



Proposal for Green River Access



Executive Summary

Green River Access

In addition to containing some of the area's finest **hunting and fishing land**, North Carolina's Green River Gamelands is home to one of the **nation's finest whitewater resources: the Green River.**

The Upper Green is a 3.7-mile Class II-III (IV) whitewater run found in Henderson County, North Carolina. The Upper Green is gaining popularity with intermediate boaters due to its marvelous and sometimes challenging rapids, **spectacular scenery**, and consistency of flow. Immediately below the Upper Green, the river enters a steep gorge known as the "**Narrows.**" The Narrows were first successfully run in its entirety by kayakers in 1988 and since then, it has become **the most popular Class V creek** in the Eastern United States.

Current access to the middle portion of the Green River Gamelands, including access out of the Upper Green and entrance into the Green Narrows, sits entirely on private land, and this access point has never represented a permanent solution. Access to Green River Gorge at its middle is popular with whitewater recreationalists as a **takeout for paddlers on the Upper Green and the put-in for paddlers of the Narrows.** Although Narrows boaters can paddle through the Upper Green to proceed into the Narrows, **Upper Green paddlers do not have a takeout option, thereby effectively eliminating a popular river run.** Additionally, with the removal of the current access lot, **other Gamelands users** (hunters, fishermen, hikers, and photographers) **would lose access** to the middle Green, forcing greater strain upon the game, land, and environment of the lower, often more inaccessible, and sensitive portions of the Green River Gorge.



American Whitewater has identified a **16.5-acre parcel of unrestricted land sharing a long border with the Green River Gamelands.** American Whitewater has finalized negotiations with the current landowner, the offer has been accepted, and the property will be transferred to American Whitewater upon payment within **three months.** Upon purchase, American Whitewater will work toward a **co-management** solution of the lower portion of this property to the State of North Carolina Parks and Recreation, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, or Henderson County.

American Whitewater

American Whitewater is a not-for-profit river conservation organization founded in 1957 to better conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. American Whitewater has 8,000 members, and with over 160 affiliate clubs, AW represents an additional 80,000-whitewater enthusiasts. **American Whitewater regularly facilitates land purchases and cooperative agreements with state and federal agencies for river access solutions.**

Recreational Opportunities

Whitewater Paddling

Upper Green River

The Upper Green is a 3.7-mile **Class II-III (IV) whitewater run** found in Henderson County, North Carolina. The Upper Green is gaining popularity with intermediate boaters due to its marvelous and sometimes challenging rapids, **spectacular scenery**, and consistency of flow. In fact, the **Upper Green flows nearly every day of the year**,



including summer months when comparable rivers are completely dry. It is the only dam-released creek of its caliber in the entire Southeastern region and it is in **close proximity to major population centers** Asheville and Greenville/Spartanburg within one hour and Charlotte within two.

The Green River Narrows

Immediately below the Upper Green, the river enters a steep gorge known as the "Narrows." The Narrows were first successfully run in its entirety by kayakers in 1988 and since then, it has become the **most popular Class V creek in the Eastern United States**

because of its intense rapids and consistent, **year-round, flows**. Over 2.9 miles, the Green River Narrows drops on average 178 feet per mile with a maximum gradient of 342 fpm, and the Narrows features one half-mile where the river indeed "narrows" and contains **11 Class V rapids in a row**. Every November, expert paddlers from around the world convene upon the river to compete in the **Green River Race**, one of the most extreme downriver whitewater races in the world. The race has become quite an event, drawing regional newspaper and television coverage, along with a healthy spectator following.

Hiking

The **Green River Gamelands** is a rugged tract of more than 10,000 acres along the Green River in Henderson and Polk Counties. Owned by the State of North Carolina, the primary purpose of the Gamelands is **wildlife conservation and management**. The **15 miles of trails** in the Green River Gamelands are a joint project between the Environmental and Conservation Organization (ECO) and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. The trails in this unique area are maintained to encourage and facilitate **foot travel only**.

