

## News Release

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### Roanoke River Blueway Under Development

Roanoke, VA (May 28, 2014) - The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission is working with a stakeholder committee composed of local governments, non-profits, paddlers, fishermen, local outfitters and watershed groups to develop the Roanoke River Blueway, a 45-mile water trail on the upper Roanoke River. A blueway (also known as a water trail, paddle trail, or float trail) is a navigable waterway with sufficient capacity (flow, depth, and width) for successful progress of canoes, kayaks and other non-motorized vessels, with sufficient access and amenities to facilitate other recreational uses of the waterway. The Roanoke River Blueway flows through or borders the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Counties of Montgomery, Roanoke, Bedford, and Franklin, and the Town of Vinton, providing river access for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, tubing, wading, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities. The Blueway also connects to numerous local parks; Roanoke River Greenway, Tinker Creek Greenway and Mill Mountain Greenway; Blue Ridge Parkway; Explore Park; Smith Mountain Lake; and businesses proximate to the river.

The overall goal of the Roanoke River Blueway project is to facilitate and encourage recreational use of the Upper Roanoke River and tributaries by residents and visitors. Additionally, the project seeks to encourage watershed awareness and sustainable stewardship of the region's water resources. To date, the Roanoke River Blueway stakeholder group has developed a Roanoke River Blueway website, interactive and printable maps, brochure, and other information to facilitate the safe and enjoyable use of the blueway including river access descriptions, hazards and portages, recommended minimum and maximum streamflow levels, contact information, and links to useful websites.

Moving forward, the Regional Commission, local governments, and the Roanoke River Blueway stakeholder group will work to improve and promote the Roanoke River Blueway; seek grant funding and other financial support; work with local outfitters, businesses, and other entities to promote the blueway and increase river related recreation and tourism; and increase watershed awareness.

Roanoke River Blueway information is available at [www.rvarc.org/blueway](http://www.rvarc.org/blueway).

Contact Shane Sawyer with the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission at 540.343.4417 or [ssawyer@rvarc.org](mailto:ssawyer@rvarc.org) for additional information.

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