

Master Plan To Be Prepared For 1,000-Mile Mountains-To-Sea State Trail

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - It is envisioned as the backbone of a network of regional hiking, paddling and multi-use trails across the state, and now state parks officials are looking for input to complete the master plan for the Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

Proposed nearly four decades ago, the 1,000-mile trail will link 33 of North Carolina's 100 counties and offer local access to 40 percent of the state's population.

Once completed, the trail will link Clingman's Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains to Jockey's Ridge State Park on the coast. Nearly two thirds of the cross-state route has been completed as a continuous, off-road trail experience, offering opportunities for hiking, biking and horseback riding through some of North Carolina's most scenic landscapes.

Where the trail has not yet been completed, detours along secondary roads allow ambitious hikers to complete the trek. A completed master plan will chart a path toward official designation of remaining portions by setting priorities for completing trail sub-sections.

The state parks system has hired Planning Communities, LLC, to prepare a detailed master plan by late 2015 at a contract price of \$120,000 supported through the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

The state parks system, other state agencies, federal agencies, local governments and volunteers organized by Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail have built sections of the trail, representing a partnership that includes hundreds of residents and every level of government.