

Cartecay Blue Trail Master Plan



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What is a Blue Trail?

- Blue Trails are the water equivalent of a walking or hiking trail.
- Blue Trails are created to facilitate community interaction with the aquatic system utilized for the Blue Trail.
- Blue Trails promote paddle sports, and also provide an opportunity for river interaction without actually getting wet.

Why a Blue Trail?

- Blue Trails:
 - Reconnect community with local watershed
 - Enhance local economy through increased tourism, jobs and recreation-related spending
 - Educate communities and offer local recreation watersheds
 - Promote healthy and active living
 - Preserve community history and identity

Building a Launch

- National Park Service's "ABCs, Ds and Es" of developing a launch site:¹
 - Accessible
 - Best Suited
 - Cost-Effective and Durable
 - Environment-friendly

¹ Nat'l Park Service, Rivers Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, "Logical Lasting Launches: Design Guidance for Canoe and Kayak Launches," Spring 2004, available at: www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/launchguide/title.pdf.

Building a Launch

- Accessible to all Paddlers
 - What to consider:
 - Launch and land without flipping or damaging boat
 - Large enough to accommodate length of boat
 - Firm surface to support movements and stabilize boat
 - No significant height difference between seat and shoreline to facilitate climbing in and out
 - Americans with Disabilities Act – Federal law that generally requires accommodations for the handicapped in places of public recreation
 - Certain exemptions will likely make accommodations unnecessary on the Blue Trail (however accommodating handicapped paddlers should be taken into consideration during construction)

Building a Launch

- Accessible to all Paddlers
 - General Recommendations for an accessible launch:
 - **Height above water:** Between 9" and 2' from highest expected water level
 - **Width:** At least 5' wide, preferably 6' to 12'
 - **Length:** At least 25' to allow paddlers “dry” access to entire length of their boats
 - **Slope:** ADA Accessibility Guidelines require that slopes not exceed 8.33% whenever possible; a slope exceeding 15% will make transition from land to water difficult for any paddler
 - **Support:** Handrails or other support structures, including step-down designs or ropes, help paddlers balance their weight during put-in and take-out
 - **Location:** Ideally in areas without heavy flow, erosion, exposure to elements, heavy boat traffic, or fragile riparian habitats

Building a Launch

- Types of Proposed Launches for Cartecay Trail
 - Simple Launches
 - Floating Launches
 - Concrete Launch Designs:
 - Ramps
 - Stairs

Building a Launch

- Simple Launch



Building a Launch

- Simple Launch
 - Simplest and most cost effective because it requires little or no construction. Paddlers use “natural” features or existing shorelines with decks, boardwalks, etc.
 - Work great as long as currents are not strong, water depth allows for stable launching without damage to boats, and vertical space between the shore and the surface of the water is not excessive.
- Possible Concerns:
 - Slippery when wet
 - Can cause damage to habitats, erosion, etc.
 - Because of obstructed view, may go unnoticed by paddlers

Building a Launch

- Floating Launch



Building a Launch

- Floating Launch

- Consists of a frame and floats, and typically accompanies a dock. Paddlers launch from the deck while the frame provides the buoyancy.
- Advantages:
 - Adjusts to fluctuating water levels
 - Few long term environmental effects
 - Easily removable in poor weather
 - Unlikely to scratch boats
- Disadvantages:
 - Not appropriate for all locations – should be limited to a minimum depth of 3 feet
 - Anchoring process must take into account a variety of climatic conditions
 - Can be “beached” at low tide or low flows

Building a Launch

- Concrete Ramp

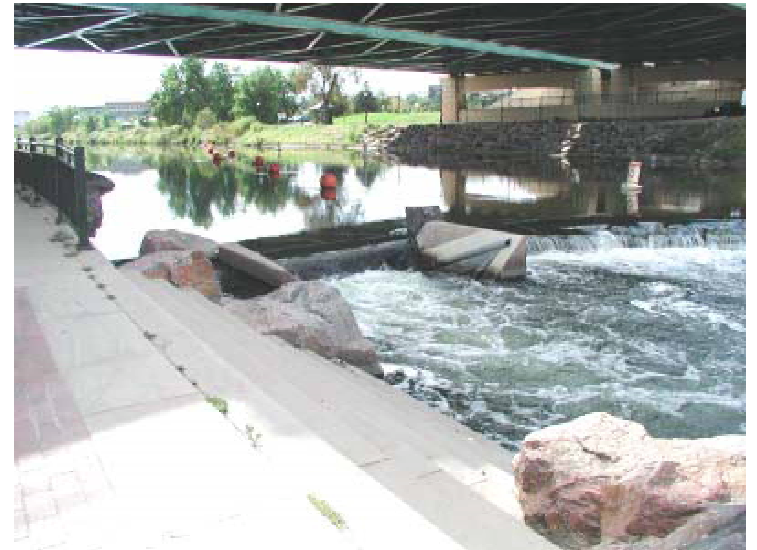


Building a Launch

- Concrete Ramp
 - Can be used alone or in conjunction with floating launches, decks, etc.
 - Most stable and durable surface for launching, and can be relatively inexpensive to construct and repair
 - Provides access for disabled paddlers
 - Disadvantages:
 - Can cause damage to riparian ecology, preventing growth of vegetation and impacting habitats
 - Can be slippery when wet
 - Not very aesthetically pleasing (but can be surfaced with rocks and other materials for improved appearance)

