

# Upper Roanoke River Watershed Initiatives

Upper Roanoke River Watershed Clean Up Plan  
Community Meeting  
Meadowbrook Community Room  
Shawsville, Virginia  
April 30, 2015

Shane Sawyer, Regional Planner  
Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Regional Commission

# Overview

- Introduction
- Partnership for a Livable Roanoke Valley
- Roanoke River Blueway
- Question and Answer



# Partnership for a **LIVABLE ROANOKE VALLEY PLAN**

Promoting Economic Opportunity and Quality of Life in the Roanoke Valley



## SUMMARY

*Final February 2014*



HEALTH CARE REGIONAL  
STRENGTHS EDUCATION LIVABILITY  
TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE  
COMMUNITY REGIONAL ARTS  
FUTURE VALUES INDUSTRY DATA  
OUTDOORS ACADEMICS WELLNESS  
PRIORITIES COLLABORATION  
RESOURCES ENVIRONMENT

[Livableroanoke.org](http://Livableroanoke.org)

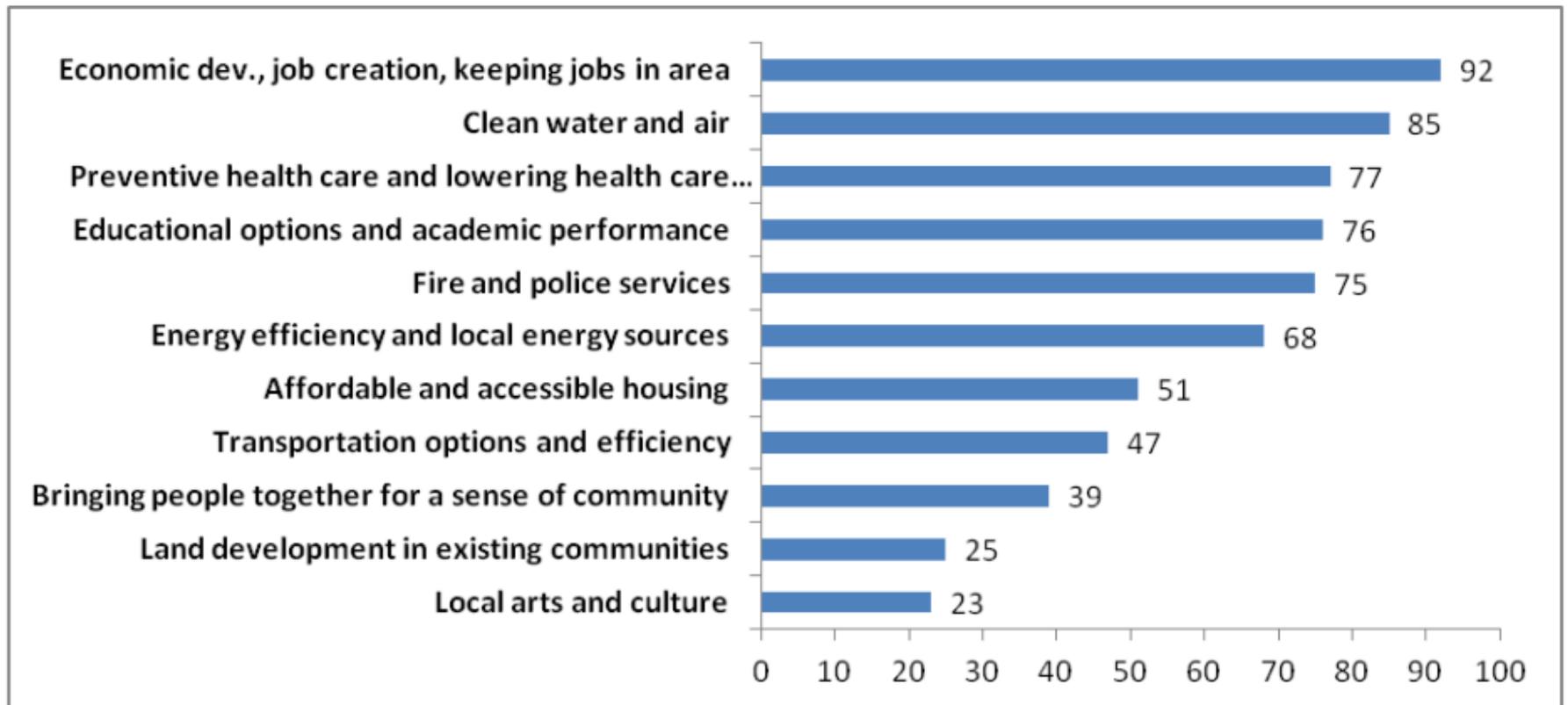
# Livable Roanoke Valley

- Partnership for a Livable Roanoke Valley (Livable Roanoke Valley) in 2011 to address quality of life challenges and plan for a better future
- two-year long, grant funded, process to engage regional stakeholders and community in a process to articulate a vision, principles and goals, and to develop a strategic action plan to realize our vision for a “Livable Roanoke Valley”
- [livableroanoke.org](http://livableroanoke.org)