Hunting and Fishing

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed in Green Gamelands. **Deer hunting** season begins in mid-September and continues through mid-December. Seasons for other types of game run through mid-May. Hunters are most active on Fridays and Saturdays and at the beginning of individual game seasons, and hunting is not allowed in NC on Sunday.

Photography

Photography is popular in the Green River Gamelands, capturing the **beauty of the surroundings** or the **whitewater action** within the Gorge.



Access Needs

Access History

Current access to the middle of the Green River Gorge consists of an **unpaved parking area**, adjacent to the Green River Gamelands, located on Big Hungry Road. However, it **sits entirely on private property** and its owners are **unwilling to sell the land** to establish a permanent access site. While the landowners have offered their field as a fee-for-access point, its management has been a hassle for them and at times unstable for users.

In addition, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission maintains **only two parking spaces** with ready access to the **middle portion** of the 10,000-acre Green River Gamelands. These spaces are completely enveloped by the abovementioned private property.

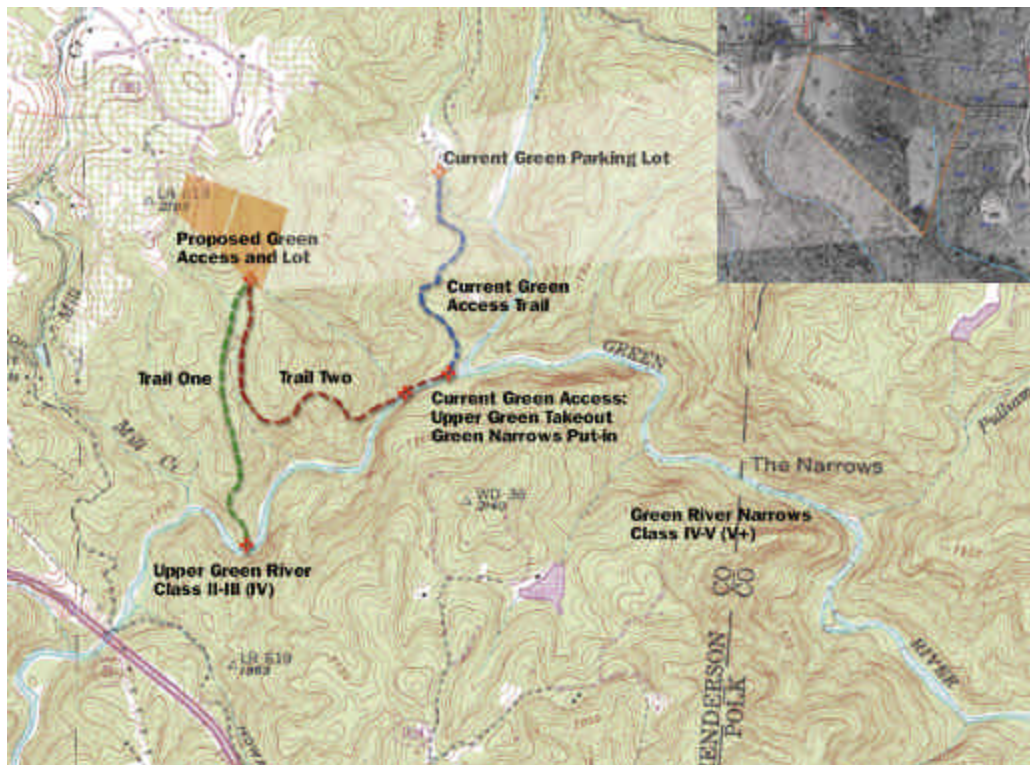
Exhaustive research by American Whitewater staff and volunteers has revealed that a **permanent access site must be found elsewhere** to provide for the long-term intentions of both Gamelands users and local landowners.