Building a Launch

- Concrete Stairs



Building a Launch

- Concrete Stairs

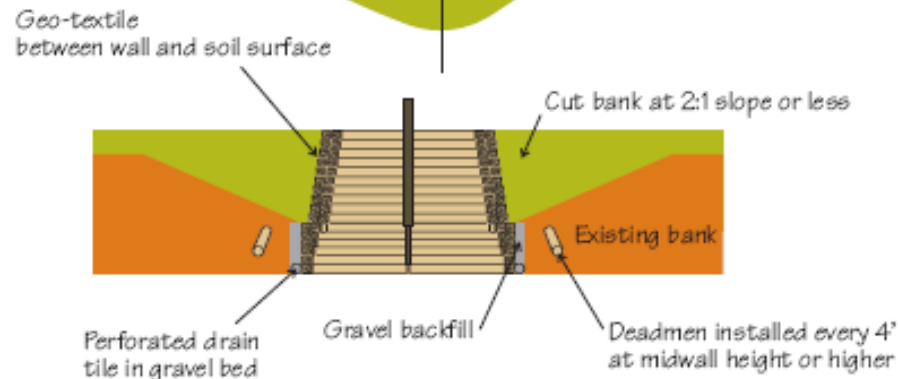
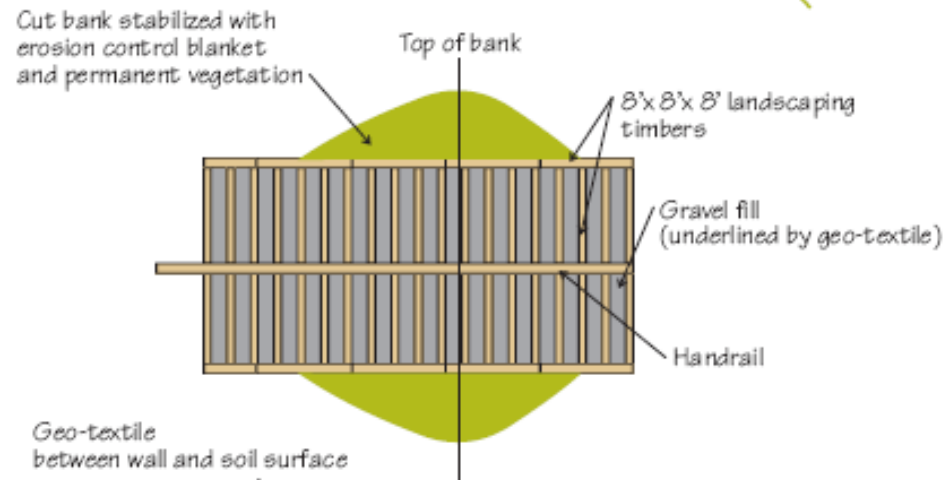
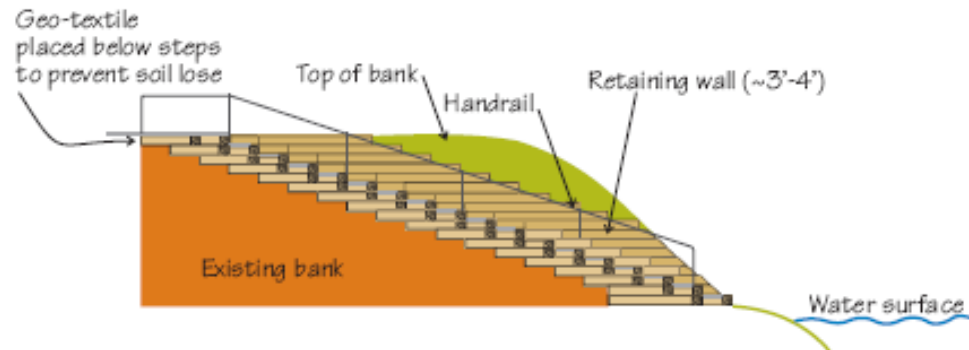
- Particularly effective in providing access along steep shorelines
- Durable and can be easily maintained in areas where water levels change dramatically
- Can be combined with boat slides to provide easy transport of boats to water
- Durable – require very little maintenance
- Disadvantages:
 - Can be expensive and may require use of heavy equipment for preparation of bank before installation
 - Might not be as easily accessible as concrete ramps, and rarely provide access to disabled paddlers

Building a Launch

- Gravel Stairs



Stair Construction



Building a Launch

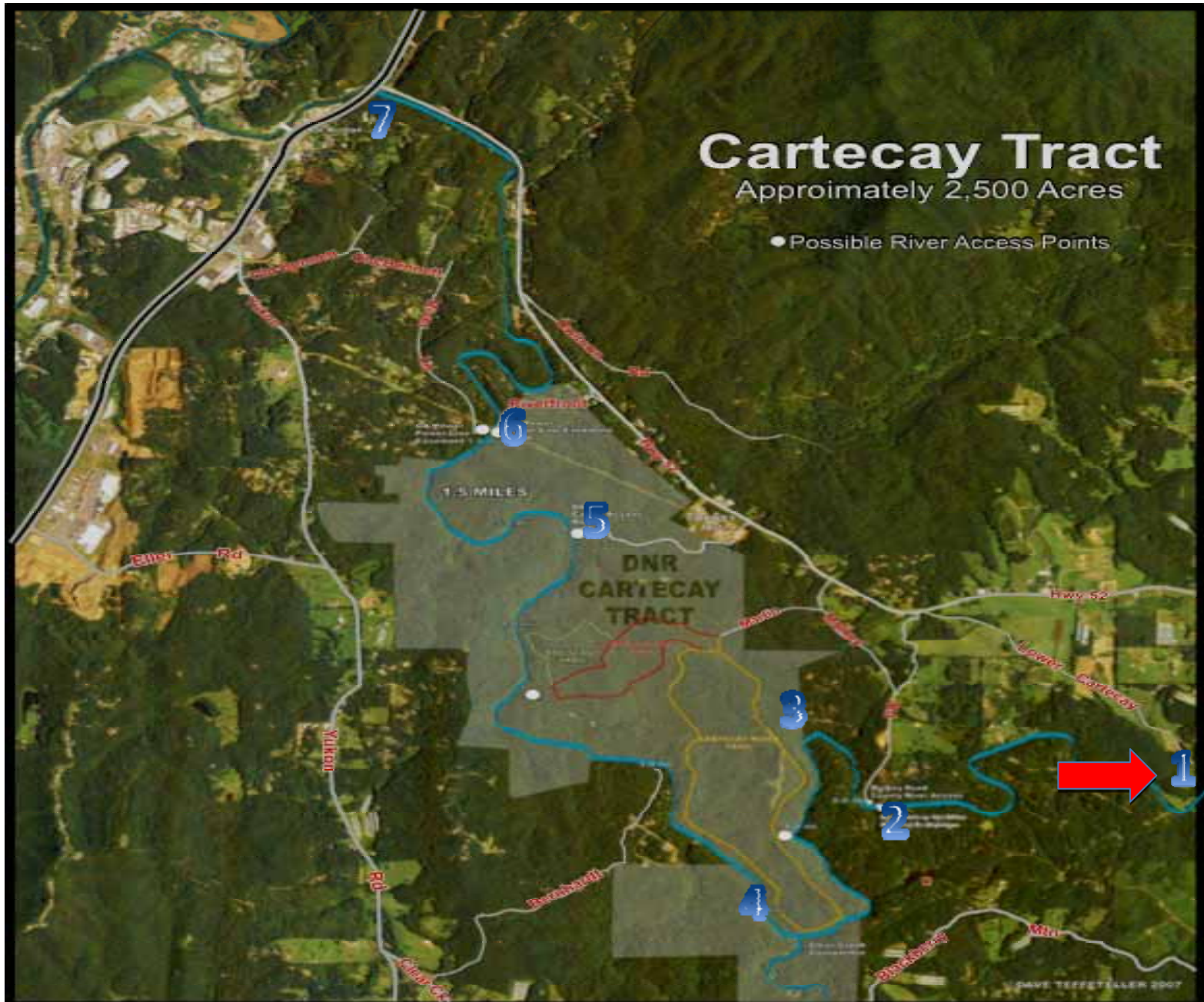
- Gravel Stairs

- Particularly effective in providing access along steep shorelines
- Durable, but less so than the concrete alternative, and can be easily maintained in areas where water levels change dramatically
- Can be combined with boat slides to provide easy transport of boats to water
- Provides more porous option than concrete stairs
- Disadvantages:
 - Can be expensive and may require use of heavy equipment for preparation of bank before installation
 - Might not be as easily accessible as concrete ramps, and rarely provide access to disabled paddlers

Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 1 – Ellijay Mountain Outfitters Launch

Notice erosion surrounding the current designated put-in area, which affect both banks of the tributary



Shallow, calm waters, but current stairs need rebuilding

Site 1 – Ellijay Mountain Outfitters Launch

- Specs
 - Site 1 has river access on both the east and west banks.
 - The natural put-in is located in an inlet on the east bank, making it safe for all ages due to its shallow water and lack of moving current.
 - The site can accommodate many vehicles and is easily accessible from Blackberry Mountain Road.
 - Due to the dilapidated condition of the current put-in, erosion, and therefore added sedimentation to the Cartecay River, has become a concern.
- Issues
 - The site is on private land, which is utilized by Ellijay's only paddling outfitter. Fortunately, the owner has expressed interest in building a sustainable and environmentally friendly put-in that would be considered a part of the Cartecay Blue Trail.

