



Public Open House *for the* Peavine to Thermal Belt Rail Trail Connector Feasibility Study

**March 24, 2020
5:00-6:30 PM
Spindale House
119 Tanner St
Spindale, NC 28160**

**Project Coordinator:
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STUDY BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Local governments, NCDOT, and local outdoor recreation and conservation groups are exploring opportunities for creating a public walking and biking trail that would connect north-south from the Peavine Trail in Marion to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail in Rutherford County. In addition, this new trail has the potential to connect with the future Wilderness Gateway State Trail, which will run east-west, connecting Chimney Rock State Park with South Mountains State Park.

DRAFT TRAIL ROUTING and ALTERNATIVES UNDERWAY

The project planning team has been working to identify areas between Marion and Gilkey where the trail could be feasible. Many factors are being considered, such as land ownership, topography, water crossings, roadways, and rail corridors.

A core belief of this project is respect for the land and landowners. We want to understand your ideas and concerns related to this trail. Without the willing participation of landowners, the trail study alternatives will be revised or not included in the study.

This study does not include steps such as trail right-of-way negotiations, but it will outline the potential benefits to landowners who may wish to participate in the project in the future. For similar trail projects, such benefits included tax breaks or other compensation for conservation and trail easements, depending on the particular agreement.

Please come to the open house public workshop to learn more, or contact the project coordinator for other ways to get involved!

There will be a second public open house to review the Draft Study in May 2020. The Final Study is expected to be completed in June 2020.



This study includes input and guidance from a steering committee composed of representatives from the Isothermal Planning & Development Commission, McDowell County, Rutherford County, City of Marion, Town of Rutherfordton, Town of Spindale, Town of Forest City, Foothills Conservancy, Rutherford Outdoor Coalition, McDowell Trails Association, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.