Access Future

Access to Green River Gorge at its middle is popular with whitewater recreationalists. **It serves as a takeout for paddlers on the Upper Green and the put-in for paddlers of the Narrows**. Although Narrows boaters can paddle through the Upper Green to proceed into the Narrows, **Upper Green paddlers do not have a takeout option, thereby effectively eliminating a popular year-round Class II-III creek**, gaining popularity within whitewater circles as an alternative to the Nantahala.

Additionally, with the elimination of the current access lot, **other Gamelands users** (hunters, fishermen and women, hikers, and photographers) **would lose access** to the Middle Green Gorge, forcing greater strain upon the game, land, and environment of the lower, more inaccessible and sensitive portions of the Gorge.





The Solution

Land Location and Description

American Whitewater has located a potential access point to the Green River and surrounding Gamelands in Henderson County, North Carolina.

The land is a **16.5-acre parcel of unrestricted land** that shares a long border with the Green River Gamelands, consisting of **two former orchards** separated by a thick strip of woods.

The lot features a **dirt road** leading along the edge of the upper orchard, extending through the woods to the bottom of the lower orchard, where the trailheads can be found.

American Whitewater proposes **transforming the lower orchard into a partially graveled parking facility**. The two trails lead from this lower orchard to the river, and **one of the trails leads directly to the access point currently being used** on the Green River in a **similar trail length**.

Management

Upon purchase, American Whitewater will look to **enter into a cooperative management agreement with a government agency** such as the State of North Carolina Parks and Recreation, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, or Henderson County. American Whitewater will provide **volunteers for regular site maintenance** and **financial contributions** to site maintenance through a voluntary donation drop box.

To prepare the land prior to introduction as an access point, American Whitewater will work with the appropriate agencies to acquire an **easement for the access road**; help **grade this road for erosion control**; mow, sod, and gravel the lower lot; prepare a donation box and informational kiosk about the Green River and Gamelands; and work with Gamelands and ECO officials on **maintenance and upkeep of the beautiful existing trail system** into this new part of the Gorge.

Local Support

Henderson County is actively pursuing the **creation of new county parks**, including greenways and access to public open space. It is very supportive of the **growing presence of kayaking in its county**, as witnessed with its generous assistance with LiquidLogic Kayaks' land purchase and relocation of its kayak manufacturing facility to the area. To staff its new facility, LiquidLogic plans to create up to **30 new jobs for the Hendersonville area** and used the Green as the basis of its decision to make Henderson County a permanent home.

This Green River access area would offer Henderson County residents a new, easily accessible area for hiking, fishing, and hunting, while continuing to attract visiting paddlers from around the world.



How to Contribute

We hope that you will consider making a donation to provide a permanent, free access point for the Upper Green and Narrows. This is the one opportunity to secure land adjacent to the Green River Gamelands and gain permanent access to the Green. **Please visit www.americanwhitewater.org/green to make your donation!**

Every donation, large and small, will be recognized on permanent signage at the trailhead and in the American Whitewater Journal. There will be different levels of recognition; for example, those who give over \$100 will receive an invitation to the exclusive celebration party on-site. All extra funds raised over our goals will be placed in a **restricted endowment for site maintenance**. Also, please consider your donation a **tax-deductible contribution**.

The entire parcel of land is larger than the actual need for access. American Whitewater is interested in selling several of the acres, some of which border the access point and some border the 10,000-acre Green River Gamelands. The land is unrestricted, primarily consisting of a large hilltop meadow with remnants of an old orchard, surrounded by woods. For more information, please contact Sutton Bacon at American Whitewater.