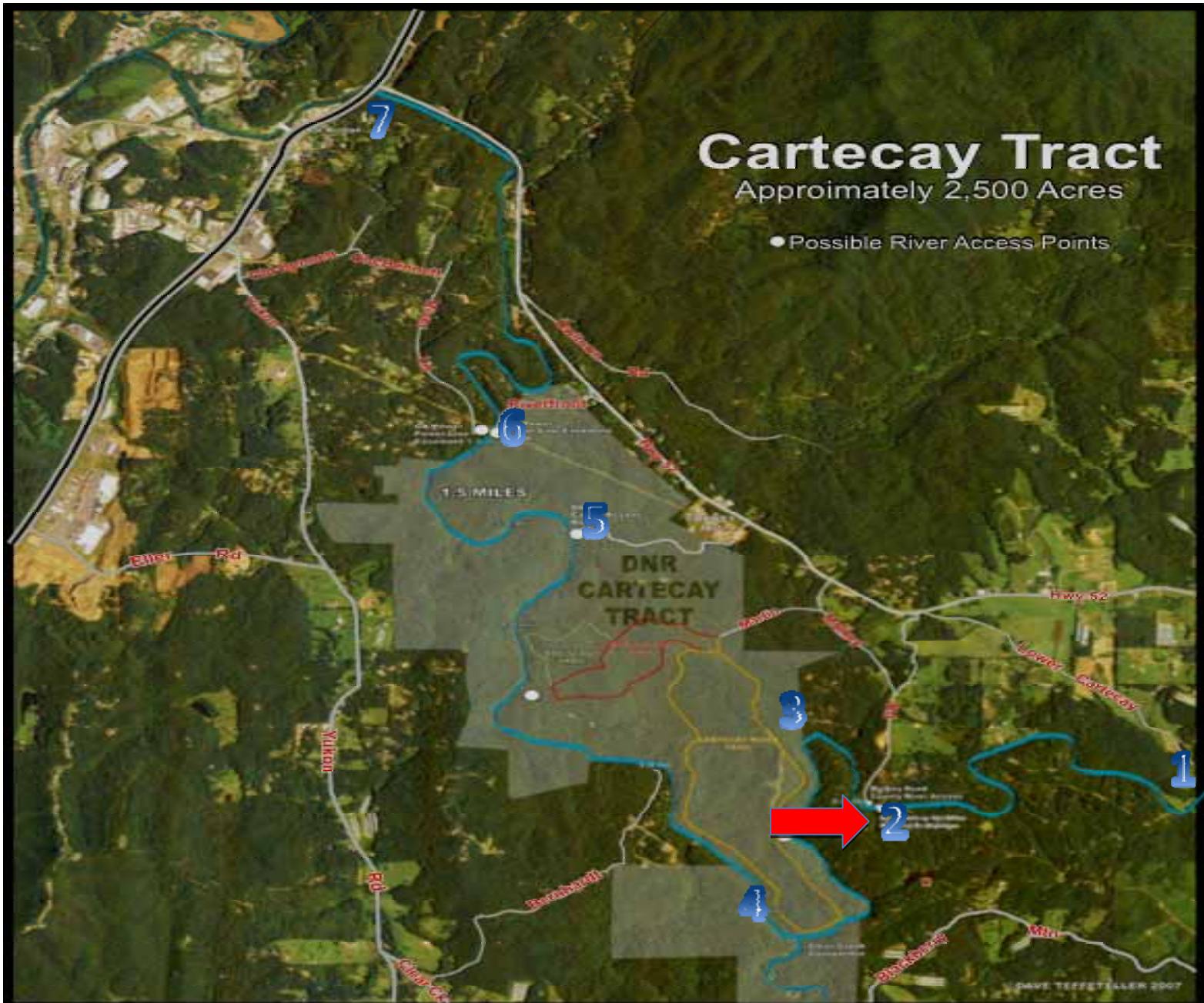
Site 1 – Ellijay Mountain Outfitters Launch

- Gravel or Concrete Stairs
 - The problem with the stairs that are already in place is that they are too narrow. Large groups of paddlers often use both the stairs and the surrounding bank area when accessing the river.
 - The put-in could be moved entirely to the bank of the river as opposed to the tributary currently in use, which has sustained erosion and sedimentation damage. By increasing the width of accessibility, users would be more inclined to use the formal launch.
 - The current stairs could be expanded into a much larger structure, or even a mildly graded concrete ramp.

Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 2 – The Blackberry Mountain Bridge



Here, there is almost no grade change between parking lot and river, which makes boat transportation easier and safer

The shallow waters make the location a practical option for a put-in with easy boater transition into and out of river



Site 2 – The Blackberry Mountain Bridge

- Specs
 - The second location is on the Cartecay Tract in the Blackberry Mountain development. For years, it has been used by river outfitters as the take-out point for paddling trips.
 - The highly used, informal take-out has sustained considerable erosion and sedimentation damage that a properly constructed take-out point could alleviate.
 - The river moves faster at site 2, but with a depth of less than 3 feet, entry and exit from a boat is still very safe.
 - The site has an existing parking lot (approximately 10 spots) roughly 100 feet from the point where outfitters and paddlers have exited the river.
- Issues
 - What role would the Blackberry Mountain community play in the development? Would their approval need to be sought?
 - Would the community be receptive to paddlers using the parking area?

