinders for Greenways

Pathfinders for Greenways, the non-profit group of volunteers supporting development of greenways and trails, continued its efforts in 2009 to develop the natural-surfaced trails in the greenway network. This year, volunteers completed:

- Poor Mountain Preserve Trails - 0.8 miles
- Meadowview Trail at Green Hill Park - 1 mile
- Gauntlet Trail at Carvins Cove - reroute due to damage from the 2008 forest fire
- Trough Trail at Carvins Cove - drainage and alignment improvements
- Carvins Cove trail assessments - 46 miles of trail for the City of Roanoke's trail plan
- Amenities, Maintenance and Repair
- Planting on the Roanoke River Greenway
- Construction of two kiosks in Salem
- Staining of the Fishburn and Wolf Creek bridges
- Repair of the Murray Run bridge after storm damage

Over 162 Pathfinders' volunteers logged a total of 4,450 volunteer hours during 2009 and hosted 94 project days to build, improve or restore the trails in the Roanoke Valley Greenway network.

Pathfinders for Greenways 2009 Board of Directors

President: Brian Batteiger
Vice-President: Tim Cribbs
Treasurer: Jim Mullens
Secretary: Helen Smythers

Other Directors

James Breakell	Linda Oberlender
Guy Byrd	Charles Osterhoudt
Bill Gordge	Amy Powell
Mark Hodges	John Renick
Scott Leffel	Danielle Rhine
Allison Masinter	Dave Tompkins
Mack McGhee	Allen Walker



The Greenway Commission held the tenth annual picnic in October. The picnic began as a way to acknowledge the contributions of volunteers and evolved into an opportunity to show off the latest new sections of the valley's greenways and trails. This year the picnic was held in Green Hill Park, where new trailhead facilities on Roanoke River Greenway and the new Meadowview Trail were developed by volunteers in 2009.

At the picnic numerous volunteers were recognized for their contributions. The **Volunteer of the Year Award** was presented to **David Eggleston** for his outstanding work at Carvins Cove. In addition, the Pathfinders recognized its loyal group of members who have provided donations to the organization every year for ten years.

Brian Batteiger, pictured above top left, received the Virginia Recreation & Parks Society Outstanding Volunteer Award for 2009.



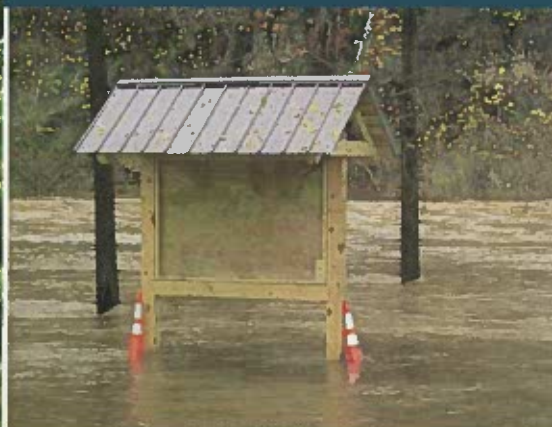
Greenway Highlights of the Year

Residents and visitors in the Roanoke Valley enjoy 169 miles of greenways and trails. The Roanoke River Greenway in particular has become a focal point for special events such as rides, runs and charity events. During Bicycle Month in May, City of Roanoke Mayor David Bowers led a ride on the greenways from Wasena Park to the market downtown, and on July 2, 2009, Governor Tim Kaine visited the Roanoke Valley to ride on the Roanoke River Greenway. Local officials, including Congressman Bob Goodlatte and staff Pete Larkin, joined the Greenway Commission for the annual canoe trip, paddling from Salem to Wasena Park to enjoy a different view of the Roanoke River Greenway. The Greenway Commission also developed a safety and trail etiquette video in response to the growing use of the greenway system. This video and maps of the greenways are on www.greenways.org.

While the localities focused on construction of the greenways in 2009, volunteers and support groups have been helping with amenities such as benches, kiosks and even art. A bench was installed in Green Hill Park on the greenway in honor of long-time Commission member Jim Phipps, who retired in 2008. The Kiwanis Club of Roanoke funded mile markers and a corresponding education guide for the Lick Run Greenway. These amenities remind us that as the greenway network grows, so does the opportunity for special places along the way.

Mother Nature's Wrath

In 2009, Mother Nature brought several special events, some of which necessitated repairs to the greenways. Floods, storms, falling trees and even snows are a reminder that the localities need ongoing funding and volunteers for operation and maintenance of the greenways.





Comments from Users

"I like the Roanoke River Greenway so much that I bought a duplex overlooking the greenway."

Steve Johnson

"In my view the greenways are the single most important thing the region has done to encourage cycling."

David Harrison