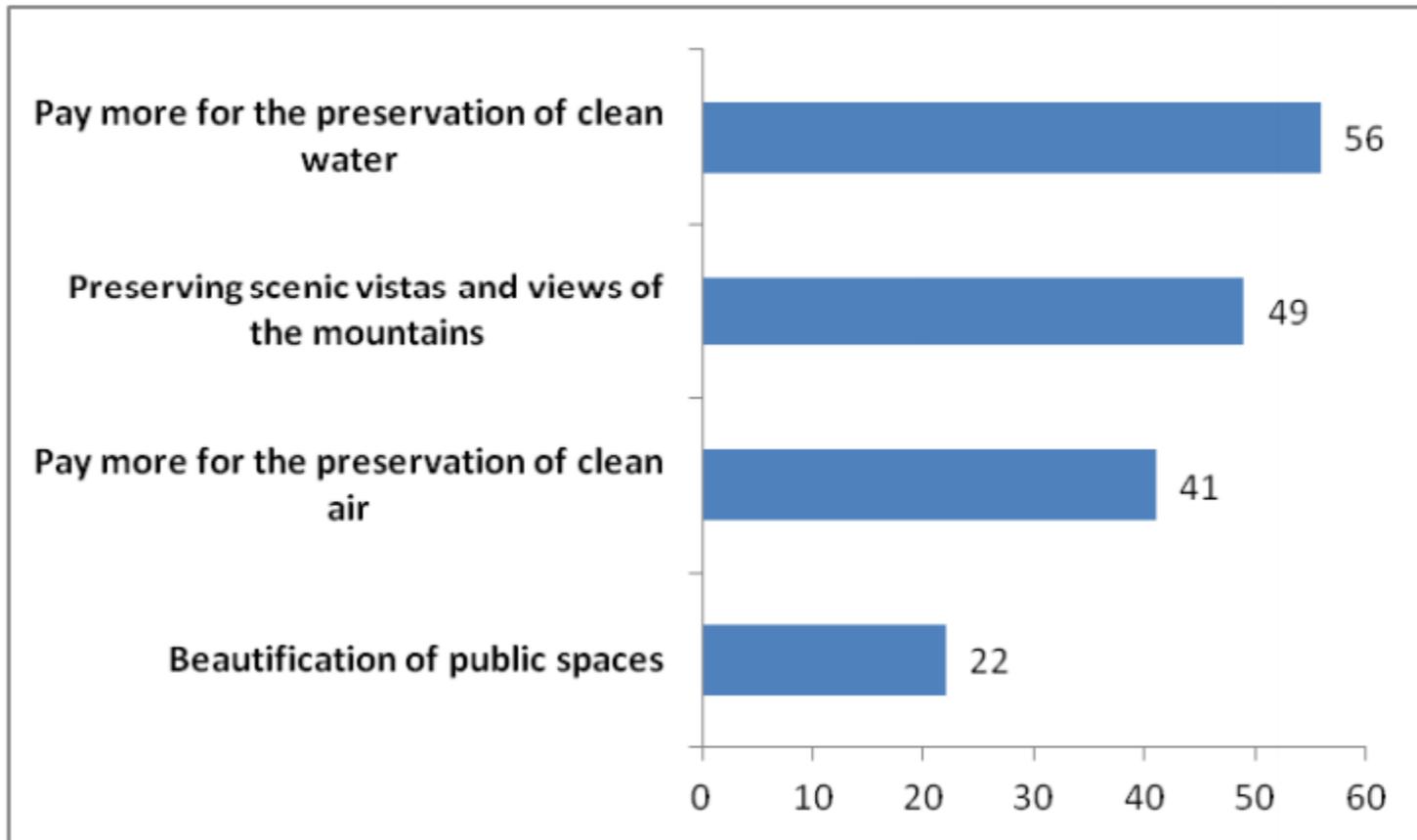
# Telephone Survey Response Ranking

- Conducted by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) Center for Survey Research
- surveyed 1,030 citizens in the Roanoke Valley in late summer 2012 regarding their opinions on 13 areas of livability, such as transportation, health care, land usage, and fire and police services.
- Top Priority
- Somewhat of a Priority
- A Low Priority
- Not a Priority