Site 2 – Launch Recommendation

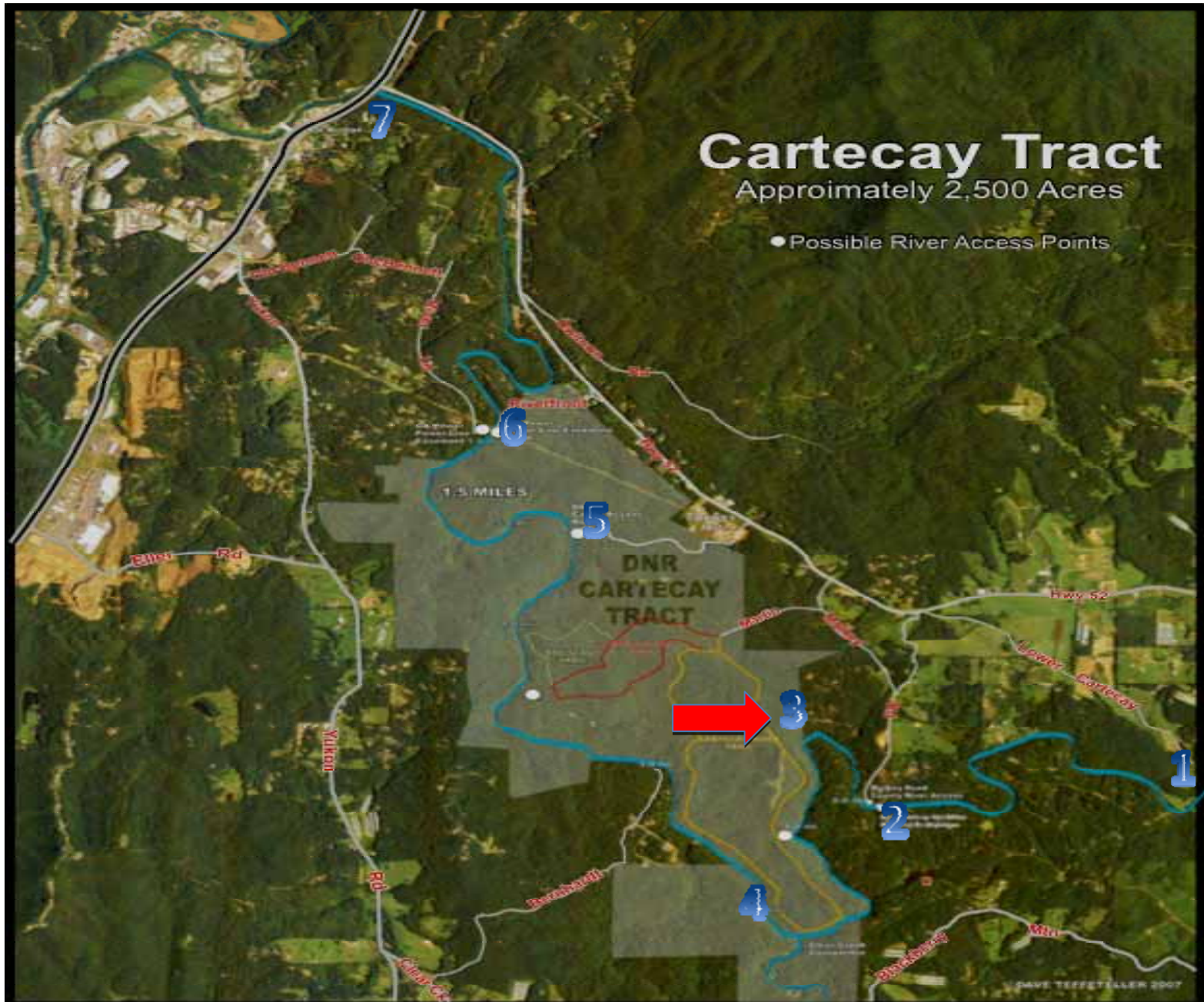
- Simple Launch

- Shallow and slow-moving water, with a small rock beach, creates excellent conditions for a simple launch site.
- The Blue Trail Team should consider assembling large and small rocks in a way that directs paddlers to one particular access point along the beach in order to prevent them from using parts of the beach that are more susceptible to erosion.

Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 3 – DNR Canoe Access Road

The water at the DNR Canoe Access Road is calm and shallow, which is safer for boat entry and exit



The current put-in is too narrowly constructed to realistically be utilized by boaters

Site 3 – DNR Canoe Access Road



Graded, level parking area
in close proximity to future
river put-in

Flat land near parking lot that
would accommodate small picnic
area and designated camping spots



Site 3 – DNR Canoe Access Road

- Specs
 - The third site – accessible from Highway 52 – is the most accommodating space on the Cartecay tract and is likely the most construction-ready.
 - The site has ample space for a put-in, a picnic area, fishing, and a campsite.
 - The site is well suited for a put-in because of favorable grading, river calmness and water depth. In fact, DNR built an access point to the river at some point; however, the launch is rundown and ultimately too narrow for paddlers to use.
 - The site has an existing parking area large enough to accommodate paddlers, anglers and campers. With minimal effort, the parking area could be restructured to hold 20-30 vehicles.
- Issues
 - None foreseeable

Site 3 – Launch Recommendation

- Gravel or Concrete Stairs
 - An extremely steep access makes concrete stairs the most viable launch.
 - The current stairs need to be widened in order to increase accessibility.
 - Blue Trail Team should consider adding a metal boat slide to the middle portion of the stairs to facilitate boater access.



Ellijay River Blue Trail: An Example



The recently constructed campsite and boat launch, pictured here, on the Ellijay River offers an ideal Blue Print for the proposed sites on the Cartecay Tract.



Human Waste Disposal at Site 3

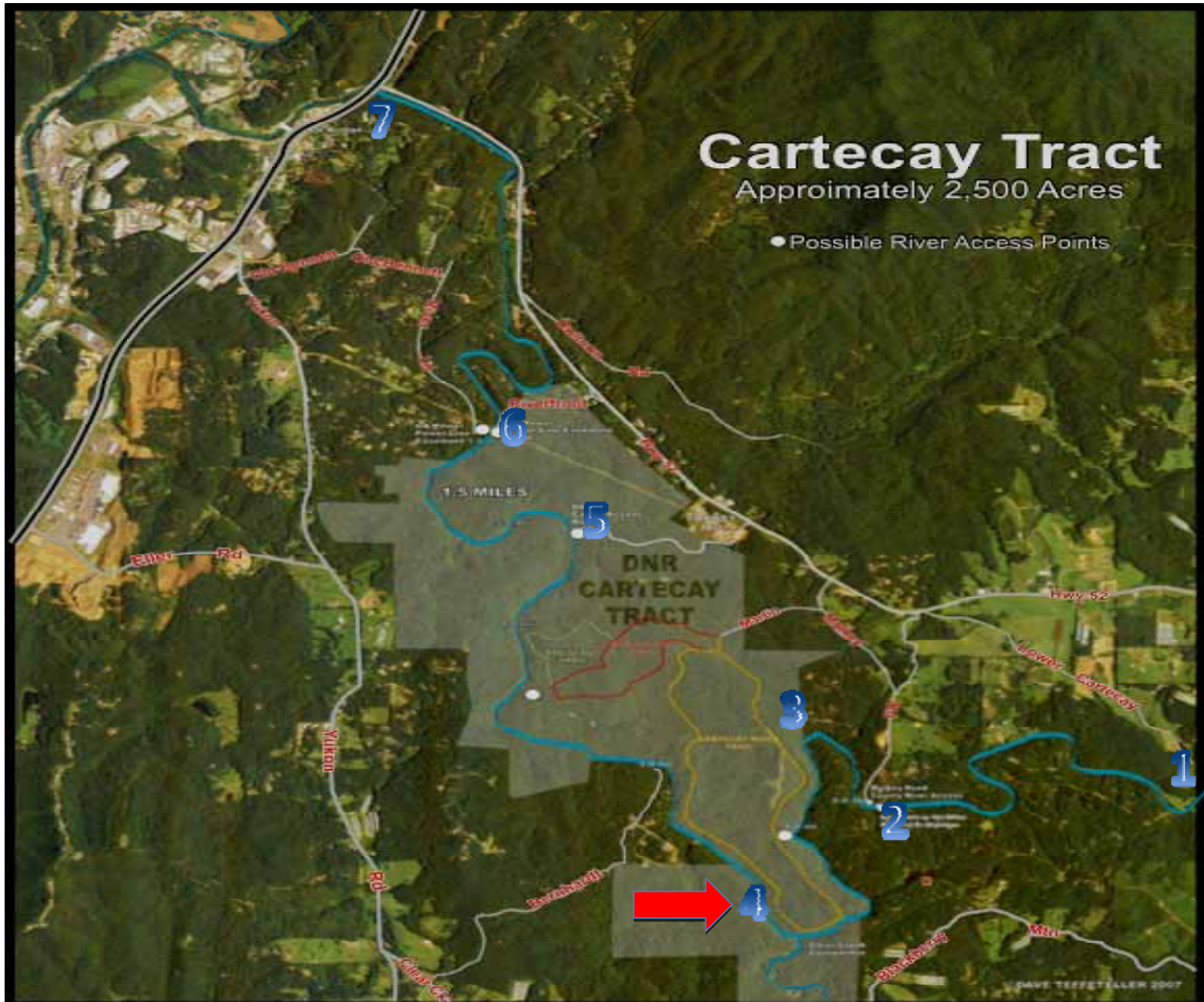
- It is strongly recommended to utilize two fully enclosed compost toilets at site 3 of Cartecay Blue Trail
- Site 3 expected to be the heaviest trafficked area on the Blue Trail because of its parking availability and activity alternatives
- Location will likely be central to the large parking lot and picnic area at site 3
- Cost is approximately \$3,200 (for 2 toilets)
- Optimizes the natural processes of decomposition and evaporation in a fully self-contained unit small enough to fit in a camper or cabin
- Because no chemicals are used, the composted material can be tilled into the soil without fear of environmental contamination
- Odor Free
- Waterless
- Environmentally Friendly
- Sustainable



Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 4 – The Shoals

Slick rock combined with a layer of swift moving water make for a potentially hazardous boating situation if persons are unaware of the approaching shoals



Site 4 – The Shoals

- Specs
 - The fourth site is not proposed for a put-in; however, the natural beauty of the shoals make the area attractive for day trips, swimming and camping.
 - There is a possibility that a walk around will need to be constructed to avoid certain hazardous areas. A “walk around” is a walking trail circumventing an obstacle in the river, usually for boater safety.
- Issues
 - Site 4 might also make a great camping site, but one that is inaccessible by public roads.
 - An issue with establishing formal campsite at site 4 is the private land that surrounds the river here.
 - The residents and land owners might be hesitant in allowing the Blue Trail to establish campsites near the “Shoals,” especially since the community is gated for privacy.

Site 4 – Launch Recommendation

- Simple Launch?
 - We need further information about the actual access point along the river for the walk around in order to make recommendations about launch construction

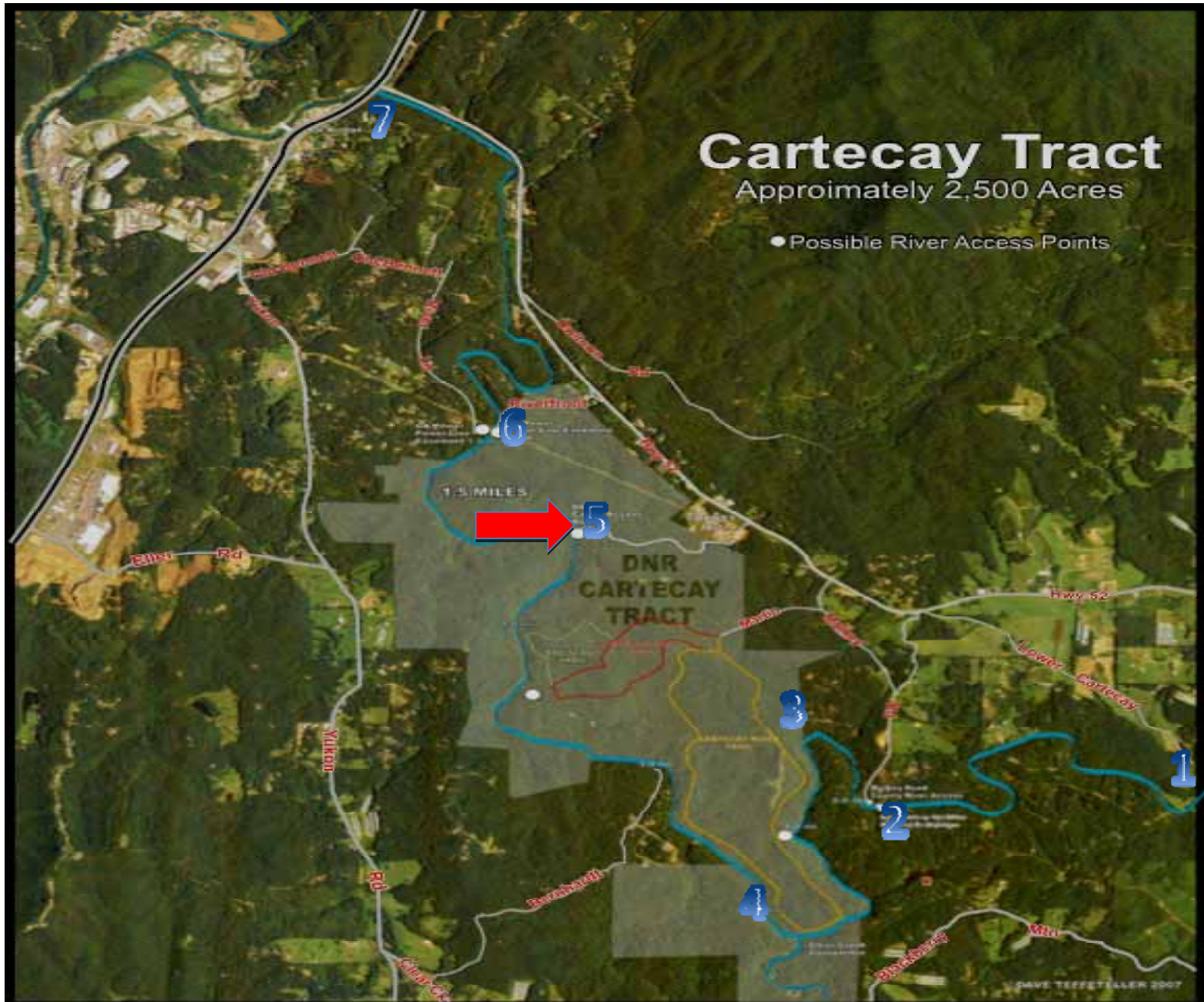
Safety Around Higher Risk Areas

- Safety for the Blue Trail paddlers is a primary concern, even if users boat at their own risk.
- Extra steps are encouraged simply as a precautionary measure for additional protection.
- To increase the safety of the Cartecay Blue Trail, signage clearly showing the beginning of the “walk around” is necessary as well as notices posted on information boards located at the put in sites.

Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 5 – the DNR Bike Trails

Closed roads hinder the ability to construct and efficiently maintain a put-in and corresponding campground.



Site 5 – the DNR Bike Trails

- Specs
 - The fifth site, also on DNR land, is at a scenic point in the river and adjacent to three biking trails in the Cartecay Tract – the Boy Scout Trail, the Red & White Trail, and the Cartecay River Trail.
 - As the bike trails are already a great source of recreation in the area, paddlers could make use of a put-in at this point.
- Issues
 - Site 5 presents several obstacles to overcome before full public utilization is possible. The access road to the Cartecay River enters a wildlife management area. Gaining approval for construction in a wildlife management area might prove complicated. However, three well-known bike trails winding through the wildlife management area are highly used. Because DNR has allowed for continued use of the bike trails, the department may allow construction for a Blue Trail take-out and campsite at this location.
 - The put-in and subsequent camping area may only be accessible by boaters navigating the Cartecay River or bikers using the trails because of a lack of public access to roads throughout the wildlife management area.
 - Seclusion is an attraction for many Blue Trail users searching for a more nature oriented camping experience; however, the logistics for managing the site become increasingly difficult.
 - The roads, including service roads that would give access to this site, are closed; however, in an emergency, the roads could be utilized to expedite extraction from the secluded site.
 - Logistically, Site 5 is the most difficult to plan, obtain approval for and develop.

Site 5 – Launch Recommendation

- More information is currently needed to give a final recommendation about the actual access point for Site 5.
- Gravel stairs will likely be recommended for their durability and adaptability to multiple terrains, in addition to the lack of accessibility of heavy construction vehicles to the site.
- Lack of access to Site 5 may ultimately impede construction of a put-in at this location.

