

Dear Commissioner Isbel,

Thank you for the opportunity to forward information to you that should be helpful to support a request for the Commission to hit “pause” on the Rails to Trails project.

I have attached the following:

- Necessity for Pause
- Brochure
- Package of Benefits and Property Concerns
- Trails that Focus on History
- Proposed Anderson County Resolution

The brochure was created several years ago and is outdated in spots (no plans for Frozen Head).

The Package of Benefits helps support one of the reasons the New River community needs some time to evaluate the possible advantages. The “Trails that Focus on History” document was the result of learning about the unique history of the New River community and how that history could be valuable to this project. (sorry about formatting on last page).

I have also attached the proposed Anderson County Resolution that we are hoping might be considered in November.

Finally, Jimmy wanted me to provide you with the same information I gave him about other trails, so here is that info:

1. There may be some similarities between the **Virginia Creeper Trail** and the potential New River (or Highlander Trail). There is one page in the brochure devoted to the statistics from the Virginia Creeper Trail. Although, I cautioned Jimmy that every trail is different.

This is a little more info on the Virginia Creeper:

· Estimating the Economic Value and Impacts of Recreational Trails: A Case Study of the Virginia Creeper Rail Trail <https://headwaterseconomics.org/trail/12-virginia-creeper-rail-trail/>

- o Virginia Creeper Trail – Damascus and Abingdon, VA (pops. 780 and 8,000)
- o Trail users spend \$28-\$38/person/trip at local businesses/lodging, etc.
- o 34-miles long trail supports 27 jobs and \$610,000 in labor earnings (2007)

2. There's a nice video on a trail in NC, here: [Ecusta Trail Brevard NC - YouTube](#)

3. The **Mountain Goat Trail in Grundy County, TN** is the one managed by the nonprofit. Their Executive Director is Patrick Dean. He is happy to talk to you. His phone number is 931.808.8149 and his email is: deansewanee@gmail.com

Their website is here: [MOUNTAIN GOAT TRAIL ALLIANCE](#)

The Mountain Goat Trail Alliance was incorporated as a nonprofit in 2006. The first 2 miles of the Mountain Goat Trail were completed in 2000, but it wasn't until 2024 that the second section – 5 miles – was completed. They now have 12 miles completed and in 2024 had 79,000 visitors and produced \$5 million of economic benefit from the trail.

4. Mayor John Gentry of McMinn County is more than willing to talk to anyone about their **Eureka Trail**. His email is: mayoroffice@mcminncountytn.gov. Mayor Gentry advised us that they feel their trail is a success especially in the quality-of-life area. It's a linear trail making it a safe place for kids to ride. It's gravel, not paved and the runners like that. They have 5k races up there. They established their trail for health reasons. There is a couple in their 70's that say it saved their lives because they have logged 10,000 miles. The trail motivates people to exercise.

This is likely far more information than you need currently but thought more was better than less.

Please let me know if you think I should attend on Monday or if you need any other information.