Schedule

April 3	Announcement/Fundraising Kick-off
May 3	Major commitments arrive
May 17	Unveiling of official site name
June 3	Deadline for all gifts
June 14	Finalize land purchase
July 1	Begin site alterations
August 30	Site is operational

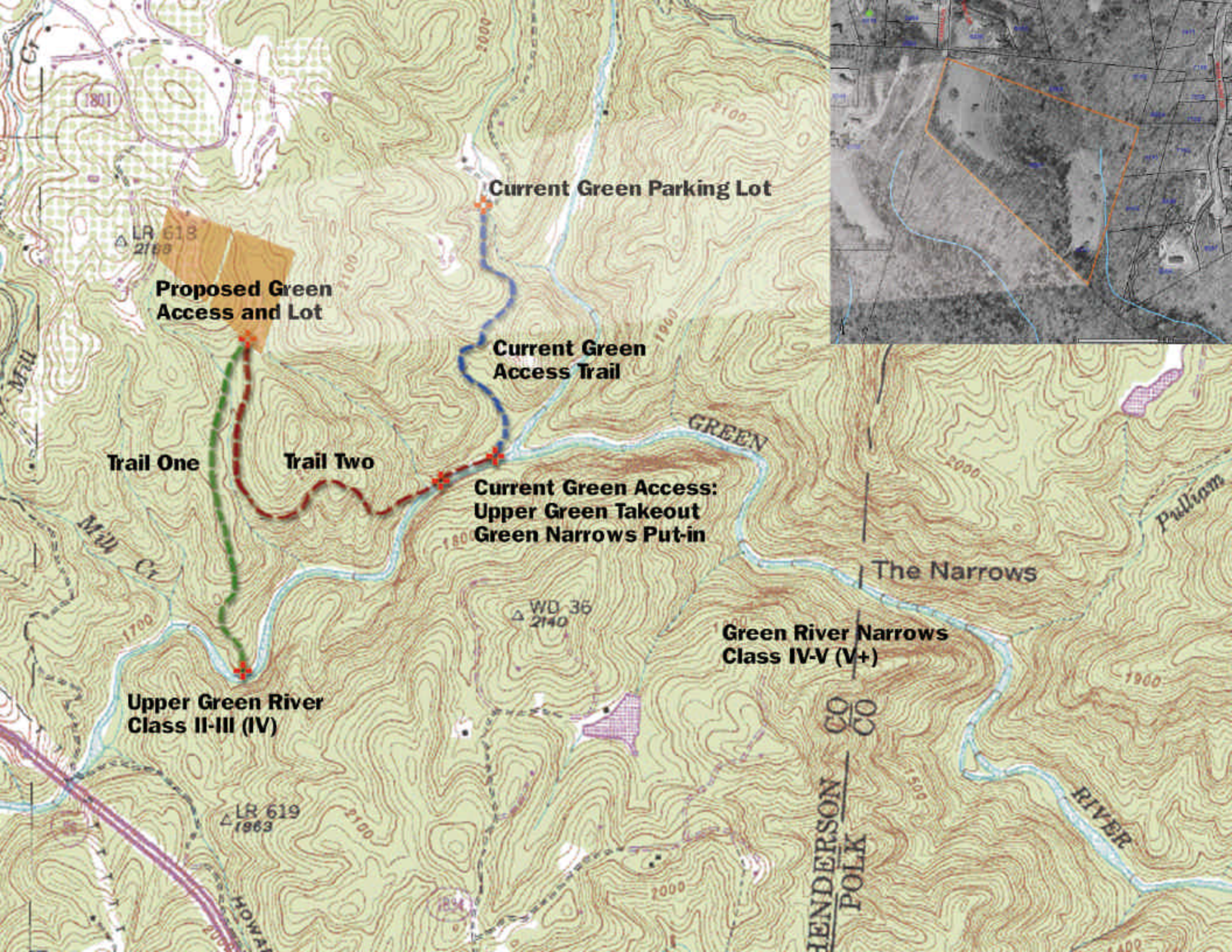
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Proposed Green Access and Lot

Current Green Parking Lot

Current Green Access Trail

Trail One

Trail Two

**Current Green Access:
Upper Green Takeout
Green Narrows Put-in**

The Narrows

**Green River Narrows
Class IV-V (V+)**

**Upper Green River
Class II-III (IV)**

HENDERSON
POLK
CO
CO

LR 619
1963

WD 36
2140

1801

LR 618
2160

HOWAI RANCH

PULLIAM

RIVER