Human Waste Disposal at Site 5

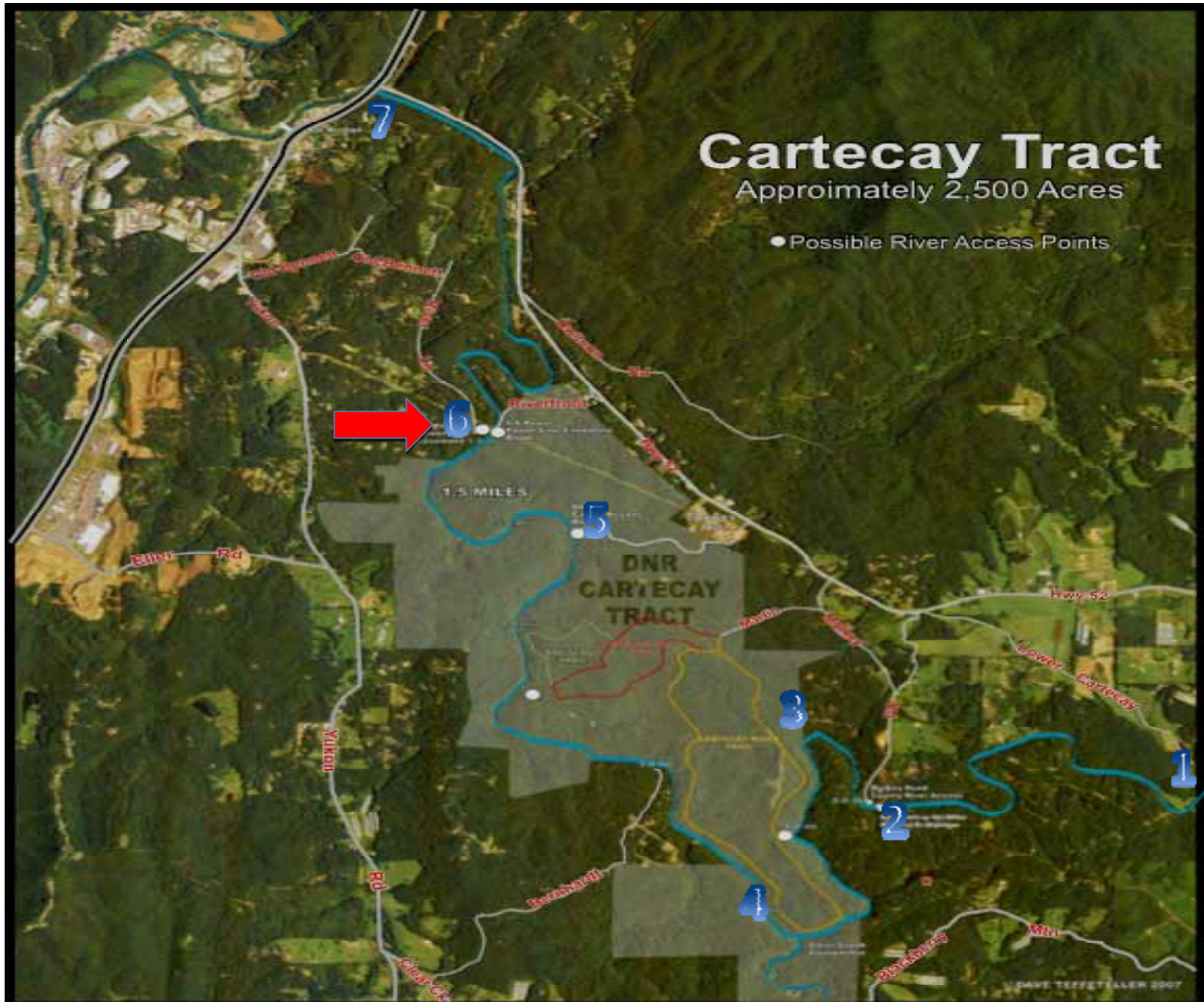
- Open air toilets are usually recommended instead of a fully housed compost toilets for a site of this size.
- Also camping “catholes” could be utilized by site 5 users, if it is deemed too large of a burden to maintain open air toilets due to the site’s seclusion.
- A site for the restroom should be picked for its privacy and distance from the river.
- The addition of soil or compost material to the toilet housing will speed up decomposition and reduce odor.



Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

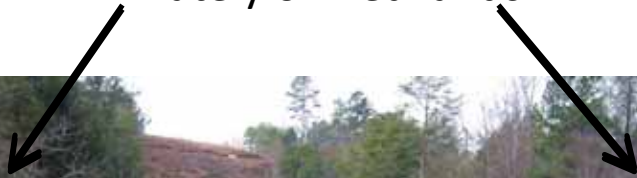
- Possible River Access Points



Site 6 – The Georgia Power Dock

West Bank Put-in

Privately owned lands



East Bank Trail



Site 6 – The Georgia Power Dock

- Specs
 - The sixth proposed site sits on DNR land on the north side of the Cartecay Tract. Georgia Power holds an easement at this location to access power lines that cross over the river. The west bank has an existing dock; however, it appears rundown and unfit for use as a put-in.
 - With minimal construction, the Georgia Power site can be used as a put-in for paddlers; however, it is not recommended for camping or formal picnicking.
 - This site is optimal for a Blue Trail put-in given the mild grade, water depth and nearby road access (River Lane and Highway 52).
 - The site may be used as a multi bank put-in, in which case the river would be formally accessible from the west or east side; however, for initial purposes, construction is proposed solely on the west bank.
 - Current parking is estimated to allow 12-15 vehicles, and the space may be expanded in the future.
- Issues
 - Is the existing dock a concern? Who built it and who owns it?
 - Will Georgia Power welcome a put-in for paddlers on land where they have an easement?
 - Will the adjacent private properties welcome the increased human traffic?

Human Waste Disposal at Site 6

- Site 6 is envisioned as smaller, less trafficked site, but within view of private residences.
- The west bank potential put-in is bordered on both sides by private lands.
- Open air toilets are usually recommended instead of a fully housed compost toilets for a site of this size, but decency is a paramount concern.
- A fully housed compost toilet is therefore suggested.
- The piping for the sustainable toilet system can be housed in a 4'x4' area, while comfortably accommodating most any occupant.
- A site for the restroom should be picked for its privacy and distance from the river.

Human Waste Disposal at Site 6

- Compost Toilet System
- Cost is approximately \$1,600
- Optimizes the natural processes of decomposition and evaporation in a fully self-contained unit small enough to fit in a camper or cabin
- Because no chemicals are used, the composted material can be tilled into the soil without fear of environmental contamination
- Odor Free
- Waterless
- Environmentally Friendly
- Sustainable