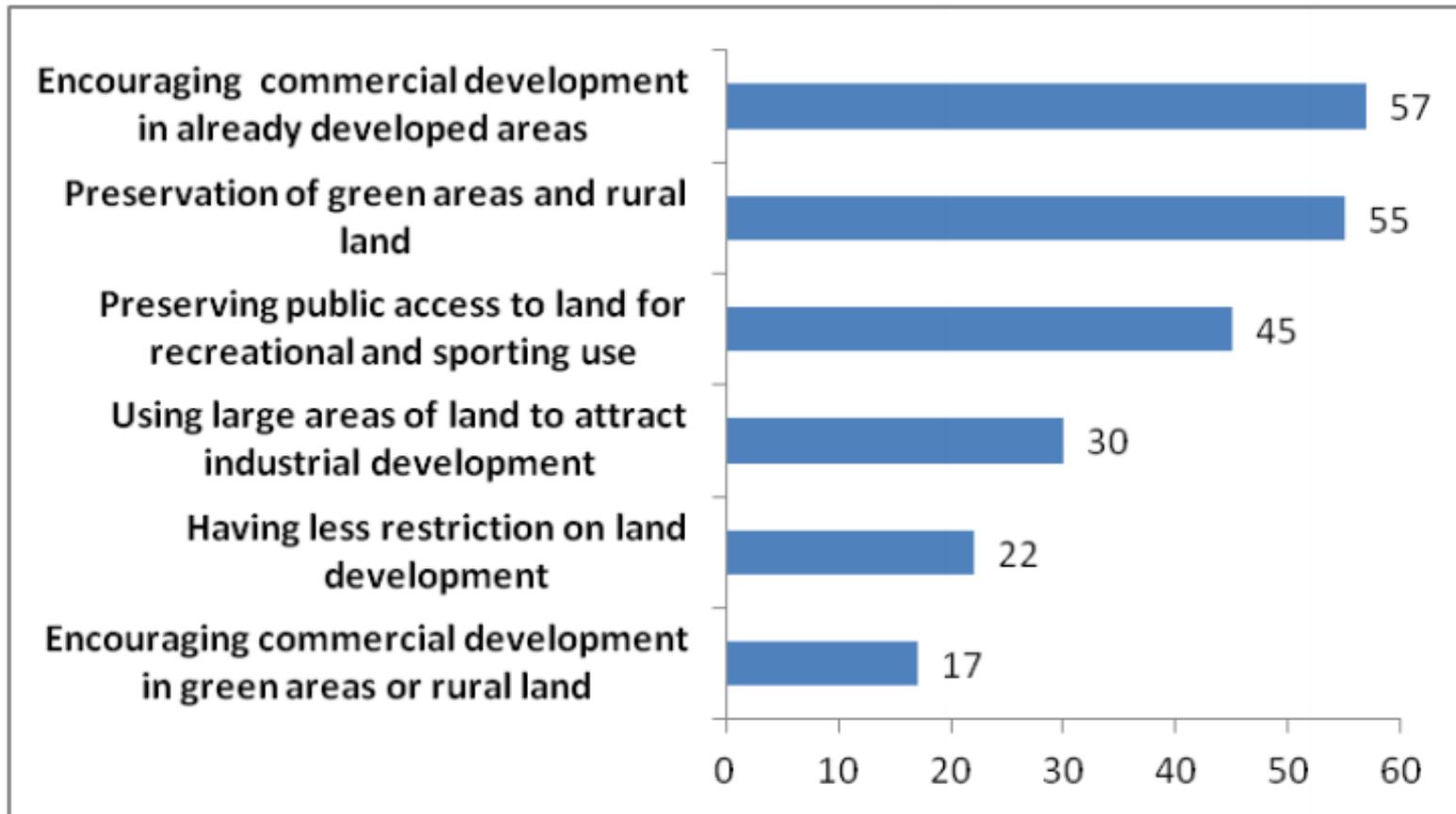
**Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents Rating Broad Regional Aspect as “Top Priority”**



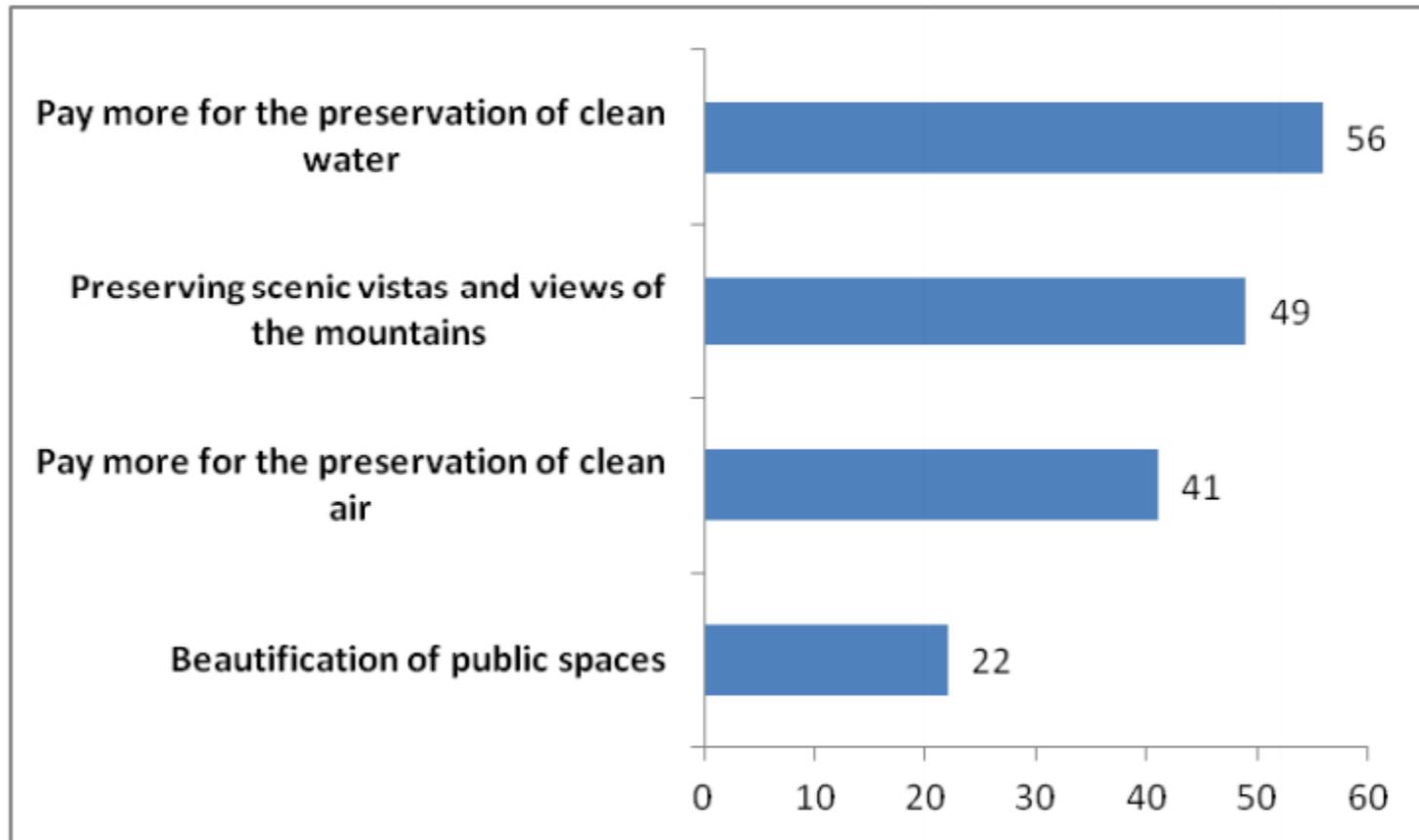
**Figure 15. Percentage of Respondents Rating Environment Areas as ‘Top Priority’**



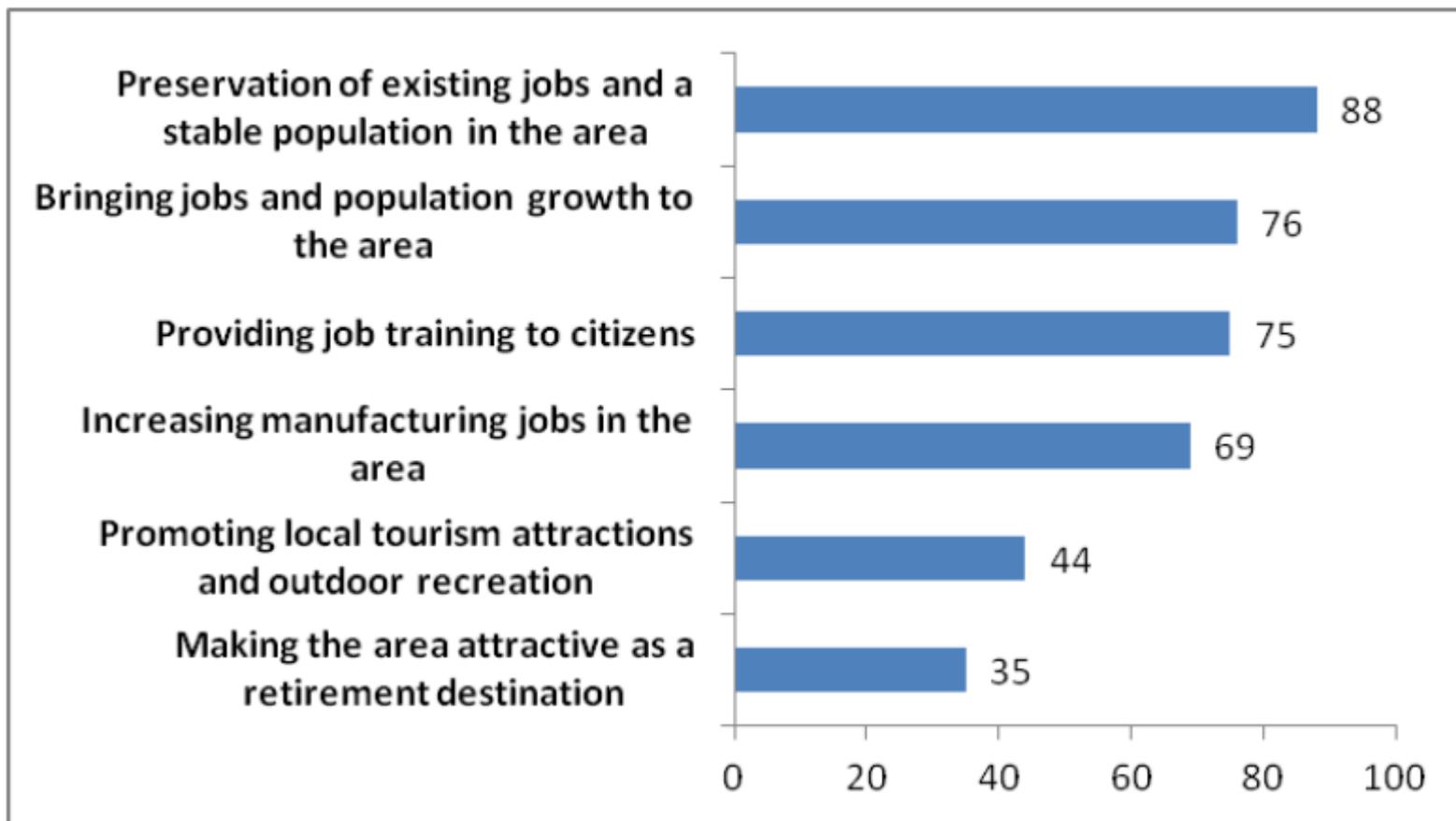
**Figure 13. Percentage of Respondents Rating Land Usage Areas as ‘Top Priority’**



**Figure 15. Percentage of Respondents Rating Environment Areas as ‘Top Priority’**



**Figure 16. Percentage of Respondents Rating Jobs and Economic Development Areas as 'Top Priority'**





Regional  
Infrastructure



Higher  
Education



Outdoor &  
Cultural Amenities



Align Workforce &  
Economic Development



Prepare Students  
For Careers



Coordinate Healthcare  
Resources



Improve Access  
to Healthcare



Wellness Support  
Services



Preserve Scenic  
& Rural Land



Encourage Energy  
Efficiency



Improve Air  
& Water



## Cultivate and market outdoor and cultural amenities

- Enhance sports tournaments infrastructure.
- Package and sell current outdoor amenities.
- Create outdoor ambassadors.
- Create a premier outdoor adventure destination.
- Provide more unique accommodations.
- Advance arts and culture.



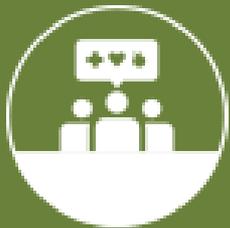
## Improve air and water quality

- Develop a stormwater banking system.
- Increase alternative transportation options and regional connectivity.
- Restore and maintain stream buffers.



## Preserve scenic and rural land

- Protect ridgetops, viewsheds, and critical rural lands.
- Encourage infill and redevelopment.



## Broaden wellness support services

- Address obesity.
- Reduce risky behaviors in youth.
- Identify wellness funding and other resources.
- Promote active living.

# Roanoke River Blueway

[www.roanokeriverblueway.org](http://www.roanokeriverblueway.org)

# What is a blueway?

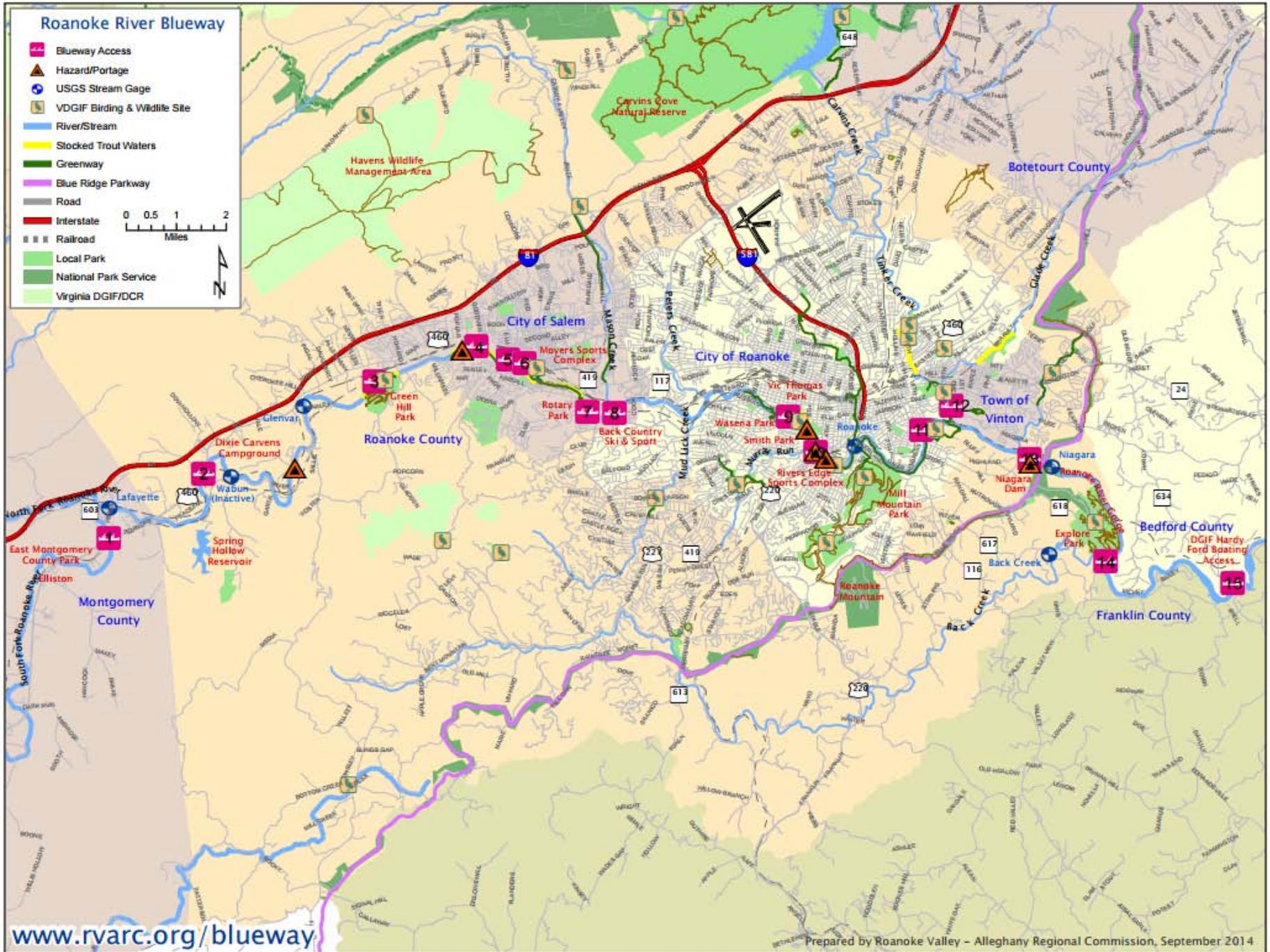
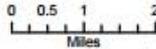
- A blueway is a navigable waterway with sufficient capacity (flow, depth, and width) for successful progress of canoes, kayaks, and other non-motorized vessels; and with sufficient access and amenities to facilitate other recreational uses of the waterway (tubing, fishing, wildlife viewing, wading, watershed awareness, etc.)
- often used interchangeably with water trail, float trail, or paddle trail
- Roanoke River Blueway is cited in the 2013 (and previous) Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP), 2007 Update to the Roanoke Valley Greenways Conceptual Plan, and other documents

# Roanoke River Blueway

- East Montgomery County Park (South Fork Roanoke River) to Smith Mountain Lake (DGIF Hardy Ford boating access at Hardy Road/634)
- approximately 45 river miles; 15 designated access points
- flows through or borders 7 separate jurisdictions - cities of Roanoke and Salem, counties of Montgomery, Roanoke, Bedford, and Franklin, and Town of Vinton
- includes sections of the South Fork Roanoke River, Roanoke River, Tinker Creek, and Back Creek
- flatwater, rapids (class I & II), and lake
- urban and backcountry settings

# Roanoke River Blueway

- Blueway Access
- Hazard/Portage
- USGS Stream Gage
- VDGIF Birding & Wildlife Site
- River/Stream
- Stocked Trout Waters
- Greenway
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Road
- Interstate
- Railroad
- Local Park
- National Park Service
- Virginia DGIF/DCR



# Opportunities

- numerous float options – duration, setting, access
- access to other natural and cultural amenities
- marketing of outdoor amenities in the region (CVB, RoanokeOutside, etc.)
- Explore Park, Back Creek, North/South Roanoke Rivers
- additional services – outfitters, shuttle services, etc.
- grant opportunities
- access improvements and/or additional access points
- in-kind services / sponsorship
- watershed education and outreach
- coordination/piggybacking with Roanoke River Greenway - \$12.8 million in RSTP funds awarded for completion from Greenhill Park to Blue Ridge Parkway

# Roanoke River Blueway Access Points

**EAST MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK**  
*(South Fork Roanoke River)*

**1**

Shoreline Access  
River Left

LAT, LON  
37.2293, -80.3094

**4.1 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**WAYSIDE PARK**

**2**

Shoreline Access  
River Left

LAT, LON  
37.2478, -80.1733

**7 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**GREEN HILL PARK**

**3**

Shoreline Access  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2735, -80.1134

**1.7 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**WEST RIVERSIDE DR.**

**4**

Canoe/Kayak Ramp  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2802, -80.0769

**2.1 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Kayak, Person with wheelchair.

**CARDINAL ACADEMY**

**5**

Canoe/Kayak Ramp  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2829, -80.0663

**0.9 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**EDDY AVENUE**

**6**

Canoe/Kayak Ramp  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2816, -80.0593

**1.7 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**SALEM ROTARY PARK**

**7**

Canoe/Kayak Ramp  
River Left

LAT, LON  
37.2681, -80.0367

**0.9 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Person with wheelchair.

**BACK COUNTRY SKI & SPORT**  
*(Private Business/ Open to Customer Use)*

**8**

Shoreline Access  
River Left

LAT, LON  
37.2677, -80.0263

**4.6 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Rental

[www.bucks.com](http://www.bucks.com)  
540.399.8602

**WASENA PARK**

**9**

Shoreline Access  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2673, -79.9633

**1.4 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**SMITH PARK**  
*Low Water Bridge*

**10**

PORTAGE  
REQUIRED

Shoreline Access  
River Left Upstream,  
River Right at bridge

LAT, LON  
37.2589, -79.9631

**5 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Kayak, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can.

**13TH ST./ BENNINGTON ST.**

**11**

Shoreline Access  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2638, -79.9149

**1.1 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Person with wheelchair.

**TINKER CREEK / 3RD ST**  
*(Under Development/No Public Access)*

**12**

Boat Ramp  
River Right  
(Put intake out)

Floatable downstream to  
Niagara Dam and upstream from  
Roanoke River. Recommend  
upstream takeout to avoid difficult  
Niagara Dam portage.

LAT, LON  
37.2712, -79.9042

**2.1 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

Icons: P, Person, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Kayak.

**NIAGARA DAM PORTAGE**

**13**

Portage Lot  
NO VEHICLE ACCESS

LAT, LON  
37.2558, -79.8759

**0.3 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

AEP access road for portage  
around Niagara Dam. Difficult  
0.3 mile portage to access  
river below dam at Roanoke  
River Gorge.

**EXPLORE PARK**  
*Rutrough Point*

**14**

FLOATABLE  
ALL LEVELS

Canoe/Kayak Ramp  
River Right

LAT, LON  
37.2258, -79.9474

**4.3 MILES**  
Next AccessPoint

\$2 per person daily fee payable  
via post in parking area

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Person with wheelchair.

**DGIF HARDY FORD**  
*Boating Access*

**15**

FLOATABLE  
ALL LEVELS

Boat Ramp  
River Left

LAT, LON  
37.2261, -79.9012

**BLUEWAY  
ENDS**

Icons: P, Person with wheelchair, Person with cane, Person with wheelchair, Person with stroller, Person with bicycle, Person with dog, Person with trash can, Person with wheelchair.

# Progress

- website – [www.roanokeriverblueway.org](http://www.roanokeriverblueway.org)
- mapping (interactive and printable)
- Roanoke River Blueway Stakeholder Committee
- Roanoke River Greenway
- media coverage
- stakeholder interest

# Roanoke River Blueway



[Home](#) [About](#) [Access](#) [Maps](#) [Plan a Trip](#) [Safety](#) [Support](#) [Water Level](#) [Water Quality](#) [Weather/Climate](#) [Wildlife/Fishing](#)

## Welcome to the Roanoke River Blueway

The Roanoke River Blueway offers a unique combination of urban, front country, and back country recreation opportunities in the upper Roanoke River watershed. Enjoy canoeing, kayaking, fishing, tubing, wading, wildlife viewing, and watershed education – with convenient access to other outdoor and cultural amenities in Virginia's Blue Ridge.



Explore the Roanoke River Blueway  
Interactive Map  
Facebook



Stay Connected  
Follow Us

facebook



[Click for weather forecast](#)

 [Find Us On Facebook](#)

 **Roanoke River Blueway**  
Friday May 1st, 2015

Join local paddlers and City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Staff in an after work run of the Roano...  
[See More](#)

[View on Facebook](#) - [Share](#)

 **Roanoke River Blueway**  
Tuesday April 21st, 2015

The Roanoke River Bacteria and Sediment TMDL Implementation Plan public meeting is scheduled for Thu... [See More](#)

[View on Facebook](#) - [Share](#)

 **Roanoke River Blueway**  
Friday April 3rd, 2015

The 2015 (3rd annual) Roanoke Valley Greenways Photo Contest is open through September 15, 2015. Pho... [See More](#)

[View on Facebook](#) - [Share](#)

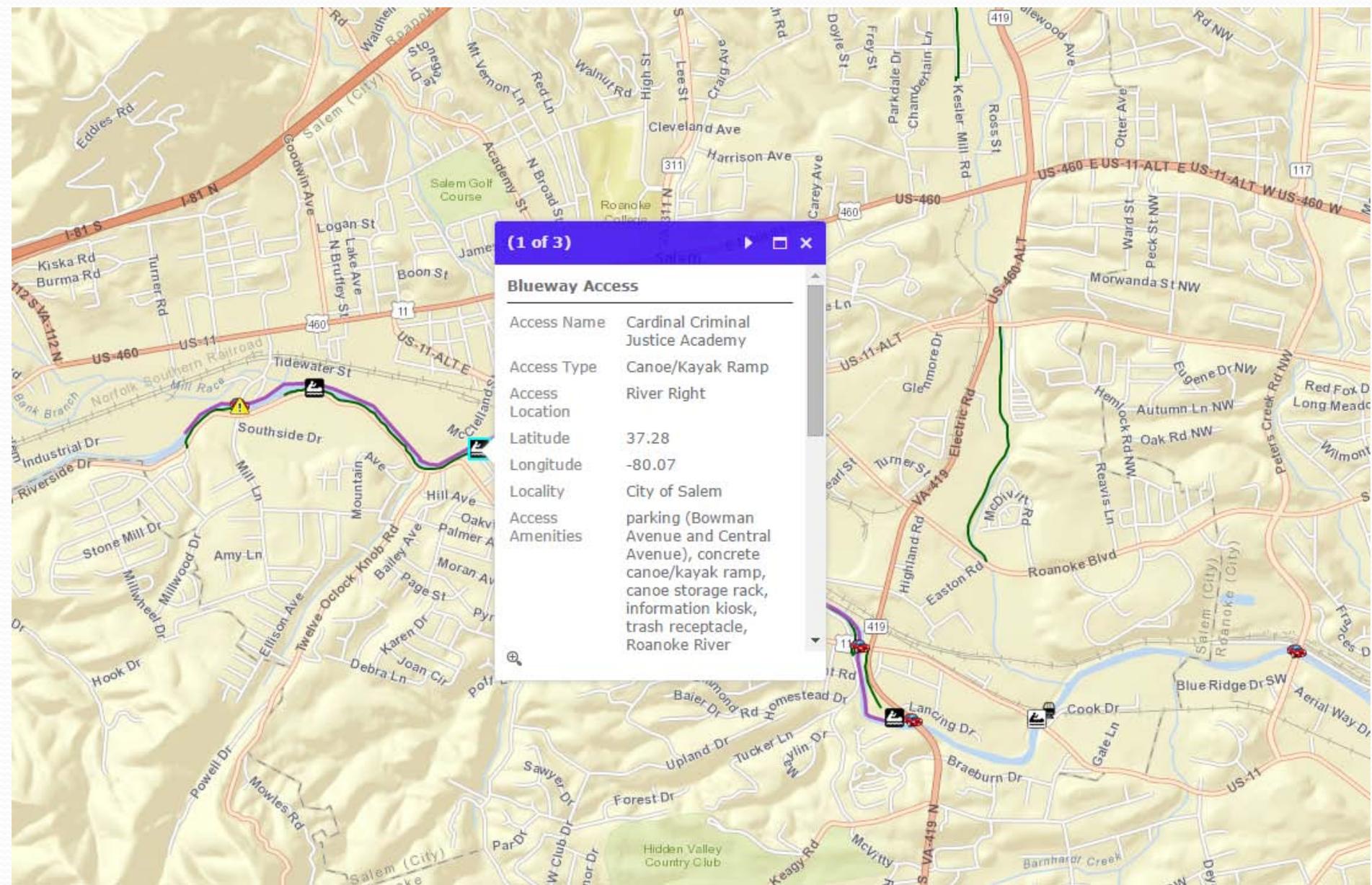
 **Roanoke River Blueway**  
Friday April 3rd, 2015

Clean Valley Council welcomes individuals and groups to volunteer for the annual spring cleanup on A... [See More](#)

[View on Facebook](#) - [Share](#)

 **Roanoke River Blueway**  
[Like](#) [50](#)

Translate:



(1 of 3) [Navigation icons]

### Blueway Access

Access Name	Cardinal Criminal Justice Academy
Access Type	Canoe/Kayak Ramp
Access Location	River Right
Latitude	37.28
Longitude	-80.07
Locality	City of Salem
Access Amenities	parking (Bowman Avenue and Central Avenue), concrete canoe/kayak ramp, canoe storage rack, information kiosk, trash receptacle, Roanoke River

# Stakeholder Committee

- City of Roanoke
- City of Salem
- Franklin County
- Montgomery County
- Roanoke County
- Town of Vinton
- Roanoke Valley Alleghany-Regional Commission
- Roanoke Valley Greenways
- National Park Service
- Back Country Ski & Sport
- Clean Valley Council
- RoanokeOutside.com
- Roanoke Mountain Adventures
- Float Fishermen of Virginia
- Friends of the Rivers of Virginia
- Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway
- Upper Roanoke River Roundtable
- Creek Freak Paddlers of Franklin County VA

# Challenges

- streamflow significantly impacts Blueway use (floatability, fishing, water quality, safety, etc.)
- streamflow varies considerably based primarily on meteorological events and to a lesser extent on seasonality
- impediments/barriers – low water bridges, Niagara Dam
- limited on ground blueway related (and oriented) information, signage, wayfinding, etc.
- limited overnight camping
- awareness of blueway opportunities (locals and visitors)
- water quality and recreational use issues (real and perceived)
- others?

# Next Steps

- Roanoke River Blueway website and Facebook updates
- continue to convene the Roanoke River Blueway Stakeholder Committee to guide Blueway development and promotion
- assist local governments in development of Blueway-related amenities and activities
- seek funding and related assistance for blueway efforts (in-kind, pro-bono, sponsorship, grants, special events)
- signage, website, mapping, promotion, access improvements, etc.

# Questions or Comments?

Shane Sawyer, Regional Planner III  
Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

phone: 540.343.4417

Email: [ssawyer@rvarc.org](mailto:ssawyer@rvarc.org)

[www.roanokeriverblueway.org](http://www.roanokeriverblueway.org)



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
**commission**