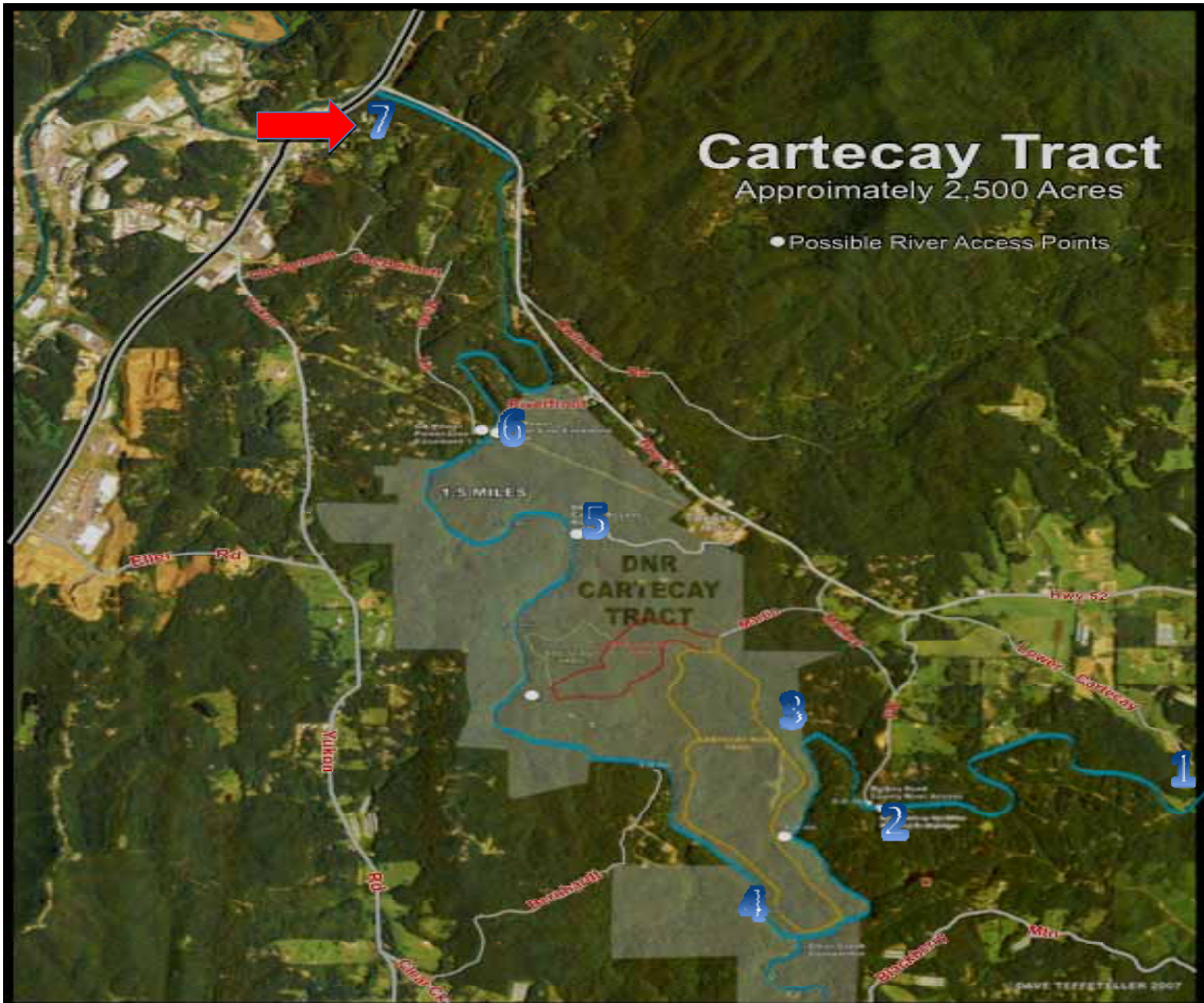
Site 6 – Launch Recommendation

- Gravel or Concrete Stairs
 - Site 6 has the benefit of accessibility, with a generally mild grade. Both gravel or concrete stairs would serve the purposes of this launch site.
 - Stairs may be more aesthetically pleasing and easier to construct here; however, it is not necessary to use stairs because access is not steep and a concrete ramp would more likely conform to ADA standards.

Cartecay Tract

Approximately 2,500 Acres

● Possible River Access Points



Site 7 – Downtown Ellijay

Notice the steep grade, which is a concern on both banks



Site 7 – Downtown Ellijay

- Specs
 - The final proposed site is also located on private property – out the backdoor of North Georgia Mountain Outfitters on Industrial Blvd, near Highway 515 in downtown Ellijay. The owners of the store have shown interest in allowing a take-out point onsite. In the past, paddlers have exited the Cartecay Tract well short of the downtown area.
 - Parking is limited and could pose a concern. Spots would be shared with the already small lot for Mountain Outfitters customers. Land owner could designate several parking spots for Blue Trail use on a first come first served basis.
 - The grade is also the steepest on the tract. This adversely affects not only construction costs, but also boat transportation.
- Issues
 - Site 7 is, comparatively, in the most populated area, which would likely result in the greatest economic stimulus produced by Blue Trail patrons; however, obtaining approval for a take-out in downtown Ellijay could prove tricky.
 - Limited parking at North Georgia Mountain Outfitters may prevent heavy use at this site unless supplemental parking is available.

Site 7 – Launch Recommendation

- Gravel or concrete stairs, possibly in conjunction with a floating launch
 - This site has both a steep grade and swifter moving water. Gravel or concrete steps should be used since they best adjust to changes in water height and impacts from stronger currents.
 - A metal boat slide should also be considered on this site.
 - Developers may find that a floating launch should also be employed to increase the size of the landing area and decrease the possibility that paddlers overshoot it.

Georgia's Recreational Property Act

- O.C.G.A. 51-3-22; O.C.G.A. 51-3-25
 - “An owner of land owes no duty of care to keep the premises safe for entry or use by others for recreational purposes or to give any warning of a dangerous condition, use, structure, or activity on the premises to persons entering for recreational purposes, except if the injury causing conduct was willful or malicious or an entry fee was charged for admittance.”

Liability Case Law

- Georgia Dept. of Transp. V. Thompson, 606 S.E. 2d 323 (Ga. App. 2004)
 - The purpose of the Recreational Property Act (RPA) is to encourage owners of land to make land and water areas available to the public for recreational purposes by limiting the owners' liability toward persons entering thereon for recreational purposes. The RPA applies to both private and public owners of land.

Recommended Trash Policy – All Sites

- A carry in, carry out policy is highly recommended.
- The Cartecay Blue Trail will be highly dependent on trail users to maintain cleanliness, due to the infrequency of formal trail managers visiting the sites.
- If trash receptacles are utilized at the sites, they will quickly become overwhelmed and detract from the aesthetic and environmental value of the Cartecay Blue Trail.
- Hence a no trash can policy at all sites will accustom the Cartecay Blue Trail users to an environmentally and budget friendly system.
- Signage at all probable sites will publicize the carry in, carry out policy.

Cartecay Safety Tips

- Avoid boating alone
- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket
- Pack essential items according to the duration of your trip (drinking water, first-aid, etc.)
- Leave your route and return time with a relative or friend
- Learn to control your boat and be able to stop the boat at any time and land on shore

Clean Water Act and the Permit Process

- Under Section 404, anyone who proposes an activity that would discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States is required to apply for a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
 - This boils down to any physical alteration of an aquatic site.
- Section 404 regulations allow issuance of individual and general permits. An individual permit is usually required only when an activity is expected to have significant impacts. Otherwise, for discharges expected to have minimal adverse effects, the Army Corps of Engineers often grants general permits.
- Burden of Proof
 - The law places the burden of proof squarely on a permit applicant to demonstrate that the destruction of any portion of a wetland is necessary. If the proposed activity does not absolutely have to be conducted in or near the water, the permitting agency is to begin with the assumption that practicable alternatives do exist.
- If the activity is regulated under Section 404, then a federal action (the permit process) is required before the activity can proceed. That federal action triggers the need for Section 401 certification and, in some cases an Endangered Species Act consultation.

The Permit Process in Gilmer County

- The local Gilmer County Code requires a 404 permit issuance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in most circumstances.
- Sec. 86-64. Protection criteria requirement for local permit or permission.
 - No regulated activity will be permitted within the wetlands protection district without written permission or a permit from the land development office. If the area proposed for development is located within 50 feet of a wetlands protection district boundary, as determined by the land development officer using the generalized wetlands map, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determination shall be required. If the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determines that wetlands are present on the proposed development site, the local permit or permission will not be granted until a Section 404 Permit or letter of permission is issued.

The Permit Process in Gilmer County

- Assuming the construction will not be so intensive as to require an individual permit under 404 of the CWA, the following language of the Gilmer County Code implies that a permit would not be needed for constructing launch points for recreational activities such as boating and canoeing. Similarly, the Blue Trail construction could fall under the “education and nature trail” exemption.
- Sec. 86-65. Permitted uses.
 - The following uses shall be allowed as of right within the wetlands protection district to the extent that they are not prohibited by any other ordinance or law, including laws of trespass, and provided they do not require structures, grading, fill, draining, or dredging except as provided in this article. (The activities listed in this section are exempted from Section 404 regulations provided they do not have impacts on a navigable waterway that would necessitate acquisition of an individual Section 404 permit.)
 - (1) Conservation or preservation of soil, water, vegetation, fish and other wildlife, provided it does not affect waters of the state or of the United States in such a way that would require an individual Section 404 permit.
 - (2) Outdoor passive recreational activities, including fishing, bird watching, hiking, boating, horseback riding, and canoeing.
 - ...
 - (6) Education, scientific research, and nature trails.

Proposed Sites and the Permit Process

- While a 404 permit may not be necessary for Blue Trail construction, a local development permit may be necessary, and a site plan with the following specifications will need to be submitted.
- Sec. 86-151. Site plans.
 - Application for a local development permit within the Coosawattee River, Cartecay River, and Ellijay River water supply watershed districts shall include a site plan, drawn at a scale of one inch equals 50 feet by a registered land surveyor or professional engineer licensed by the state, with the following information:
 - (1) A map of all planned excavation and fill, including calculations of the volume of cut and fill involved, cross sectional drawings showing existing and proposed grades. Elevations, horizontal scale, and vertical scale must be shown on the cross sectional drawings.
 - (2) A map of any wetland boundaries occurring within the site must be provided. This boundary may be included on other maps provided by the applicant.
 - (3) Location, dimensions and area of all impervious surfaces, both existing and proposed, on the site and adjacent to the site for a distance of 200 feet.
 - (4) The orientation and distance from the boundaries of the proposed site to the nearest bank of an affected perennial stream or water body.
 - (5) Elevations of the site and adjacent lands within 200 feet of the site at contour intervals of no greater than two feet; and no greater than one foot for slopes less than or equal to two percent.
 - (6) Location and detailed design of any spill and leak collection systems designed for the purpose of containing accidentally released hazardous or toxic materials.
 - (7) All proposed temporary disruptions or diversions of local hydrology.
 - (8) The site plan shall contain a surveyor's or engineer's certification that the project site is or is not located within a water supply watershed district, a wetlands protection district, the Coosawattee River Corridor Protection District or the mountain protection district, as applicable.

Possible Permitting Obligations under DNR

- The DNR coastal resources division requires construction permits not only for coastal bodies of water, but also for areas placed on the Wild and Scenic River Study List and for areas within 2,000 feet of National Wildlife Refuges.
- The Cartecay River does not come under either, but the 17 mile portion of the Conasauga River located within the Cohutta National Wilderness Area in Fannin, Gilmer, and Murray Counties, Georgia is included in the Scenic River Study List.
- The Study List is updated periodically and therefore should be checked to ensure compliance immediately before construction on the Cartecay Blue Trail commences.

Economic Effects of Blue Trails

- Communities built around Blue Trails have experienced substantial economic growth.
- Two Case Studies:
 - Roanoke River Trail – Williamston, NC
 - Lake Superior Water Trail - Lake County, MN

Economic Effects of Blue Trails

- Roanoke River Trail – Williamston, NC
 - Population: 5,843.
 - Median Income \$22,925.
 - Approximately 2,220 paddling outings in 2000, with each paddler spending an average \$87.25 per trip.
 - Blue trail visitors generated an estimated \$193,695 in revenue in 2000.
 - First constructed in 1996 and currently encompasses over 200 miles of “wilderness eco-adventure,” fueling the development of eco-businesses throughout the region.



Roanoke River Partners



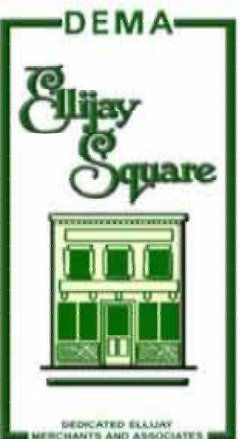
Economic Effects of Blue Trails

- Lake Superior Water Trail – Lake County, MN
 - Population: 11,058.
 - Median Income \$40,402.
 - Approximately 3,078 paddling outings in 2000, with each paddler spending an average \$34.53 per day.
 - Blue trail visitors generated an estimated \$106,191 in revenue.
 - The trail began as a 20 mile pilot project in 1998 and has currently grown to over 80 miles of available trail.
 - Home of the 12th Annual Two Harbors Kayak Festival – a vastly successful kayaking race bringing hundreds of racers and even more visitors to the area.



Economic Effects of Blue Trails

- What effect could a Blue Trail have on Ellijay and surrounding Gilmer County?
- Ellijay is a similarly situated rural area:
 - Population 1,584 as of 2000 census with median household income of \$22,120.
- Potential for tourism related development as paddlers travel into the area.
 - Home of the annual Georgia Apple Festival in October
 - A similar paddling event (such as Lake County's Two Harbor Festival) could generate significant revenue.
 - Even modest spending paddlers would bring significant revenue through: boat rentals, outfitters, motels and bed and breakfasts, restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores and shops. Also benefitting from increased traffic by paddlers would be the secondary market to the other cultural assets of the area, such as Ellijay's Historic downtown.



Recommendations

- There are some site issues that could not only prevent a single site's development, but possibly thwart the entire Trail prior to the breaking of ground. For the Cartecay Blue Trail to come to fruition, at least initially, the Environmental Practicum Group recommends a first phase of development with an optional second phase at the discretion of the Gilmer County Commissioners.
- Constructing the Blue Trail in two separate phases lowers initial investment costs, making it more acceptable to stakeholders, while still realizing the goal of Blue Trail site implementation.
- Sites 2, 3, and 6 could supply the most benefit and also present the fewest number of roadblocks to final construction.

Cost Estimates for Sites 2, 3 and 6 (approximates)

- 3 Put-ins -- \$22,500 (\$7,500 each)
- 3 Compost toilets with full housing--\$6,000 (\$2,000 each)
- 1 Open air toilet-- \$300
- 2 Picnic pavilions -- \$3000 (\$1,500 each)
- 2 aluminum picnic tables -- \$1,000 (\$500 each)
- 3 Information posting signs-- \$750 (\$250 each)
- 3 formal Campsites -- \$300 (\$100 each)

- Total Estimate for Sites 2, 5 and 6 = \$33,850

- Unknown Costs -- equipment rental, environmental services, insurance, land clearing
 - Estimates made under assumption that County Labor can be utilized in the construction of the Cartecay Blue Trail

Cartecay Contact List

- Dave Teffeteller, President, Coosawattee Watershed Alliance
- Scott McBride, Vice President, Coosawattee Watershed Alliance
- DNR Representatives (TBD)
- Gilmer County Commissioners, Mark Chastain, Will Beattie, JC Sanford
- Environmental Management Services, Inc., (770) 735- 2778 (Necessary for Permitting Application Completion)

Please direct further questions or
concerns to Dave Teffeteller or Scott
McBride of the Coosawattee
Watershed Alliance

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CoosawatteWatershedAlliance.org