

# **Adventures in the Dan River Basin**

By  
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## **TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:**

### **Getting Acquainted with the Basin's Rivers**

Thanks to the studies of our local and regional scholars, we know a lot about the history and pre-history of our area and can go traveling either physically or in imagination. In the bioregion of the Dan, human and other creatures traveled by land and water. Would you like to be introduced to the major rivers of the Dan Bioregion?

Even before Europeans had established themselves on the eastern coast of North America, their monarchs had begun to grant them land in the interior, in territory that they had never seen. To find and claim that real ("Royal") estate, they traveled on land when they had to and on water when they could.

You can do the same. By land and water you can escape the 21<sup>st</sup> century and experience some of the wilderness they traveled.

With information provided by the natural and cultural historians of our region, you can travel by car, boat, horse, bicycle, your own feet or your imagination, aided by the work of scholars. Let's travel the six rivers of the Dan watershed and some of their tributaries. These rivers are:

### **THE DAN**

The Dan rises from springs on Belcher Mountain, on the Blue Ridge Plateau in Patrick County, Virginia, within view of the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Morrisette Winery, and after flowing more than 200 miles through Patrick, Stokes (past Hanging Rock State Park), Rockingham, Caswell, Pittsylvania and Halifax Counties, six counties in two states, joins the Staunton in the waters of Kerr Reservoir ("Buggs Island Lake").

### **THE SMITH**

The Smith River rises in Patrick County, Virginia not more than a stone's throw from the source of the Dan, on the same mountain. Upstream from Fairy Stone Park it provides a swift whitewater run after a rain. Between Philpott Dam and the town of Bassett it provides another good swiftwater run when the Philpott turbines are operating and water is being released. Whitewater opportunities continue downstream from another hydropower dam at Martinsville before the Smith joins the Dan at Eden, in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

## THE MAYO

The Mayo River's two branches rise in Patrick County, Virginia, flows through Henry County, Virginia and across the state line into Rockingham County, North Carolina, where they come together just before a spectacular series of whitewater rapids at Mayo Beach. After more falls and two hydropower dams the Mayo joins the Dan at Madison. Parts of it, including natural areas and outstanding whitewater, will be included in the future Mayo River State Park, developed through the efforts of the Dan River Basin Association.

## THE SANDY

Rising near the community of Callands, in west central Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the river drains much of the western portion of the county, including Westover Hills, before joining the Dan River at Danville. It is the only named river in the watershed wholly contained within the borders of a single county.

## THE HYCO

Deriving from Hyco Creek in Caswell County and South Hyco Creek in Person County, North Carolina, to form Hyco Reservoir and then Hyco Reservoir Afterbay, behind two dams of Progress Energy, the waterway leaves the Afterbay as the Hyco River, flowing from Person County into Halifax County, Virginia and joining the Dan in the backwater of John H. Kerr Dam.

## THE BANISTER

Rising near Callands, in west central Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the Banister flows south of the County seat at Chatham, along the northern edge of the White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Area, and through an impoundment at the town of Halifax, county seat of Halifax County. Flowing southeasterly, it joins the Dan at Staunton River State Park.

[For more detailed descriptions of the rivers, see the section titled [The Rivers: Anecdotes, Scouting, Descriptions, Distances, ACCESS](#)]

Adding a dimension to today's travel along these rivers, river historians Lindley S. Butler and William E. Trout III tell us that throughout the nineteenth century the batteaux that carried freight on the **Dan**, the **Smith** and the **Banister** often competed with the mills for the right to keep the rivers open to navigation. Many remains of both the mills and the navigational structures in the rivers--built to assist the batteaux through shoals and rapids--still exist and can be seen in Rockingham, Caswell, Pittsylvania and Halifax Counties. Travelers throughout the Basin can find old mills and mill dams still intact and even operational.

## **TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:**

### **Getting Acquainted with the Basin's**

#### **Rocks**

Save gasoline and money. Travel close to home. There's plenty to see in the Dan River Basin. There's plenty to do. Check the outline. Then go to the areas of your interest and prepare for your guided tour. Even if you have (pardon the expression) "rocks in your head," you can satisfy your interest by traveling in the Basin.

#### **ROCKS, RIVERS and GRADIENT**

Nearly everyone realizes that mountain ecology differs from piedmont ecology. If you move from the highlands to the hills, you notice a difference in the plant life. But how do mountain rocks differ from piedmont rocks in their effect on the rivers?

James Beard, Curator of Earth Science at the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, takes a long view of history. The 200 million-year-old New River, he says, will eventually be captured by the more swiftly-flowing Roanoke and other systems flowing southeasterly toward the Atlantic Ocean. Such a stream capture has already occurred on the upper **DAN**. The Kibler Valley stream, near Claudville, Virginia, in the distant past eroded upstream when the New River was a lazy stream meandering on the then much flatter Blue Ridge Plateau.

Only old streams meander. Mountain streams flow as straight downhill as they can.

Once the Kibler stream captured the News's tributary, those lazy meanders began to move faster, eroding and deepening to form what is now the **DAN RIVER GORGE** upstream from Kibler Valley. Much of the gorge, described in the *Dan River Book* (see [Sources](#)) is filled by water backed up by Talbott and Townes Dams.

#### **PINNACLES ROCKS, PIEDMONT ROCKS**

The rocks in the vicinity of The Pinnacles, upstream from Pinnacles Power Plant in Patrick County, are largely igneous and metamorphic. Rocks downstream, in the 40-mile-wide, 5-7 mile wide Triassic Basin of Rockingham and Caswell Counties, are largely sedimentary: conglomerate, arkose, arkosic sandstone, shale, sandy shale and mudstone. Mountain streams flow straight downhill, influenced strongly by gravity. Piedmont streams turn, widen and narrow in search of the softest rocks, the easiest to cut through.

Blocked by a wall of tough rock, a river may make a sudden and dramatic turn or be squeezed through a narrow opening.

The result can be dramatic. Floating downriver, a boater passes from open fields and broad flood plains to narrow forested banks or past high cliffs; for example, "Demon Rock" in Stokes County and The Bent in Rockingham on the **DAN**.

### **WATERFALLS, SHOALS AND RAPIDS**

When the flow passes from hard rocks (likely igneous or metamorphic) to soft (likely sedimentary), the result is that the softer rocks below, or beside, or between are eroded away, leaving the harder ones to form the river bed, or the midstream boulders, or the eroding bed of the pool below the drop. River runners know these formations.

### **BURSTED HILL**

Near a fish weir upstream from the town of Milton on the **DAN**, Culver Road dips close to the river. Bursted Hill is a forested mound 130' high and three-quarters of a mile in circumference between the road and the river. If you ask Larry Gibson, a Culver Road resident, he'll lead you to the mound, where you'll find fragments of reddish-brown igneous rock scattered among the hardwood trees. This phenomenon, never studied by professional geologists, first entered the historical record in 1790 as the subject of a paper read before the American Philosophical Society. Warren Mincey, earth scientist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Yanceyville, says Bursted Hill is the result of a volcanic dike, an opening bringing volcanic material from the earth's hot core.

## **TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:**

### **Getting Acquainted with the Basin's**

#### **Paleontology**

##### **UNIQUE DINOSAURS IN THE DAN BASIN**

The late Floyd Rich, Rockingham County naturalist, writing in the Rockingham County Heritage Book, told of a fascinating discovery in the quarry of the Solite Corporation: 67 specimens of a lizard-like forerunner of the dinosaur. These specimens are found among the Triassic Period rocks in the company's quarry near Eden and nowhere else on Planet Earth. The Triassic was the earliest period of the Mesozoic Era, the era that saw the first appearance of dinosaurs in the fossil record.

## TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Archaeology

#### THE DAN RIVER PEOPLE

In southeast Stokes County, downstream from the U.S. 311 crossing of the Dan, two creeks enter river right: **Carmichael Creek** and **Town Fork Creek**. Between these creeks, on the broad flood plain river right, is the site of what has been called "Upper Sauratown Village," one settlement of the Dan River People. Other sites of the "Dan River People," first studied by the late Richard P. Gravely, Jr. (1914-1988) and then by Dr. R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr. of the University of North Carolina and Dr. Sandra Olsen, curator of archaeology at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, have been found on the **Smith River**, on **Leatherwood Creek** near Martinsville, on the **Mayo** and on the **Dan** near Madison. The settlements are dated between 1000 and 1450 CE.

Prior to 1000 CE the early forbears of the Dan People were hunter-gatherers and lived in temporary camps. Beginning about 1000 they practiced agriculture and lived in palisaded villages. They were the ancestors of the Sara (Saura, Sauro, Charah, Cheraw, Sarraw), who left the area after 1700.

An exhibit at the Martinsville Museum in the 1990's depicted the Dan People as living in "arbor-like" houses, made of sapling poles "bent at the top and tied with white oak thongs" and covered with bark and mats" [*Dan River Book*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, page 124]. In the rich alluvial soil they raised many varieties of corn, peas, beans, pumpkins, squash, watermelons, muskmelons and potatoes; hunted birds for their meat and their parts for bone tools and personal adornment; utilized plants like gourds for food and kitchenware and hunted a variety of animals.

Clever and peaceful they may have been; but they were driven first to the southern edge of the **Dan watershed** and then out of the Basin entirely by raids of the Pennsylvania Seneca, who also harassed the Saponi and the Occaneechee. Passing southward, they joined first the Keyauwees on the Pee Dee near Cheraw, South Carolina; and then the Catawba, near present-day Charlotte. The last survivor may have been seen in Germanton (then the Stokes County seat) in the year 1836 [*Dan River Book*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, p. 127].

## TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Native Americans

#### THE OCCANEECHEE, SAPONI, TUTELO

Throughout much of the Dan River Basin, little evidence can be found of Native American settlement. Here and there, as for example at the confluence of the **DAN** with **PUMPKIN CREEK**, some evidence has been identified as the remains of Indian settlements; but for the most part, the finding of arrow heads and camp fires has been seen as evidence of areas of hunting and Native American skirmishes. Even the frequent fish weirs in the rivers cannot be definitely assigned to Native Americans, as they could have been built by early European colonists as well as taken over from indigenous peoples

The Occaneechee (Akenatzy, Aconecho) are an exception. It is clear that when Europeans visited the confluence of the **STAUNTON** and the **DAN**, they found the Occaneechee well established on an island between the two rivers. According to one historian, Occaneechee Island was four miles long and was flanked, upstream and down, by two other islands occupied by the allied Tutelo (Toto) and Saponi. The Indians, one writer discovered, had been on the islands for 10,000 years before the coming of the Europeans—one writer says 12,000. One authority on Native Americans says that the Occaneechee language was the language of Southern trade, as Algonquin of the North, Mobilian of the Gulf region and Comanche of the Southern prairies. Park Rouse says the culture of the Occaneechee was the highest of all the Virginia Indians. Its reach extended 500 miles in all directions and dominated trade from 1250 to 1676 CE.

Two Virginia traders used Occaneechee interpreters, following the Trading Path into Kentucky and Tennessee in 1640. John Lederer, a German physician, when he was part of an exploring party in 1670, kept a careful diary in Latin when he visited the Occaneechee. But despite their prosperity, and perhaps because of it, Lederer says the Occaneechee were "insolent" and "hospitable to rogues." One writer says that they and their allies the Saponi "had made many enemies" because of their cruelty to travelers. Thus, with the arrival of Europeans, they were "in a weakened condition, hardly able to hold the land from constantly warring neighbors." In the year 1676 warfare, intrigue and shifting alliances among the Native Americans was capped by intrigue and treachery by Nathaniel Bacon, a colonial leader who effectively put an end to the trading empire [*Dan River Book*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, and pp. 256-258].



## **TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:**

### **Getting Acquainted with the Basin's**

#### **Cultural History**

##### **THE MOVEMENT OF EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION INLAND**

Europeans arrived in North America by water, and it was by water that European culture spread to the interior in its earliest days. Pioneers followed rivers and creeks and settled on their banks. By looking at dates and places one can trace their penetration of the continent's interior: the dates on land grants; the dates of formation of towns and cities; of the building of roads; of the establishment in turn of fords, ferries and bridges in the same locations.

The progressive birthing of new Virginia counties from older and larger ones provides a particularly neat and telling instance of the westward movement of the Europeans:

Surry from James City	1652
Brunswick from Isle of Wight	1720
Lunenburg from Brunswick	1748
Halifax from Lunenburg	1752
Pittsylvania from Halifax	1767
Henry from Pittsylvania	1776
Patrick from Henry	1791

The progressive founding of North Carolina counties follows a similar pattern but is not quite so neat:

Caswell	1777
Rockingham	1785
Stokes	1789
Person	1791

## TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Cultural History

#### ITS VARIETY AND SCOPE

This is not the place for an exhaustive history of culture in the Dan River Basin. For that one had best look into some of the volumes listed under the heading **SOURCES**, including the sources' sources. The following, though, may provide a suggestion as to the scope and richness of that history, hinting at the potential richness of the armchair adventures possible as you study the background of our region. These are some of the themes and topics you will encounter as you reach back into the region's past:

*Land grants*

*Exploration*

*Settlement (almost as early in the West as in the East; what tended to lag in the west was organized government)*

*Interaction, both conflict and cooperation, with native Americans (this is the period of interest to the Trading Path Preservation Association, based in Hillsborough, North Carolina)*

*Slavery*

*Trade and trading paths*

*Roads > fords > ferries > bridges*

*Railroads and their effect on both river and road travel*

*Formation of farms, villages, towns, counties, industry, laws, government*

*Lives of public figures, both rogues and heroes (for example: in Patrick County this variety—James Earl Brown “J.E.B.” Stuart, Patrick Henry, William De Shazo, Shirley Mitchell, R. J. Reynolds & Andy Griffith’s Mayberry)—and in Caswell the contrast between, on one hand Bartlett Yancey and on the other “Chicken” Stevens and his murderers in the Ku Klux Klan; and in*

*Rockingham the complex industrial developments epitomized by the industrialist,  
governor and philanthropist John Motley Morehead*

*The American Revolution and the Army of the Carolinas' "Race to the  
Dan"*

*Danville as the Last Capital of the Confederacy*

*Milton's Thomas Day, Free Black cabinet maker*

*Virginia International Raceway, 1950's-1960's, 1990's-*

*Baptizings in the rivers, persisting to the present*

*The Great Wagon Road's various crossings of the area's rivers*

*Dams, including two in Danville's Water Project in Kibler, emblematic of  
the zeal for hydroelectric power following the model of the Tennessee Valley  
Authority'*

## TIME TRAVEL IN THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Cultural History

#### DAMS AND NAVIGATION

At latest count, there are at least twenty-one dams on the rivers of the Dan River Basin:

Dan	11
Smith	4
Mayo	2
Hyco	2
Sandy	2
Banister	<u>1</u>
	22

These have provided and still provide power for mill operations, industrial cooling and the production of electricity. Despite the resulting obstruction of the rivers' flow, three of the area's rivers have had a rich history of commercial traffic and are still providing recreational opportunities.

Included among these recreational opportunities are canoeing and kayaking; fishing, nature study, bird watching, and another that may not readily come to mind: archaeological study.

Dr. Lindley Butler, Professor Emeritus of History from Rockingham Community College and Dr. William E. Trout III of Richmond have studied the history of navigation in the Dan River Basin and identified extant remnants of navigational structures in the **Dan**, **Smith** and **Banister**. Because of their work and the enthusiastic advocacy of Jeffrey Johnston, river aficionado and founder of the Dan River Basin Association, you can even call Three Rivers Outfitters (See [Contacts](#)) and arrange for a river trip on an authentic replica of a nineteenth century batteau, the semi-trailer of river cartage in the nineteenth century. Following the chartering of the Roanoke Navigation Company in 1812 the company built canals, locks, wing dams and sluices to concentrate water at shoals and rapids and make it possible for the 40- to 60-foot long flat-bottomed boats to pass. Trout's *Dan River Atlas* and Butler's books and articles (see [Sources](#)) give details of the classic struggle of the river "truckers' and the builders of mills. Boaters wished to keep rivers navigable, and builders of mills wanted to harness the rivers to power their operations.

## EXPLORING THE TURF OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Outdoor Recreation

#### HIKING, BIKING, HORSEBACK RIDING, CAMPING

Beginners in any arena need guidance. Start with your city's or county's director of parks and recreation. Join a club. Check the library's holdings. Or join the **Dan River Basin Association** and enjoy a **First Saturday Outing** each month of the year, an institution that is almost as old as the 4+ year old organization itself. These **First Saturday Outings** have included hikes, river floats, special museum visits and mistletoe garnering in December; and they are available without cost to members and their guests.

The older, richer and more sophisticated the city's or county's recreational program, the more varied is likely to be its offerings. The City of Danville's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, for example, offers a wide range of activities, from environmental education to spelunking.

In order to give you an idea of the range of opportunities available to individuals in the Dan River Basin, we list here the **HIKING** trails to be found in the Basin. Many of these are connected with **CAMPING, PICNICKING, EQUESTRIAN** and other opportunities.

[Listing is by Counties, arranged "as Eastern rivers flow": roughly from west to east and in order of descending elevation above sea level.]

#### Patrick County

##### Rocky Knob Recreation Area, Blue Ridge Parkway

Mountain Industry Trail at Mabry Mill 0.4 miles

Round Meadow Trail 0.5 miles

Rock Castle Gorge Trail 10.6 miles Strenuous (wet stream crossings)

(Connecting trails: Woodland Trail 0.8 miles, Black Ridge Trail 3 miles;  
Hardwood Cove Trail 0.8 miles)

##### Pinnacles Project, City of Danville Utilities Department

Aqueduct Trail 3 miles Strenuous

Pinnacles Trail 1.4 miles Strenuous

(These connect. Combined round trip 7.4 miles)

#### Patrick & Henry Counties

##### Fairy Stone State Park

Oak Hickory Trail 1.3 miles easy to moderate

Iron Mine Trail 1 mile easy to moderate

Scott's Knob Trail 1.7 miles easy to moderate

Whiskey Run Trail 2 miles easy to moderate

### **Franklin, Henry & Patrick Counties**

#### **Philpott Lake Project**

Philpott Park and Overlook

Goose Point Park

Jamison Mill Park

Jamison Mill Trail 0.7 miles easy

Salthouse Branch Recreation Area

### **Henry County**

[Proposed, supported by \$400,000 Federal Grant: Philpott-Martinsville trail via Bassett and Fieldale, connecting with existing trail]

### **Stokes & Surry Counties]**

Sauratown (equestrian) Trail 21.7 miles on private property connecting Pilot Mountain State Park with Hanging Rock State Park. With 3 private connecting loops is 33.1 miles long.

### **Stokes County**

#### **Hanging Rock State Park** (18 miles of trails)

Lower Cascades Trail (Access from Hall Road) round trip 0.6 miles

Hanging Rock Trail 1.2 miles

Wolf Rock Trail 1.9 miles

Cook's Wall Trail 1.1 miles

Magnolia Spring Trail 0.4 miles

Chestnut Oak Trail 0.7 miles

Upper Cascades Trail 0.2 miles

Indian Creek Trail 3.7 miles

Tory's Den Trail 4.2 miles

### **Rockingham County**

Chinqua-Penn Trail 1.5 miles easy

Greenways, City of Eden: extant but not yet "officially" open

### **Pittsylvania County**

#### **City of Danville**

River walks on the Dan

Walking, biking and mountain biking trails, Dan Daniel Park

#### **White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Area**

Saponi Trail. Wet creek crossings. Created by Dan River Trail Association; designed and mapped by Berndie Lunsford.

Ringgold-Sutherlin Richmond & Danville Rail-Trail 5.6 miles easy. Created by Dan River Trail Association

## **Caswell County**

### **Hyco Lake Natural Learning Area**

- Beaver Trail 0.5 miles
- Rockpile Trail 0/2 miles
- Campfire Trail 0.2 miles

### **Caswell Game Lands**

#### **Cherokee Scout Reservation**

Nature Trail

Creek Hikes [The compiler of these notes has spent many fascinated hours exploring Country Line Creek, Moon Creek, Hogan's Creek and Hyco Creek. There are many other creeks in Caswell and the other counties of the watershed waiting to be explored, adopted and protected.]

## **Person County**

### **Mayo Lake Park** (a peninsula in Mayo Lake)

- Lake View Trail 0.3 miles
- Wild Turkey Trail 0.5 miles
- Bridge Trail Loop 0.25 miles
- Eagle Trail 0.2 miles
- Red Trail Hawk Trail 1.9 miles
- Beaver Trail 1.1 miles
- Rocky Trail 0.9 miles
- Sappony Spring Trail 0.9 miles

### **Piedmont Community College, Roxboro Campus**

Nature Trail 2.0 miles (Color-coded sub-trails: Hardwood Trail, Wild Flower Trail, Conservation Trail, Observation Trail, Geology Trail, General Trail.

## **Halifax County**

### **Staunton River State Park**

- River Bend Trail 7.3 miles easy to moderate
- Connecting Trails: Tutelo Trail 0.1; Crow's Nest Trail 0.4; Robin's Roost Trail 0.5; Loblolly Trail 0.6; Campground Trail 0.1; Captain Staunton's Loop 0.5.

## **Mecklenburg County**

### **Occanoochee State Park**

- Plantation Trail 0,8 miles easy
- Connecting trails: Mossy Creek Trail 0.7 miles; Warrior's Path 0.2 miles; Big Oak Trail 0.6 miles

## **Mecklenburg & Charlotte Counties**

### **John H. Kerr Reservoir**

- Eagle Point Trail 7.4 miles easy

## EXPLORING THE TURF OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Outdoor Recreation

#### HUNTING AND FISHING

DeLorme's atlases for Virginia and North Carolina list many good fishing areas and identify them with appropriate symbols on each map. Most of the counties in the **Dan River Basin** have state-run game lands for hunting, with ponds for freshwater fishing. Each county has private hunting preserves that are leased to hunting clubs. All of the counties in the Basin have vast rural areas, some of them wild enough to provide habitat for **bears**, all of them visited by bears from time to time on annual migrations. **Beavers** are common on the Basin's streams. Unfortunately, creeping development and clear-cutting threaten much of the habitat for wild creatures. Caswell's Gamelands are the center of **wild turkey** restoration, and the surrounding areas of the Basin are rich in turkeys.

**Trout** fishing (**river, brown, rainbow**) flourishes in the mountain portions of the Basin, where stocking is routine and special trout fishing licenses are sometimes required. Prime areas include **Kibler Valley** and the "**Trout Waters**" at **Joyce Mill Road** (Stokes County # 1417). Stokes County conservation biologist Ken Bridle has determined that the upper reaches of the **Dan River** are rich in a great variety of species becoming rare elsewhere. Each spring there occurs a run of **striped bass** in all the rivers that spill into **Kerr Reservoir**. **Catfish** thrive where the water is swift, as below the dams in **Danville**. Also found in the rivers of the Basin: **bluegill, bream, carp, crappie, gar, perch, and sunfish**.



## EXPLORING THE TURF OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Outdoor Recreation

(picnicking, hiking, camping, bird watching, nature study, tree identification, spelunking, rock climbing etc.)

### PARKS & NATURAL AREAS

**Patrick County:** Blue Ridge Parkway; Wayside at Lover's Leap, U.S. 58; Rock Castle Gorge Recreation Area; Primland Hunting Preserve; Pinnacles Recreation Area (Townes and Talbott Reservoirs, hiking trails); Kibler Valley (prime whitewater canoeing); DeHart Gardens

**Henry County:** Whitewater on Upper Smith River; Fairy Stone Park; Philpott Project area; Turkeycock Mountain Wildlife Management Area

**Stokes County:** Sauratown Mountains; Hanging Rock State Park; Trout Waters at Joyce's Mill Road ("Coiled Cobra" rapid); Sauratown Plantation Gameland; Belews Lake (Duke Power Co.)

**Rockingham County:** Belews Lake (Duke Power Co.); Cedar Mountain Natural Area; Bear Mountain Natural Area; Rocky Branch Natural Area; Hunt Lake, Rockingham Lake; Hazel Lake, LaMar Lake, Williamsburg Lake

**Caswell County:** Caswell Game Lands; Hyco Reservoir (Progress Energy); Farmer Lake; Roxboro Lake; Wildwood Lake; Cherokee Scout Reservation

**Pittsylvania County:** Dan Daniel Park; Ballou Park; White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Area; Richmond & Danville Rail-Trail; Turkeycock Mountain; Briers Mountain; Smith Mountain; Farmers Mountain; Boyd Mountain; Lake Burton; Leesville Lake; Cherrystone Lake; Elkhorn Lake

**Halifax County:** Staunton River State Park; Banister Lake; Conner Lake

**Person County:** Hyco Reservoir and Afterbay Reservoir; Mayo Lake; Person County Gamelands; Chub Lake; Waterworks Lake

**Mecklenburg County:** Staunton View Park; Buffalo Park; Longwood Park, Rudd Creek Recreation Area; Occaneechee State Park

## EXPLORING THE TURF OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

#### Indoor Recreation

#### MUSEUMS, HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS AND HOMES TOURS

Historic buildings and historic sites (mills, ferries, bridges, navigational structures) can be found throughout the **Dan River Basin**. Many of these are written about by **amateur and professional historians** and their published by **historical associations**. These associations often operate **museums** displaying old artifacts and preserving historical and genealogical data. Often they conduct **homes tours** and initiate projects to preserve important **structures** (e.g., the old Henry County Courthouse in Martinsville; and the Thomas Day House in Milton) or celebrate the lives of local **persons**; e.g., (Enos Slaughter from Person County, member of the Baseball Hall of Fame, James Earl Brown ("JEB") Stuart at Patrick County Museum in Stuart, Virginia..

Two museums in the Basin create and host major traveling exhibits: the **Virginia Museum of Natural History** in Martinsville and **the South Boston-Halifax County Museum of Art and History** in South Boston. The **Caswell County Civic Center** show-cases the work of local and regional artists, as does the **Danville Museum of Art and History**. The **Reynolds Estate** in Critz, n Patrick County, puts on a variety of types of programs throughout the year, including lectures and celebrations.

These and other organizations can be found listed under **SOURCES**.

## EXPLORING THE TURF OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:

### Getting Acquainted with the Basin's

### Outlook for the Future

## ASSESSING PRIORITIES & EXPLOITING RESOURCES

**Historical associations, Chambers of Commerce and tourism bureaus,** aware of changes in the economic life of the region, have turned their attention to the future. Responding to the decline and exodus of textile operations and gloomy prospects for tobacco production and manufacturing, planners are turning their attention to **recreational and heritage tourism** and are learning to exploit their resources for outdoor and indoor learning. **Danville** has been a leader, reorganizing its departments to combine **parks, recreation and tourism. Rockingham County's office of tourism and economic development,** blessed with the **Dan, Smith and Mayo Rivers,** has decided to promote itself as a "water world." Other counties and municipalities may follow these examples.

If the communities of the Basin are to become and remain attractive to **tourists** for **recreation** and the study of **cultural history,** the **STEWARDSHIP** leg of the three-legged mission statement of the **DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION** comes into play. That is, we who live in and visit this corner of the planet must concern ourselves actively with her welfare. All four North Carolina counties in the Basin participate in the **Big Sweep,** annual clean-up of **roadways** and **waterways.** Three Board members of the **DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION** have had special training in **stream monitoring.** Many of our members, schooled in such organizations as the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society, practice "**no-trace**" **outdoor activity, taking nothing but photographs, leaving nothing but footprints** and in general "**living lightly on the planet.**"

From its formation in the year 2001, the **DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION** has carried on active and successful programs in **EDUCATION** and **RECREATION.** Early in 2005 the **STEWARDSHIP** Committee, led by Chairperson KEN BRIDLE, with Brenda Martin, Wayne Kirkpatrick and Mike Vaughan, has inaugurated a **Stream Watch** program, enlisting volunteer individuals and groups to "adopt" and regularly visit river segments and tributary streams. Numbers of volunteers are growing, and plans are underway to conduct training in the techniques of **biological monitoring.**

## **SOME UNSOLVED ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS**

### **DAMS: What's Wrong With 'Em?**

#### **Destruction of Fish Species**

Everyone who reads the newspapers knows that dams interfere with the life cycle of the salmon, threatening some salmon stocks and some salmon species, the way of life of many Native Americans and the availability of salmon as food for the rest of us. How many know of the effect of dams on other members of the food chain and the health of rivers?

#### **Destruction of Mollusk Habitat**

We know that the effective life of a dam is often as short as seventy-five years. Because the dam slows and stops the river's natural flow, it causes the river to drop its load of sand, gravel and other detritus. This load builds up behind the dam, reducing its capacity to contain water. But how many of us think of the other effect of this siltation: the covering of the natural stream bed, the destruction of habitat for native mussels, the interruption of the food chain and the degradation of the health of rivers? The decline of native species of clam has resulted in the invasion by more silt-tolerant species such as the Asiatic Clam. Mollusks, according to biologist Douglas Chadwick, are the "canaries" of the river, "warning of the collapse of the ecosystems which will result in the destruction of other species. Numbers of mollusks dwindle as fish succumb to pollution, for fish are hosts to young mussels" (*Dan River Book*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, page 17).

## **INVASIVE SPECIES**

### **The Coyote Case**

The late river sage Joe Gibson believed that Wiley Coyote was introduced into the East by fox hunters as substitutes for foxes. To train dogs for fox-hunting, a hunter needs a fox. When foxes are few, a coyote may do. Ask a sheep farmer whether he's in favor of transplanting coyotes. But once introduced, "they cannot be fully exterminated," according to John H. Houben, a wildlife biologist from the US Department of Agriculture in Blacksburg. Be careful about messing with the natural order.

## **CLEAR-CUTTING**

### **Hard on Song-Birds and Other Creatures**

Are your dawnings as musical as they used to be? Do you awaken to the former chorus of song-birds? If not, maybe it's because their habitats are being destroyed. Some birds--sparrows, cardinals, wrens—build their nests close to ours. Others require a more solitary establishment deep in the forest from which they may make occasional forays into our neighborhood. Some prefer wooded stream banks, others open fields

The same is true of other creatures, including large and small mammals. Can you imagine a squirrel in a treeless area? A beaver without a stream to dam or swim in?

Within the past decade timber companies, finding the atmosphere of the Northwest more friendly to their non-human neighbors than to the loggers' activities, have been turning their attention and moving their heavy equipment into the Southeast, where anyone can see an increase in timbering, some of it careless, aesthetically damaging to the environment and destructive of the natural order. Farmers faced with the loss of their income from tobacco are tempted to see their woodlots not as a viewscape; not as a patrimony to be celebrated and preserved, not as an integral part of the ecosystem or as a cooler and purifier of the air and a filter and retainer of water but solely as a source of a substitute income.

Ways must be found to balance economic necessity with the preservation of our heritage and the protection of our portion of a fragile planet—the only water planet in our solar system—so far as anyone knows.

## **EXPLORING THE WATERS OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN:**

### **Getting Acquainted with the Rivers**

#### **THE DAN**

##### **Following the River**

The Dan is the longest named river in the Basin. In its more than two-hundred-mile course it collects the waters of dozens of tributary streams and five major rivers: the Mayo, the Smith, the Sandy, the Hyco and the Banister before joining the Staunton in the waters of Kerr Reservoir ("Buggs Island Lake") to form the Roanoke.

The Dan River rises from many springs on Belcher Mountain, on the Blue Ridge Plateau 3300' above sea level, forming two streams. The West Fork and the South Fork meeting at the foot of the mountain, form a stream 4'-6' wide. Watering the eponymous "Meadows of Dan" and its crops, goats and cows, the river has also in the past turned two mill wheels of the Cockram family before forming the better known mill pond with its still extant mill building standing where U. S. Highway 58 crosses the now 10' wide river. Almost immediately the river enters the "Dan River Gorge," where it joins the meandering former tributary of the New River. Its waters are backed up by Talbott Dam and Townes Dams, elements of the City of Danville Pinnacles Project, which culminates in the aqueduct-fed power plant at the head of Kibler Valley.

When the power plant is operating and generating electricity, it releases water in a swift and steady stream, creating three Class III rapids within the first mile downstream. Boaters have named them "Power Plant Rapid," "Public Enemy #2" and "Basketball Falls." The Dan flows swiftly through Kibler Valley and beyond. One low-water dam near picturesque Fall Creek requires portage. Passing from Patrick County, Virginia into Stokes County, North Carolina, the river is crossed three times by the state line.

The Dan River virtually bisects Stokes County from northwest to southeast, continuing swiftly through "Coiled Cobra," a Class 3 rapid (Class 4 after a rain), spilling over Jessup Mill Dam (an obligatory portage), forming many Class 2 rapids, passing Hanging Rock State Park and "Demon Rock" and around the horseshoe bend at Moratock Park in the county seat of Danbury, passing by caves, otter slides and a couple of crossing sites of the colonial-era Wilderness Road, threading a Class 2-3 rapid formed by the dynamiting of a former hydropower dam at Hemlock Golf Course, spilling over another Class 2-3 rapid at Hairston Falls, passing the site of "Upper Sauratown," an ancient Native American Village and, at Pine Hall, in southeast Stokes County, turning northeasterly near the border of Rockingham County.

At Pine Hall the river is subjected to the second of several former and current sand dragging operations, with their environmentally damaging disturbance of bottom-dwelling creatures and bank vegetation, straightening of the channel and accelerating stream flow, with resulting increase of flooding. Between Pine Hall and Madison, the ecology seems to change subtly from mountain to piedmont species. At Madison, the 19<sup>th</sup> century head of river navigation, the Dan meets the Mayo. From here the river holds many remains of old navigational structures (now on the National Register of Historic Places) designed to facilitate navigation. The Smith River empties its waters into the Dan just upstream from Eden Wildlife Access ramp; and not far downstream the dam at Duke Power's Steam Plant requires another portage.

In passing from Rockingham County, North Carolina into Pittsylvania County, Virginia (and briefly into Caswell County, North Carolina), the river is again crossed three times by the state line near Berryhill ("Stateline") Bridge. For about five miles upstream from Danville, Dan waters are back by Schoolfield (hydroelectric) Dam, the first of five dams in the city, at least three of which require portage. At Union Street dam, one may view from the bridge extant machinery that operated the upstream gate at a former canal lock. At Brantley Steam Plant, Dan Daniel Park provides access to a Class 1 rock garden and a 45-minute float to a major access ramp at Angler's Pride Park. After about 1.5 miles the river crosses again into Carolina, flowing nine miles in Caswell County, past more underwater navigational structures and ferry sites that figured prominently in the Army of the Carolinas' "March to the Dan" in the Revolutionary War. Another major boat launch ramp is provided at Milton Wildlife Access. From about South Boston, where Nathanael Greene's army crossed to safety after retreating all the way from King's Mountain, North Carolina, the waters of the Dan are backed up by John H. Kerr Dam.

## THE DAN RIVER, MILE BY MILE

[In the following account, drawn from *The Dan River Atlas* and the *Dan River Book: Odyssey, Epic, Guide*, we shall travel upstream, as the colonists did, measuring miles from the now-drowned confluence of the Dan with the Staunton to form the Roanoke. Mileages from the Dan/Staunton confluence to Seven Island Bridge are based on Trout's travel using Global Positioning Satellite equipment. Dates in brackets document Trout's search of old documents in piecing together the history of navigation. Information on the river from Seven Island Bridge to Belcher Mountain is largely drawn from *The Dan River Book*, and distances in this section of the river are estimated based on map study. **ACCESS** in bold face capitals indicates major, official or easy river access; ACCESS in regular capitals indicates unofficial access, usually on highway right-of-way and involving some difficulty. Access from private property, even where permission has been granted to some in the past or present, is not mentioned here. Ask permission. Since changes are constant and inevitable, some information may be out of date. If you know this to be so, please inform the current **Dan River Basin Association** Web Master, Outings Chair or other officer.

WIDTH	DESCRIPTION	MILE #
1 mile	Confluence of Dan and Staunton Rivers [Inundated by Kerr Dam] MECKLENBURG COUNTY. VIRGINIA <b>ELEVATION</b> <b>328'</b>	0
1 mile	Bridge, US 58/15/49	0.2
1 mile	Southern Railway Crossing	0.9
1 mile	Power line crossing	1
.7 mile	Mouth of Owens [Orange] Creek river right	2
.7 mile	Mouth of Irish Creek river right	3
.7 mile	Mouth of Bluestone Creek river left; Byrd's Bluestone Castle	3.5
.6 mile	Occaneechee Island [Inundated]	4
.8 mile	Buffalo Creek right; Buffalo Public Use Area, end of Cow Road <b>ACCESS</b>	5
.6 mile	Tutelo [Totero] Island [Inundated]	6
.8 mile	Millstone Branch river right	6.3
.7 mile	Elliott Branch river right	6.7
.8 mile	Tomtit Branch river right; "Walls of Jericho" at Jericho Shoals [1879]	7.3
.9 mile	Abbeyville Town [Inundated]; site of Russell's Ferry	7.9
.9 mile	Jeffrey's Chute, called Upper Thoroughfare in 1879, connected the Dan and Staunton seven miles above their confluence; boat ramp left at Staunton River State Park <b>ACCESS</b>	8
.5 mile	Marbleyard Shoal, named for the smoothness of its bottom, "upon which it is difficult to find a hold for the boatpoles." [1879]	8.6
.5 mile	Hog Island [inundated]; Hog Island Shoal	9.4
.5 mile	Holiday Shores Boat Ramp river right <b>ACCESS</b>	9.6
.7 mile	Aaron's Creek river right; Aaron's Creek Shoal; Line Branch Creek river left; HALIFAX COUNTY LINE	10
	Lower Banks Creek river left	10.9
.7 mile	Bagby's Ferry [1823]; Bagby's Shoal	11
.6 mile	Hyco Shoal [1879]	11-12
.6 mile	Peters Creek river left [submerged]; site of Harris's Ferry [1812]	12
.7 mile	Little Hyco Falls [submerged], a bad place for bateaux	12.2
.6 mile	Hyco Island [inundated] [1812, 1837]	12.5
	<b>Hyco River Confluence river right</b>	12.6
.7 mile	Hyco Falls [submerged]. At the drop of Hyco Falls the Dan becomes a lake. Upstream, the river usually stays in its banks. Downstream, it spreads, inundating its former banks.	13



.7 mile	Jones Ferry [1912]; Haley's Derry [1823]; Scott's Ferry [ 1827]	14
.5 mile	King's Shoal [1879]; 3 navigational sluices [1879], not seen 2001.	14.9
.6 mile	King's Mill [1879]	15.1
.5 mile	<b>Banister River Confluence river left</b> ; Slabtown left [1854]; Chatham Branch river right; Nichols Ferry & Boatyard	16.1
.5 mile	Scenic bluff river right	16.4
.4 mile	Pipeline crossing; rip-rap; Grassy Creek Shoal [1879]	17.5
.4 mile	Perrin Creek Wildlife Management Area river right	18-21
.2 mile	Moon's Shoal [submerged] [1879]; Torian's Mill [1879]; Boyd's Fish Traps (?); Ferry [1627, 1837]	19.9-
.2 mile	Reedy Creek river left; power line crossing	20.9
200'	South Boston Public Boat Landing river left <b>ACCESS</b>	21.4
	Bridge, US 360; truck 501	21.7
	Bridge, US 501; stone piers of 1855-1858 covered bridge. Upstream of bridge: a batteau landing for boats coming up from Clarksville to Richmond & Danville RR freight elevator river left.	22.4
	Boyd's Ferry, with Irwin's (location unknown) a crossing for Greene's troops, 1781. THE PRIZERY river left.	22.6
	Power line crossing	23.5
	Lawson's Creek right	23.6
	South Boston Electric Light and Power Plant [ca. 1900]	22.9
	Pond Branch river left	24.3
	Miry Creek river left	26.8
	Rogers Island	28.5
	Power line crossing	28.7
	Locust Creek river right	30
	Chalmers Creek river right	30.4
	News Derry river left (station on defunct Richmond & Danville RR)	31.3
	Rocks left (landmark for Henry Estabrooks, Yankee officer captured in 1864, who escaped from Confederate prison train and drifted downriver to Clarksville.	32.5— 32.7
	Birch Creel river left	32.9
	Little Toby Creek river left [Reedy Bottom Creek, 1879]	34.4
	Big Toby Creek [Maosti Creek, Byrd's EDEN?] river left	35.1
	Reedy Bottom Shoal [1879];	35.5- 33.4
200'+	Paces Road Bridge (# 658). Town of Paces left. BENCH MARK: <b>ELEVATION 353'</b> ; GAUGING STATION..... <b>ACCESS</b>	35.6
	Powell's Creek river right	37
	Byrd's Branch river left	37.5
	Rock bluff right; signs of splitting and blasting holes [Trout ]	37.6
	Powell's Shoal	37.7- 36.9
	Winn's Creek river right; Carter's Ferry [1879]	37.7
	Wing dam here [1823, 1837] Not seen 1999 [Trout]	40
	Barksdale Depot site river left (R&DRR, abandoned) Batteaux plied between here and Milton ; "hoist, and tramway bank to station" [1878] Ferry	40.8
	Double Creek river left	40.9
	Barker Creek river left	41
	US Highway 58 crossing. Difficult ACCESS but action contemplated by DRBA Board of Directors <b>ACCESS</b>	42.9
	Ruins of Oliver's Mill [1879] river right; dam, mill pond	44.4
	3 stone piers of Milton & Sutherlin narrow gauge RR, built 1878	45.5

	Stamp's Ferry site [1879,1823; Lewis' Ferry [1879]	45.8
	Wolfe Creek river left	46.1
	Sandy Creek river left (crossed by Ringgold-Sutherland Rail-Trail). PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY LINE	46.6
	Springs branch river left	47.3
	Virginia International Raceway river right	47-48.5
	HALIFAX COUNTY LINE	48
	Milton Shoal [1879]	48.6- 49.9
	Country Line Creek river right. Asa Thomas Mill .1 mile up creek	48.8
200'+	NC 62 Bridge; NORTH CAROLINA LINE; CASWELL COUNTY; <b>ELEVATION 355'</b> NC WILDLIFE AUTHORITY BOAT RAMP <b>ACCESS</b>	48.1
	Norfolk, Franklin & Danville RR follows river right (abandoned)	51.5- 49.5
	Little Rattlesnake Creek river right	51.7
	Cane Creek river left, named by William Byrd, 1728, for "prodigious quantity of tall canes" lining the banks.	52.2
	Unnamed creek off Bursted Hill river right	52.4
	Cane Creek river left (named by William Byrd 1728)	52.3
	Crowder's Shoal & Fish Dam [1879]	54-53.3
	Rattlesnake Shoal [1879]	54.8- 54.2
	Coy Creek river left	54.2
	Thomas' Fish Dam Sluice [1879]	54.5
	Rattlesnake Creek river right; town of Blanch (post office closed 1990's)	54.8
	Blanch Ferry [1982]; bridge site [1925]	55
	Antioch Plantation; tobacco inspection 1791, two years before Danville's	?
	Hunt's Ferry [1879]	55.4
	Moon Creek river right; Wilkinson's Shoal [1879], sluice, wing dam	56.9
	Pass' Shoal [1874]	57.2-.1
	Big rock river left	57.3
	Hogan's Creek river right; Dix's Shoal Sluice; Dix's fish traps [1822]	57.7
	VIRGINIA LINE: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY	58.4
	Noble's Shoal Sluice [1879]	58/7
	Dix's Ferry (John Dix's Dix Hill on Hance's Branch river left)	58.9
	Julius Allen's Shoal Sluice [1879]	59.4
200'	Angler's Pride Park boat ramp river left. Terminus of the River Walk and Dan Daniel Park <b>ELEVATION 375'</b> <b>ACCESS</b>	59.8
	North Water Pollution Control Plant, City of Danville river left	60.3
	Island. Which? These change over years. [Trout]	60.4
	South Water Pollution Control Plant, City of Danville river right. Water level gauge. Fifth Danville dam (broken). Run in center or river left.	60;6
	Pumpkin Creek river right	60.7
	Crag's Island. Channel on left	61
	US 29 crossing	61.2
	Jackson Branch river right	61.3
	Reedy [Reed's] Island. Rock garden in river. Batteau channel river right	61.4
	Brantley Steam Plant dam. Fourth Danville dam. Portage left <b>ACCESS</b>	61.7
	Railroad bridge crossing	62.4
	Richmond & Danville RR bridge crossing. Riverwalk trail terminus	62.5
	Worsham Street Bridge, built 1928 (D. B. Luten). Being dismantled 2005	62.75

	Batteau locks river right; end of Morotock Canal	62.8
	Main Street Bridge, built 1827 (D. B. Luten). Replaced 2002	62.85
	Wynne's Falls dam on Danville's Great Falls (1827). Third Danville dam.	63
	Manwalk crossing	63.2
	Union Street dam, second Danville dam. Portage trail left	63.4
	Camilla Williams Park river right	63.6
	Sandy Creek enters river left	64.3
	Aiken Bridge. Wilson's Ferry, sluice [1879] Gone	64.4
	<b>Sandy River confluence left</b>	64.7
	City of Danville Water Works river left (Park Avenue and Memorial Drive)	64.9
	Robertson Bridge. Lynch's Shoal [1879] had 3 wing dams	65.7
	<b>Schoolfield dam (first Danville dam) PORTAGE LEFT</b>	65.8
300'	Dan River Park. Canoe rentals, Danville Parks and Recreation. <b>ELEVATION 440' ACCESS</b>	65.9
	Islands. Channel is river right.	66.2
	Dan's Shoal [1879]	66.6-65.8
	Wing dam [1879]	67
	Monkey Race & wing dams [1879]	67.2
	Bull Sluice & wing dams [1879]	67.3
	Long wall 800' [1879]	67.6
	Cliff river right	67.9
	Long shoal. Maybe structures still there or destroyed by sand dragging	68.6-67
	Spring Creek river left	69.3
	Wilson's Ferry	69.35
	Wing dam [1879. Schoolfield dam backs up water to about here.]	70.45
	Wing dam [1879]	71.1
	Glass Shoal with 4 wing dams [1879]	71.25
	Power line crossing	71.4
	Wing dam [1879]	71.7
	Butter Spring Shoal [1879]	71.8
	US 58 By-Pass crossing	71.9
	Danville & Western RR trestle, 2 stone and 2 concrete piers (active)	72.1
	NORTH CAROLINA/VIRGINIA LINE (CASWELL COUNTY). Line Creek right	72.3
	Wolf Island Creek river right [Sable Creek: William Byrd]	72.7
	Wing dam & sluice [1879]	72.9
	CASWELL / ROCKINGHAM LINE	73.2
	Wolf Island Shoal [1879]	73.6-72.7
	Williamson Creek river right [Lick Creek 1879]. Eastern edge of Byrd's 20,000 acres ("Land of Eden")	73.6
	Byrd's "Mt. Pleasant" river right [1728]. VIRGINIA / CAROLINA LINE. PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY	73.7
	Granny's dam [1879]. Not seen 1998.	74.2
	Adam's Island	75-74.4
	Wing dams & sluice [1999]	74.7
	Wing dams & walls [1999]	74.8
	Childress Creek river left	75.1
	Adam's Fish Trap Shoal [1879] [1999]	75.2
	Little Island Lodge Rapid [1879]	75.8-

		75.6
	Ware's Shoal Wing Dams #2 left bank [1879]; right bank [1999]	76.6
	Ware's Shoal Wing Dams #1, 2 pairs of dams 19' & 18' wide. One remains [1879] [1999]	77
	Great Creek river right [1879]	77.4
	Pruitt's lower shoal sluice [1879] [1999]	77.7
	Pruitt's upper shoal sluice	78
	White Oak Creek river right	78.6
	Small rapid above power line crossing at Cow Ford [1879]	78.5
	Trotter's Creek river left. Perkins Mill was upstream, built 1759.	78.9
	Perkins Ferry was here before Revolution; Daniels Ferry [1879]. White's early 1900's before Berry Hill Bridge was built.	80.4
80'	Berry Hill ("Stateline" Bridge) CAROLINA / VIRGINIA LINE: ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, <b>ELEVATION 463'</b> . Difficult access: rip-rap left ACCESS	80.8
	Hairston's Fish Trap Sluice on Hairston's Fish Trap Shoal [1879] [2001]	81.2
	Bailey's Gallows Sluice on Bailey's Gallows Shoal [1879]	82
	Tanyard Shoal (tanyard owned by Gov. John M. Morehead (1796-1866))	83-82.3
	Tanyard Sluice #3 [1983]	82.7
	Tanyard Sluice "2 [1983]	82.9
	Tanyard Sluice #1 [1983]	83.1
	Devil's Jump (impressive rock mid-river)	83.6
	Devil's Jump Shoal [1879]	83.7
	Cascade Creek river left. Farley plantation. Town proposed 1819.	84
	Gwynn's Ferry [Terry's, Broadnax's 1895-1814]. Replaced by Draper and Berryhill Bridges	84.9
	Wide Mouth Shoal Sluice left [1879] [1983]	85.4
	Wide Mouth Shoal Sluice right [1879] [1983]	85.5
	Wide Mouth Creek river right [1879]	85.9
	Glenn's Creek river right [1879]	86.5
	Pipeline crossing. Three ledges. 3 shoal sluices left	87
	NC 700 bridge crossing. Built 1853. First Draper bridge 1914 ACCESS	87.3
	Wing dam and sluices [1879] Gone	87.4
	Rock Creek river right [Rocky Creek 1879]	88.85
	Town Creek river right. [Saura 1728, Byrd; Sauratown 1879; Lower Sauratown 1775 & 1827]. Broadnax Plantation	88.5
	Indian Shoal Sluice & wall "difficult to ascend in low water [1879] [2001]	89.1
	Impressive waterfall river left, from Duke Power Co. pond	89.2
	Sauratown Ford Sluice on Sauratown Ford Shoal [1879] [2001]	89.5
	Duke Power Steam Plant dam, built on wing dam and sluice [1879]. <b>OBLIGATORY PORTAGE</b> . Portage trail river right.	89.9
	Double Shoal [1879]	91.5-89.9
	200' wall [1879] Inundated	90.1
	Wing dam [1879]	90.8
	"High point of rock shoal" [1879] Inundated	91
	NC 14 /87 bridge	91.1
	Double Shoal [1879]	91.4-89.9
	Wing dam inundated	91.4
	Mebane [Fishing Creek] Bridge ("Mebane's Folly"). Closed	91.7
70'	Eden Wildlife Access ramp. <b>ELEVATION 492'</b> ACCESS	
	<b>Smith River confluence river left</b>	92.4
	Pier river center from 1852 Leaksville covered bridge. Batteau channel	92.9

	river right, with wing dam and 150' sluice wall [1879] [2005]	
	Arch bridge [1922] slated for demolition 2005	93.5
	Leaksville Landing river left: 4 cribs for mooring bateaux 2001	93.5
	Matrimony Creek river left, "exceedingly noisy and impetuous"—Byrd	94.5
	Harrington Highway bridge; 1' drop. Buffalo Creek river left	95.3
	Grief Wade Plantation mined coal river left in Civil War. Where was landing? [Trout]	96
	Sneed Strong's Fish Dam Sluice right [1879] [2001]	96.9
	Galloway's Lower Ford Sluice center & fish trap right [1879] [2001]	97.3
	Whetrstone Creel river left	97.4
	Power line crossing	97.46
	Power line crossing	98
	Galloway's upper ford [1879]	98.6
	Galloway's Island sluice right of island [1879] [2001]	98.8
	"The Bent"; <b>ELEVATION LEFT 639'</b> ; HUNDLEY'S ROCK {"Deer rock,' Reese's Rock) <b>ELEVATION RIGHT 678'</b> ; <b>RIVER LEVEL ELEVATION 520'</b>	101.5- 98.6
	Reese's Rock Sluice river right center [1879] [1996]	99.4
	Belicky's Wall river center [1990's]; sluice left center [1879] [1996]	99.5
	Roach Creek (Little Rockhouse Creek") river right	100
	Rockhouse Creek (named for a cave upstream) river right	101.1
	Eagle Island, Falls (river right), mill and lock (left) [1983]	101.6
	Eagle Falls ford [by 1784]. Jackson "Town" river left [1818]	191.65
	½ mile distant from river left, batteau physician Polly Wray is buried in Wesley Chapel Cemetery, on Godsey Farm Road	102
	Power line crossing	102.4
	Ledges; sluices river left	103.1. 103
100'	Settles Bridge Access, County Road #2149 (unpaved) off #2150 <b>ELEVATION 513'</b> <b>ACCESS</b>	103.2
	Wing dam and sluice [1879]. Gone	105.1
	Mulberry Island Shoal; home built by Thomas Settle Jr. 1860	105.5- 105.3
	20' tank in river. Gasolene? [Trout]. Water for irrigation (Kirby Wilkins)	106.3
	Henderson's fish trap river center; sluice right; "some old fish traps" [1879]	107.1
	Jacob's Creek river right; Jacob's Creek Landing. Danbury Bridge (1918), destroyed 1873. Moore's Toll Bridge 1860's-1879's. Earlier bridge 1820's.	107.4
	Dan River Campground landing river left <b>ACCESS</b>	107.5
	Wing dam [1879] Gone.	107.8
	Gravel Shoal Sluice river right [1879] [1983]	108.1
	Lone Island Ford & Wing Dam [1879] Sluice right	108.6- 108.4
	Hogan's Creek river right	109
	"OID fish dams [1879] at Grand Shoal. Gone.	109.35
	Slink Shoal Sluice & 4 Wing dams: "the crown jewel of the batteau trail"—Lindley Butler	110.5- 110.3
	US 220 By-Pass; Cross Creek Rapid & sluice right [1997]	110.7
	Robertson Fish Trap (river center) and sluice (river right) [1997]	111.1
	Power lines crossing	111.4
	<b>Mayo River Confluence River Left</b>	111.55
	NC 704 Bridge. Signs direct boater to access under bridge <b>ACCESS</b>	111.9
	Pier from Madison covered bridge river right, 1837ff. Rebuilt 5 times	112.2

Pier from abandoned Cape Fear & Yadkin Valley RR (Atlantic & Yadkin 1898). Coming of railroad marked the last batteau trip to Madison summer 1888	112.4
Old ford [1879]	112.8
Approximate site of Lacey's Ford	113.5
Lindsay Bridge <b>ELEVATION 555</b> <b>ACCESS</b>	114.8
Dam at Pine Hall Brick Co. Portage river right. Boaters drowned here 1998.	114.9
Warning signs for dam [placed by Briggs Neal. Altman, <i>Dan River Book</i> ]	115.3
Sand bars, rocks; Cross Rock Shoal & Fish Dam [1879] 92001]	116
Shoal, rocks, old fish dam [1879]. Rocks left to protect RR bank	116.5
Old fish dam [1879]	117.6
Sandy Island Shoal. 4 wing dams [1879], now under sand	118
Dam at Pine Hall Brick backs up water to about here	118.3
Rutley's Shoal [2001]; channel right. "Another fish dam not in use" [1879]	118.8
Carter's Fish Dam [1879], now a pair of wing dams. Who opened? Why?	119.1
STOKES COUNTY LINE. "Old fish dam at head of Carter's Shoal" [1879]. Channel right center [2001]	119.5
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY LINE	119.8
Belews Creek river right	120.4
Buzzard Island Shoal [1879]. Channel right [2001]	120.6
"Old fish dams" [1879] Gone 2001.	121.3
STOKES COUNTY LINE	120.7
Sand dragging operation river left	121.9- 121.3
Stokes County Road # 1908 Bridge. <b>ELEVATION 580'</b> Town of Pine Hall river left. <b>ACCESS</b>	122
Fish trap or wing dam? [2001]. Channel river center. Golf Course river right.	122.4
Dalton's Fish Trap Shoal [1879]. Gone. Petrified wood in this area.	123
N & W Steel truss bridge [1891]. Large flat stones show ancient wave action [Trout]	123.5
Granny Angel's Shoal, Island & Ford [1879]. Remains of wooden slot trap [2001]	123.6
Shoebuckle Island & Shoal [1879]. Island gone	124.1
"Old fish dam" [1879] Channel center left [2001]	124.4
Town Creek river right; river makes hard left bend	124.7
Ledge, rocks, "fish dam which could easily be changed to wing dams" [1823]	124.9
Shoebuckle Ford [1879] Site of "Upper Sauratown" Village river right	125.3
Clay's Ford [1879]	125.9
"Old fish dam" [1879]. Not seen 2001.	126
Carmichael Creek river left. Clay's Island (gone). Channel on left.	126.4
Sand dragging operation river left	126.9- 126.4
US 311 BRIDGE. Access difficult or dangerous or both. <b>ACCESS</b>	126.9
Hairston's Ford Shoal. Great Wagon Road crossing. Steel truss bridge piers (built 1899)[	127.1
Upper Sauratown Plantation river right; head of navigation; now Gamelands	127.1
Wade's Ford (Hairston's Upper Ford) [1879]	128.5
Stone wall, remains of Hairston's Mill; mill race still intact river right	129

	Hairston Falls, Class 3 at high water; at low water a rock garden	129.2
	Ledges	131.3
40'	Broken dam, Hemlock Golf Course. <b>ELEVATION 620' ACCESS CLOSED</b> (Contract between landowner and County not renewed)	130.8
	Window Cave about here	131.3
	Cave said used by Confederate draft dodgers	132.3
	Ford [1879]. Branch of Great Wagon Road	132.4
	Davis Bluff ("Mt. Horrible") [1879] Many stories of falls from the top	133.6
	Davis Shoal [1879]	134.1
	Blackies Branch river left	134.2
	Branches of Great Wagon Road crossed here at Davis's Upper Ford [1879]	
	Murrays Branch river left	134.6
	Muck Creek [1879]	134.7
	Thompson's Fish Trap [1879] Timber from slot trap? [2001] Channel r. center	135.3
	Ducking Shoal [1879]	135.5
	Dodgetown Road Bridge (County Road #16) ACCESS	135.7
	Fulcher's Ford [1879] Pilzer Steel Bridge (1918), deck removed	135.9
	Snow Creek river left (run after rain) County Road #1698 ACCESS	135.9
	Sink Hole Shoal [1879] Drowning here 1860's. Former eddy? Now sand-filled	136.8
	Fish dam at foot of Old Mill Shoal [1879]. Channel center; hard left	137.2
	Riverson's Fish Trap [1879] Parallel timbers from wooden slat trap? [2001]	138.8
	Lime bluff [1879]	139.4
100'	Moratock Iron Furnace & canoe access river left <b>ELEVATION 715' ACCESS</b>	139.7
	Sheppard Mill Road Bridge (County Road #1652) MORATOCK PARK	140
	Moratock Rapid (Class 1). Old dam site	140.2
	Sandy Run river left. Iron ore from Rogers Ore Bank upstream on Sandy was floated to Moratock Furnace	141.4
	Seven Island Bridge (1898, 1927) now being replaced	142.1
	<i>Mileages from here are estimates from maps, following Dan River Book</i>	
	Route 8 bridge	144.9
	Hanging Rock State Park boat ramp ACCESS	145.1
	Dan River Shores river left	147.3
	Moore's Springs Camp Ground river right. ACCESS	149.4
40'	NC 89 Bridge. Whitt's Store Access CLOSED. Alternative (ROUGH) ACCESS under #1477 bridge over Big Creek. <b>ELEVATION 760'</b>	151.5
	Bonds Branch river left	154.7
	Peters Creek river left	155.2
	Collinstown Road Bridge (#1432). Jessup Mill river right	164
	Jessup Mill Dam: <b>OBLIGATORY PORTAGE LEFT</b>	164
	Little Dan River left	
	Big Dan Lake river left	
	"Coiled Cobra" rapid: Class 3-4 at Joyce Mill Road bridge #1417 (Closed)	
	Flippin Road Bridge # 1416 ACCESS	
	VIRGINIA STATE LINE: PATRICK COUNTY	
	NORTH CAROLINA LINE: STOKES COUNTY	
	VIRGINIA STATE LINE: PATRICK COUNTY	
	#645 bridge	
	# 781 Low Water Bridge: <b>PORTAGE LEFT</b> ACCESS	

	#103 Bridge	
	Fall Creek right. Scenic waterfall upstream	
	#813 river right. <b>ELEVATION 1244'</b> ACCESS	176
	Cox's Branch river left	
20'-50'	#648 "Kibler Valley Bridge #3" [see <i>Dan River Book</i> ]	
	Low Bridge: watch your head	
	Roaring Creek river left	
	#648 Kibler Valley Bridge #2	
	Basketball Falls Rapid, CLASS 3	
	#648 Kibler Valley Bridge #1	
	Public Enemy #2 Rapid: CLASS 3	
	Squall Creek river right	
	Power Plant Rapid: CLASS 3	
20'-50'	Pinnacles Power Plant, City of Danville <b>ELEVATION 1540'</b> ACCESS Access to Aqueduct Trail [strenuous], connecting to Pinnacles Trail [strenuous]	184.6
	Barnard Creek river left	
15' below dam	Townes Dam, end of #602; only muscle- and battery-powered boats permitted; admission by permit from Danville Utilities Department (434-799-5727) Between the dam and the power plant, river is really not navigable because of down trees not cleared. Great Falls of Dan a Class 5 two-phase cascade 35' top to bottom, other rapids Class 4 <b>ELEVATION 2212</b> ACCESS	187.4
	Wildcat Knob river right	
	Mill Creek river right	
	Talbott Dam, end of #601 (permit required) <b>ELEVATION 26261...</b> ACCESS	193.4
	Big Bend of Dan	
	Otter Arm river right	
	Big Ivy Creek / Big Cherry Creek river left (access to Willie Knowles Bottom)	
	Tuggle Creek river right	
	County Road #632 bridge	
	Quaker Field Branch river right	
	U. S. 52 Bridge, Cockram Mill #3 (extant; see <i>Dan River Book</i> )	201.4
	#745 bridge	
	#610 bridge,	
	Cockram Mill #2 river left (see <i>an River Book</i> )	
	#610 bridge	
	#610 bridge	
	#610 bridge	
6'	Confluence of East and West Forks, Cockram Mill #1 traces	
	Farm pond on West Fork	
1"	Springs on Belcher Mountain on private property. <b>ELEVATION 3300'</b>	207



## THE SMITH

### Following the River

The waters of the Smith River, backed up by Philpott Dam, are surrounded by hundreds of acres of parkland. In addition, the river in its upper reaches from its rise in Patrick County, Virginia to Fairy Stone Park, is worthy of wild and scenic designation; as is the portion in Henry County, from Morgan Ford Road (#622) to Eggleston Falls.

The Smith River (called Irvine's by William Byrd in 1728 and Smith's by William E. Trout III in *The Dan River Atlas*), joins the Dan at Eden, North Carolina, just upstream from Eden Wildlife Management Boat ramp, 92.4 miles from the now-drowned confluence of the Dan and Staunton to form the Roanoke. The following account is drawn in large part from *The Dan River Atlas*, by William E. Trout III, of the Virginia Canals and Navigations Society. We shall be traveling upstream, like the early European colonists. Mileages from the Dan confluence to Union Bridge, at Fairy Stone Park, in Henry County, Virginia, are drawn from Trout's work, based on Global Positioning Satellite equipment. From Union Bridge to the source of the Smith on Belcher Mountain, on the Blue Ridge Plateau, mileages are estimated based on map study.

### THE SMITH RIVER, MILE BY MILE

DESCRIPTION	MILE #
<b>Smith River / Dan River Confluence at Dan River Mile # 92.4</b>	0
Swing bridge for golf carts	0.3
Bear Slide Natural Area river left	0.5
Kings Highway Bridge	0.8
Island	1.7- 1.6
NC 770 Bridge. Tackett Branch river right. Colonial Salem NC-Petersburg Road ford crossed here	1.7
Private access river right. Apply to Three Rivers Outfitters, 336-627-6215, <a href="http://www.3-r-o.com">www.3-r-o.com</a>	<b>2</b>
Falls and Class 2 rapids	2.5- 1.9
Spray Industrial Complex at Spray Circle, Eden NC	2.6- 1.75
<b>SPRAY DAM. PORTAGE LEFT.</b> A dam was here in 1813	2.6
Aiken Road Bridge #1733	3
Rock garden	3.2
NC Routes 14 / 8 Bridge	4.1
Fish dam [Trout 1999]	4.4
Very rocky island. Brims?	4.7
VIRGINIA / CAROLINA LINE: HENRY COUNTY. Site of Potosi Island 1728	5.1
Stuart Creek river right	5.2
Site of proposed (1999) dam; would have backed up water to Martinsville	5.4
"Jagger Rock" (suck hole here; water emerged at state line)	6.7

Route 622, Morgan Ford Road. <b>BENCH MARK. ELEVATION 587'</b>	7
Stone piers of old Morgan Ford Bridge [1827]	7.1
Site of proposed (1980's) Hydro Power Dam; would have backed water 12 miles	8.05
Home Creek river left	8.25
Break [Breaker] Reed Ford (1927; ruins of road ramp upstream	10.5
Remains of dam and mill site river left. Joseph Goodwin's [1728]?	10.8
Whale Rock (Trout's name)	11.2
Drag Creek (Turkeypen Branch) river right. "THE BEND"	11.4
Turkey Cock Creek river right	12.5
Fall Creek river left. Long Island Ford. Long Island Truss Bridge replaced 1990's	14.5
Batteau channel (Trout)	15.2
Leatherwood Creek river left	16.1
Burgess Creek river right	16.9
Pipeline crossing	17.5
Marrowbone Creek river right. Put-In on #642 (Altman 2005)	ACCESS 17.8
Island	18- 17.9
<b>EGGLESTON FALLS;</b> "Parklike Area of rocks and islands. . .deserves to be. . .natural" {Trout} Sluices blasted from rock river left	18.2- .1
Red dye leaked from left bank here	18.4
Fish dam? (Trout)	18.9
Falls, with channel	19.6
U. S. 58 bridge	20.6
Possible batteau channel through rapids (Trout)	21.1
Forest Park Country Club left	21.5- .2
Mulberry Creek left	21.2
Pipe bridge. Falls Ford [1827]	21.5
Machine Branch river right	21.9
Partial fish dam? [Trout, 1999]	22.46
Wing dams [Trout 1999] Former channel left (now gravel-filled?)	22.7
Ledge. Natural cut river center? (Trout, 1999)	23.13
Stone railroad piers; N & W RR Crossing	23.3
Possible batteau channel right, downstream from overhead pipe crossing	<b>ACCESS</b> 23.44
Martinsville Fish Dam (Trout, 1999)	24.05
Bed rocks. Class 2 rapid.	24.15
Road #966 Access off parking lot behind CVS Pharmacy, U.S.29 (2005)	<b>ACCESS</b> 24.2
Natural wing dam (Trout, 1999)	24.5
<b>DAM</b> & us 58 / 220 Business Bridge, Martinsville	<b>ACCESS</b> 25.1
Former DuPont Plant river left	25.9
Preston Branch river right	26.45
The Round About or Horseshoe Bend [1827]. River front is private nature preserve.	28.8- 25.7
End of Road #602: ugly house frontage; trees clear CUT	<b>ACCESS</b> 27
Ford about here [1827]	27.7
Grassy Creek river right [1827]	28.1
Beaver Creek river left. Up creek, remains of mill site [1827] and crib foundation of old railway pier (?) Water backed up to about here by dam.	30.1
Long channel right. Could island be old sluice? (Trout)	30.5
Dam and canal to Beaver Creek proposed here 1918	30.75
Island. Channel on right.	31.1
3 timber crib foundations of abandoned railroad	31.7
Fieldale Railroad Station river right. Jordan Creek river right	31.7
Concrete intake box? (Trout) 2 wing dams. Waller's Ford about here [1827]	32.1

#609 bridge	32.15
Wing dam at water intake. Broken fish dam?	32.7
Rock pile at foot of falls. Wing dam? (Trout 1999)	33.2
Bedrock under US 220 bridge. Where is [was] channel?	33.45
Reed (Reedy) Creek river left	34
Hordsville river right, .4 mile from river, home of George ("Old Rusty") Hairston II, founder / president of Smith River Navigation Co.	34.7
# 903 bridge (alternate VA 57)	35.1
Large rocks form a modern wing dam: for intake structure on river left? [Trout, 1999]	35.4
Rock Run (Rocky Creek) river right	35.7
Power line. Possible batteau channel [Trout 1999]	35.8
"Leaning Tower" Intake (Trout)	36.45
Blackberry Creek river right/ Steel water intake river left? (Trout)	36.7
3 possible wing dams (Trout 1888)	37.2
In downtown Bassett, access river right at parking lot across Alternate 57 from Public Library [Altman, 2005] ..... ACCESS	
<b>BENCH MARK: ELEVATION 760</b>	37.4
Bassett Historical Center	38
Boat ramp (Trout, 1999) ..... ACCESS	38.1
#666 bridge	38.4
Modern wing dam at an intake "Leaning Tower" (Trout 1999)	38.7
Concrete box	38.8
#666 bridge	39.2
"The Horseshoe" [1827]	39.2- 38.4
Falls, island. Channel right? (Trout 1999)	40.4
Town Creek river left. Brings in clay-laden water to a clear-running river (Altman, 2005)	42
#674 bridge. Intake screen river right shows range of water levels (Trout, 1999)	42.2
2 possible sluices visible at low water (Trout, 1999)	42.6
<b>PHILPOTT DAM.</b> Fishing and rest rooms both sides of river. #904/905 does not cross dam ..... ACCESS	45
Cow Branch river right	45.7
Bowens Creek river right	46
Bowens Branch river right	46.3
PATRICK COUNTY LINE. FRANKLIN COUNTY ON RIVER LEFT	46.6
Drowned river bed passes between Deer Island (river left) and Turkey Island	47
Salthouse Creek river left	47/4
Picnic area river right (Goose Point) Boat ramp right at end of #822 ..... ACCESS	47.5
Roland Branch river left	47.9
Goblintown Creek river right	48.3
Still in Philpott Reservoir PATRICK COUNTY RIVER RIGHT; FRANKLIN COUNTY RIVER LEFT	
Boat ramp river left (end of Road #798) ..... ACCESS	50.2
Picnic area river left	50.4
Horseshoe Point river left	50.7
Campground river left	51
Osley Creek river left	51.5
Nicholas Creek river left. Jamison Mill site (inundated)	52.4
Beard's Creek river left	52.6
Jackson Run river right	52.7
Union Church Bridge (#623); Mines Branch Recreation Area river right; Site of Blue Falls (blue-tinted rocks visible from bridge) & George Hairston Forge? (Trout); Ryan's Branch Recreation Area and boat ramp river left; Take-out for "Upper Smith whitewater run" (needs a recent rain—(Bev Bryant). RIVER ENTERS PATRICK COUNTY. ACCESS	54

Otter Creek river left	54.4
Puppy Creek river right	57.2
Water backed up by Philpott Dam to about here	58.8
Small Creek river left	59.6
White Falls	60
White Oak Creek river left	61
Poplar Camp Creek river left	63
Joint Creek river left	65.3
#704 Iron Bridge Road, off VA 57, near village of Charity. Put-In for "Upper Smith run." Bev Bryant says Charity to Union Bridge is 15 river miles. Minimum level 3.0 on USGS gauge at Smith River Church; a good run is 4.0, but the river rarely stays at that level very long.	66.1
	<b>ACCESS</b>
Widgeon Creek river left	66.9
Sycamore Creek river right	69.1
Buffalo Creek river right	70.9
Jack, Jill & Conners Creeks river left	72.5
Route 8 bridge	73
Jacks Creek Road	73.5
#722 Bluegrass Road	74.2
#613 Lone Ivy Road	76.2
#636 Winding Star Road (ends below US 58 at "Lover's Leap")	76.6
#620	77.2
#611 Apple Tree Road; CONFLUENCE OF SMITH 7 NORTH FORK	77.6
Smith River rises near intersection of #764 (Mountain View Road) & #759 (Luke Helms Road), 2 miles from Cockram Mill Pond on US 58	81.8
North Fork of Smith rises near Belcher Mt. Road below Tinsley Knob	86.0
North Prong of North Fork rises across #764 (Mountain View Road) from springs of South Fork of Dan River.	90.00

**THE MAYO RIVER  
SOUTH MAYO RIVER  
AND  
NORTH MAYO RIVER  
THE SMITH**

**Following the Rivers**

Like the Dan and the Smith Rivers, both branches of the Mayo River rise on the Blue Ridge Plateau, in Patrick County, Virginia. They come together just inside of Rockingham County, North Carolina and join the Dan in the city of Madison. According to William E. Trout III, the Dan, after its confluence with the Mayo, flows more than 111 miles. Each branch of the Mayo has a short reach. The combined flows of the Mayo and South Mayo come to about 51.3 miles; of the Mayo and North Mayo about 39.8 miles. Though the South Mayo is the longer branch, boaters putting into the river for the classic whitewater run put in on the North Mayo in Virginia and find their moments of greatest excitement in North Carolina. The lower reaches of the Mayo have been largely claimed by industry, including two hydropower dams. The future of the river may be different, with the full realization of the new plan (2005) for the future Mayo River State Park, a series of parks, trails, camps and points of river access.

We'll be traveling upstream from the Dan/Mayo confluence. The mileages on the following lists are estimates based on map study. **ACCESS** printed in **BOLD FACE CAPITALS=public, official and easy launching place.** ACCESS printed in regular capitals=difficult or unofficial launching places, usually on highway right-of-way. Places where private landowners have granted access in the past are not indicated. Ask permission.

**THE MAYO RIVER MILE BY MILE**

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>RIVER MILE #</b>
MAYO CONFLUENCE WITH DAN: DAN MILE 111.55	0
#2177, Water Street Bridge	0.2
Stone pier from 1892 bridge. Replaced 1965 (Trout)	0.25
Mayo Ford in Colonial times; Petersburg-Salem Road. <b>Bench mark: ELEVATION 565'</b>	1.0
# 135 bridge; end of Madison River Race, 1990's. Created by Briggs Neal, it portaged two dams. Madison-Mayodan Recreation Center river right. ACCESS	2
<b>GREAT FALLS OF MAYO. DAM. PORTAGE RIGHT</b>	2.5
<b>DAM. PORTAGE RIGHT</b>	3.5
Electric sub-station parking area river right; west side of US 220 Business ACCESS	5
Highway 770 Bridge ACCESS	9
Hickory Creek river right	13.25
Mayo Beach river left. Upstream are "Blender," and "Boiling Hole," Class 3 rapids, at end of Old Anglin Loop (unpaved), with "RIVER ACCESS" sign on Anglin Mill Road	15

(#1358)	<b>ACCESS</b>	
Anglin Mill Road bridge # 1358. Upstream are famous "Stair Steps." Class 2.		15.5
Start of "Stair Steps" (Class 2). Fall Creek river left		15.75
Confluence of S. Mayo and North Mayo Rivers		15.8

### **NORTH MAYO RIVER MILE BY MILE**

Confluence with South Mayo		15.8
VIRGINIA-CAROLINA BORDER: Henry County		15.85
Moore's Mill Road: put-in the "classic" Mayo Run (Class 1,2,3)	<b>ACCESS</b>	18
Horse Pasture Creek river left		19.8
George Taylor Road #688		21.9
Log Manor Road # 265		25.5
US Highway 58		25.9
Turnpike Road #968; Railroad Lane Bridge		26.2
Mill Creek river right		26.6
Koger Creek river left		26.9
PATRICK COUNTY LINE		27.9
South County Line Road #828		29.7
Stella Road #701		32.5
Koger Mill Road #703		33.3
Spencer Creek / Grassy Branch river left		34.3
Laurel Branch river right		35.3
Polebridge Creek river left		36.7
Pleasant View Drive #687		38.8
Rise of North Branch, Mayo River (like some of its tributaries) on Bull Mountain, northeast of Stuart, Virginia		39.8

## SOUTH MAYO RIVER MILE BY MILE

Confluence with North Mayo	15.5
VIRGINIA LINE; HENRY COUNTY	16.1
Crooked Creek river right	18.4
George Taylor Road #695; put-in for "Classic" Mayo whitewater run, slightly longer and less interesting than the North Mayo run (Altman 2005)	19/4
PATRICK CIUNTY LINE; Green Creek/Jackson Branch river left	21.6
End of Casey Ridge Road river left	23.4
Spoon Creek river left	25
Moorefield Store Road #700. GAUGING STATION	27/6
Russell Creek river right	28.8
Ayers Orchard Road # 653	32.2
Mayo Drive #680	36.4
#683	37.4
Poplar Drive # 727	38.8
Rich Creek river left	39.8
Commerce Street #681	41.4
Highway 8	42.4
Poorhouse Creek river left	43.2
Dobyns Road #631	44.2
Dobyns Road #631	45.2
Dobyns Road #631	45.6
Dobyns Road #631	45.8
Brushy Fork river left	46.4
Cove Creek Road #815	46.8
Rye Cove Creek river left	46.9
Dobyns Road #631	48.5
Dobyns Road #631	49.9
South Fork of the Mayo River rises between Rock Mountain and Joes Knob, northwest of Stuart, Virginia, just over one mile from the Big Bend of Dan River in Talbott Reservoir	51.3

## **THE SANDY RIVER**

### **Following the River**

Like the Banister River, the Sandy rises in northern Pittsylvana County near the Callands community. It joins the Dan at Danville, within a stone's throw of Riverside Drive, which carries U. S. Highway 58 Business through the city of Danville. It is the only named river in the Dan River Basin whose flow is entirely within one county. The river flows through open country, woods and suburbs and joins the Dan in downtown Danville. In the course of its flow, the Sandy and its tributaries drain parts of the communities of Bachelor's Hall (Tocky Branch), Westover Hills, New Mt. Cross (Hickory Forest Creek), Brosville (Hardy's Creek), West Fork (Sugartree Creek), Soapstone (Tanyard Creek, South Prong), Whitmell (Stewart Creek), Sandy River ( Bawley Branch), Callands, Grady and Tunstall.

The Sandy's confluence with the Dan is at Dan River Mile 64.8; that is, 64.8 river miles from the now drowned confluence of the Dan with the Staunton to form the Roanoke.

On it is at least two dams, but it is not primarily the dams that limit its navigability; it is the shortness of its "fetch," about 30 river miles. Because of the shortness of the river and the rockiness of its bed, the river is too shallow to be navigable except immediately after—or during—a rain. At other times the boater's enjoyment will be lessened by her heightened concern to avoid getting stuck on bedrock too close to the surface, by the effort of struggling to push off the rocks once stuck or the constant and often futile vigilance required in seeking a channel when the river is shallow nearly everywhere. Truly, one needs to wait for a good rain in the headwaters.

### **Scouting**

By Forrest Altman

I first scouted the Sandy River by automobile July 18, 2005. Later in 2005 (New Year's Eve Day) I ran it for the first time.

I admit I was surprised at what I found in scouting by car. I had not ever met anyone who had paddled the Sandy, though Karen Cross says that Dave Odhner and Jimmy Hankins and others often did in the '80's when the Danville Canoe Club was young and active. I'd always heard it was navigable only after a rain.

The Sandy River isn't the one you cross when you take the exit ramp from US 29 Business to Piedmont Drive. That's the Sandy Creek, which joins the Dan .4 mile downstream from the Dan/Sandy River confluence. But like the creek, the Sandy River is crossed by Piedmont Drive near the Piedmont Mall, which overlooks Riverside Drive. If you travel northwest on Mt. Cross Road (#750), and



then northwest on Medical Center Road (#882), you'll be roughly paralleling the Sandy River. That's what I did. The result was fun, fascinating and often surprising.

I began my investigation behind J. R.'s Outfitter on Mt Cross Road, whose property is backed by the Sandy River and whose proprietor has considered creating a boating access on the river behind the store, 0.3 mile from the Dan. He was advised by Karen Cross, Danville's Outdoor Recreation Director that stabilizing the bank at this place would present major engineering challenges. The Sandy here, on a hot and dry July day, was 100' wide, plenty deep enough for a muscle-powered boat, the current slow, the banks tree-lined as far as the eye could see from the bridge over Old Riverside Drive. Clearly, it was as true here as anywhere on a river: that a person can be afloat and hardly be aware of being in the city. Still, I was eager to explore upstream.

I didn't pause to check the Piedmont Drive crossing of the river .9 mile from the Dan. I stayed on Mt. Cross Road, turning left on Moorefield Bridge Road. At the bridge, about 6 river miles from its confluence with the Dan, the Sandy is 50' wide, half its width at Danville, with sand bars but a good channel and plenty of depth. Upstream from the bridge a shallow ledge and a Class 2 rapid seemed runnable even in dry July. Scouting downstream on foot, I found a huge section of culvert stuck against the right bank: 5' in diameter, 25' long. Still farther downstream was a 3' high dam broached right of center. Though this seemed the best choice of channel (a huge hole river left seemed to swallow water in a threatening manner), it wasn't ideal, for below the drop was a nasty hydraulic that would require good speed to get over. I wouldn't like to run it except in the company of reliable buddies skilled in rescue. But the river here, though curvy and tricky, was attractive to me, with high, sandy, wooded banks. At the bridge the best access seemed to be river right above the bridge.

To give you some idea of the wildness of the area, on my way to the next bridge I had to brake for a dozen wild turkeys, hens and chicks, crossing River Ridge Road.

At Stony Mill Road, #869), about 9.3 river miles from Danville, I flushed a heron from a ledge downstream. Upstream were cows wading and 20 or so Canada geese floating. The river made a broad bend here, and there was a good access river right upstream from the bridge—if you don't mind the trash or if you're willing to bring a trash bag with you.

At County Road #832, Medical Center Road, about 15.7 river miles from the Dan, the Sandy was about 40' wide, tree-flanked and tree-shaded, with a difficult access river right under the bridge. A bit over a half-mile upstream, at #832, Hinesville Road one-lane bridge, the Sandy narrowed to 20', with sand and gravel bars downstream and upstream but a clear channel; river left.

At Brookside Road, almost 19 miles from Danville, the Sandy was 10'-20' wide, with a large down tree against the bridge pier and other strainers—and a Class 2 pour-over looking as if it could be really scrapey except after a rain

At the one-lane bridge over Wyatt Farm Road, the winding river was again 40' wide, with a choked channel and sand bars but at least one clear channel everywhere in view of the bridge. The river here was tree-lined and beautiful.

At White Oak Road, #840, the river was a mere 10' wide, with sand bars: scarcely navigable.

In the vicinity of Mapleton Road, #818, one gets views of Turkeycock Mountain, where mountain bikes travel the road, but at the road's crossing of the Sandy River, the poor little 8' wide stream was squeezed into a culvert under the road. No putting in here.

Realizing that I'd have trouble finding any more traces of the river this far upstream, I took a lunch break and turned my attention to scouting the upper reaches of the Banister, which rises, like the Sandy, in the vicinity of Callands.

During this scouting trip I got the idea that some of the sections of the river could be run at other times than after a rain. If you'd like to try, give me a call: 336-234-8556; [musakulu@gamewood.net](mailto:musakulu@gamewood.net)

## **RUNNING THE SANDY RIVER**

By

Forrest Altman

When my buddy Trent called me and told me “the guys” were planning to run the Sandy River New Year’s Eve (December 31, 2005), my first thought was “Is there rain in the forecast?” There wasn’t, but our intrepid veteran trip leader Doug Shumate was eager to go. So we went.

A buddy of Trent’s ran the river the day before and reported that it was “a bit scrapey.” That was an understatement.

None of us in the group (twelve persons in eleven boats) had ever run the river before. Some of us had scouted it, and James was familiar with the turf because he was raised in the area and had fished the Sandy as a boy. The plan was to put in at Stony Mill Road (County Road 869) below the dam and take out at Moorefield Bridge Road. Knowing that parking on two-lane Moorefield Bridge Road was limited (only one proper space on the south side near the bridge), we left most of the vehicles in the parking lot of the K-Mart in Danville and “doubled up.” to carry boats and persons.

Scouting at the put-in, we realized that immediate access to the river from the road was out of the question: there’s a dam there. Since even stopping near the river was impossible without trespassing on private property. Doug went to talk to the landowner, who gave permission to launch on his property and even came down to watch us unload. Several members of the group chatted with him and his son. Some of the guys ran a bit of the rapid immediately below the dam; most of us put in at a convenient sandy beach several hundred yards downstream.

The river was flat in places, with plenty of depth, but as we progressed downstream from the dam, we found many places where the bedrock was close to the surface; a lot of rock gardens; several 3’ drops and an almost constant challenge to find a deep enough channel. Every boat had plenty of paint scraped off its hull, and the one tandem boat, with two persons close to its rockered center, was said to have worn a significant hole in the bottom.

We had fun—at least most of us did, because we were running the Sandy for the first time—but we worked hard to find a channel, avoid rocks or push off them once stuck. Wait for a rain before running the Sandy..

## THE SANDY RIVER: MILE BY MILE

WIDTH	LOCATION / ITEM	RIVER MILE #
	Confluence of Sandy River and Dan River, downtown Danville	0
	US 58 Business bridge, Riverside Drive	0.2
100'	Old Riverside Drive Bridge, near intersection of Mt. Cross Road	0.3
	Piedmont Drive bridge	0.9
	Pipeline	4
50'	Moorefield Bridge Road # 863	6
	Hickory Creek river left	6.3
	Rocky Branch / Pine Lake Creek river right	8.3
	Hardy's Creek river right	8.9
100'	Stony Mill Road (#878) bridge. <b>DAM. Obligatory Portage</b>	9.3
	Stewart Creek river left	10.1
	Sugartree Creek river right	12.7
	Sugartree Church Road # 851	13.7
40'	Medical Center Road # 882	15.7
20'	Hinesville Road #822	17.1
10'-20'	Brookside Road #844	18.7
40'	Wyatt Farm Road #812	20.9
	West Fork river right	21
10'	Water Oak Road # 840	21.4
8'	Mapleton Drive #818	22.7
	Maple Road # 817	24.5
	VA Highway 57. The Sandy River rises just north of the highway, near intersection of Highway 41, west of Callands, within two miles of the rise of the Banister.	30

## TRAVELS ON THE HYCO RIVER

By

Forrest Altman

In "Trip 21," the last "chapter" of *The Dan River Book*, in the section titled "The Map In My Head," I tell about a trip upstream on the Hyco River, from the Dan/Hyco confluence to Hyco Landing, at US 58, east of South Boston. The area near the confluence is complex and confusing; and it's easy to get lost. The current between the Landing and the confluence is significant, and it's easy to become winded when paddling upstream from the Dan.

But you know how it is with us river aficionados: we never know when we've had enough; and therefore I wanted to know more about the Hyco, especially since I live within three miles of it. So early on July 3, 2005 I set out, *solus*, paddling again upstream on the Hyco, this time *from*, and not *to*, Hyco Landing. The current was now much easier to deal with; in fact, it was noticeable not at all unless I stopped paddling or unless I was watching leaves float. The gradient must not have been great; and certainly the water was deep enough to be running gently; paddling in the center of the river, I could not reach the bottom with my paddle. The river, forested on both banks, varied in width from 40 to 70 feet, surely depending on the solubility of the rocks. Sometimes the right bank was high and the left low; and sometimes the reverse. Since I've never recovered from my college courses in physical and historical geology, I was fascinated by the rocks river right: sedimentary deposits in thin layers, like paper-thin peels of birch bark; ready for Moses to pry apart and scroll the Ten Commandments; and farther upstream, massive, twisted, sculpture-like rocks, textured like petrified wood.

It was a hot day, but an occasional cool breeze blew downriver, bringing a whiff of sweet fragrance from somewhere in the woods. I was on holiday and in no hurry and thus did not work up a sweat despite the heat. Getting up the river was no great challenge. There were a couple of snags of down trees in the center of the river or reaching out from the banks, but none was hard to get around or under. I saw one 10' log about three inches in diameter that bore the unmistakable marks of beaver teeth.

Starting from the landing beside Highway 58. I was accompanied for some distance by highway sounds, not my favorite wilderness serenade; but soon the music was birdsong, both familiar and unfamiliar voices. Quiet as I thought I was, listening, my coming flushed an occasional duck, species unknown, quacking a brief dissonance in the midst of the songbird counterpoint. Maybe the empty mussel shells on bankside logs were the leftovers from a raccoon's lunch.

About two miles above the landing, upstream from a bridge presumably at Buckshoal Road, #601, I came across two old bridge piers, one easily visible on the right bank, the other off in the trees river left. I began to be more aware than

before of the little eruptions that every river traveler experiences, assuming them to be fish jumping to the surface and beyond in pursuit of the delicious may fly or damselfly. I switched to silent, Native American paddling mode in order to invite closer encounters with the wild creatures.

At my lunch stop, a few yards upstream on a 10' wide tributary river left, my quiet munching was punctuated by a loud splash. I got up from my repose against a large maple tree and moved a couple of steps to where I could look down the stream toward the river. I expected to see a huge tree branch blocking the channel. Instead, what I saw was a large beaver, nose and most of her/his back visible above the surface of the stream, moving back and forth, and occasionally beating the surface with its broad, tiller-like tail, making the very sound I had just heard. I verily believe he (or more likely she, with a young family in a lodge nearby), was giving me territorial signals, something equating to "Get out of Dodge if you know what's good for you!"

My sandwich eaten, I launched the boat again and decided to head back downstream. I now had a good idea of what this section of the river was like; maybe I could expand my knowledge from map study and by coming back when I could recruit a partner or two to facilitate a shuttle. Upstream paddling gets old pretty quickly. But my Walt Disney True Life Adventures weren't over yet. I had become convinced, after my encounter with the beaver on the tributary, that some of the little eruptions of the surface I'd been observing were caused not by fish jumping but by beavers surfacing. As I paddled quietly downstream, still Native American style, I was surprised to see, swimming upstream toward me, a second beaver, her or his face well above water. I drifted until, not more than twenty feet from me, Mr. or Ms. Beaver chose to demonstrate the surface dive.

My pal K. Paul Johnson says that he experienced in this section of the river his first and only sighting of a black bear in the wild. I can credit the report. This is a wild, remote and beautiful natural area. The thrush's lovely arpeggios as I picked up trash at the Landing, might have been saying sweetly, "See you later."

● \* \*

### **HYCO ADVENTURES (Continued): HYCO RESERVOIR AFTERBAY**

A few days after the trip up from Hyco Landing, I decided it was past time to become acquainted with the section of the Hyco just over the Caswell-Person county line, only a few miles from my house. I had floated on and swum in Hyco Reservoir, where wakes of power boats make swimming and muscle-boating less than ideal; but I had never laid eyes, much less a paddle, on the After Bay, a reserve water source with its own dam. Putting in on McGhees Mill Road (an antiquarian would spell it McGeehees) at the west end of the bridge over the After Bay, I paddled left (northeasterly), with the imperceptible current, turning right around the first point of land, left around the next one, and right around the

third, soon glimpsing ahead what appeared to be a light gray wall of rock. Before arriving there, I stopped at a low beach river left, not wishing to be pulverized in the spillway of the After Bay dam.

Now-- don't do what I did.

After beaching the boat, I plunged into the bush and picked my way up through huge rip-rap boulders that had been there long enough to be almost obscured by grass, grapevines, tree seedlings and worse: thistles, stinging nettles and blackberry canes (I was barelegged in my paddling shorts). At the top of this painful embankment, a dirt track led to the dam, with its five high viewing towers and four separate spillways, only one of them open. Still, there was enough water to float a canoe, I figured. Though the channel width below the dam was less than the length of my 14' canoe, it widened to 30' in its natural bed just downstream.

Away from the dam, the "road" led to a locked gate in a barbed wire fence, where I saw what seemed to be four-wheeler tracks leading me back along the fence to the beach and back again along the fence to the dirt track leading away from the dam, into the woods. The four-wheeler tracks continued—down the other side of the berm and alongside it to the stream below the dam. Ceremonially, I dipped my river boot into the again natural Hyco River and then made my way back to my boat and paddled to the put-in. The water level, I noticed, was 3' below the high water mark.

In addition to the access at the west end of the bridge, there's one at the east end. To get to McGees Mill Road from Roxboro, take NC 57, turning right on Concord-Ceffco Road. To reach McGees Mill Road from Semora, you can take NC 57 South, turning left at Concord on the Ceffco Road, but I find it interesting to take NC 119 North, turning right on Cunningham Road and, after turning right again on McGees Mill Road, stopping short of the Hyco at the produce stand of Mr. James Poindexter, a helpful local who knows the area.

## **ANOTHER HYCO ADVENTURE DOWNSTREAM FROM THE AFTERBAY DAM**

In October of 2005 I lucked into a couple of tandem canoe trips with a new member of the Dan River Basin Association (but a veteran sailor and outdoor aficionado), Randy Eakes. One of our adventures was on the Hyco River downstream from the Afterbay Dam. After the requisite stroll across the dam, admiring the structure and the view from the top, we hefted the boat, schlepped it up to and over the berm level with the dam and launched it in the "natural" river below the dam.

Both Steve Carpenter and Paul Johnson had told me that the Hyco downstream from the Progress Energy reservoirs was blocked by trees downed by

hurricanes, but of course I had to see for myself. Randy and I learned that it wasn't only hurricanes that had downed trees, littering and blocking the channel. Beavers had done their share. We lifted over at least two significant beaver dams and encountered some incipient ones and places where the river was inches deep, less than enough to float tandem Red *Mohawk*, who requires only three inches.

We floated (and towed the boat) downstream toward (but never quite to) the Virginia line, schlepped upstream on Ghent Creek to a trestle of the abandoned Norfolk Southern Railroad, continued downstream past and over and under and around many down trees, wading and pulling the boat through many shallows before abandoning hope of reaching the next bridge (Woodsdale Road), weary of the unexpected hikes and obstructions.

Back upstream and stroking in the deeper waters of the Afterbay, Captain Randy was able to retrace our paddle strokes around the bends back to the McGhees Mill Road access.



## THE HYCO RIVER MILE BY MILE

The Hyco River joins the Dan in the waters backed up by John H. Kerr Dam, 12.2 miles from the now drowned former confluence of the Dan with the Staunton to form the Roanoke. It rises as two creeks, the Hyco and the South Hyco, which meet in the waters backed up by the dam at Progress Energy's coal-fired steam plant. The Hyco goes from creeks to reservoir to after bay to river before joining the Dan. The scouting reports above cover only a portion of the length of the river; the rest remains to be explored. Paul Johnson says the river in Virginia upstream from Hyco Landing is blocked by many down trees from Hurricane Hugo. Steve Carpenter says the same thing about the river downstream from the afterbay dam. The mileages on the following chart are estimates based on map study and limited scouting.

DESCRIPTION	RIVER MILE
Hyco confluence with Dan River 12 miles from drowned Dan/Staunton confluence	0
Hyco Landing at US 58 8 miles east of US 501 at South Boston, Virginia <b>ACCESS</b>	3
Bridge at Buckshoal Road #601	5.2
Bridge at Kingswood Road #738	7.7
Bridge at Lowery Road #741	9.9
Bridge at East Hyco Road #744	10.9
Coleman Creek river left.	15.4
Mayo Creek river right. Area east of here is part of John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir Project	15.6
Bridge at US 501. Gauging station. <b>ACCESS</b>	17.9
Bowes Creek river right	20.9
Bridge at Bethel Hill Road #710	21.7
NORTH CAROLINA LINE; PERSON COUNTY	23.3
Castle Creek river right	23.8
Bridge at Woodsdale Road	24.8
Story's Creek river right	26.2
Powell's Creek river left	26.5
Ghent Creek river right	26.7
Afterbay dam, Progress Energy. No named tributaries to Afterbay have been identified.	27.9
Bridge at McGeehees Road <b>ACCESS</b>	30.4
Hyco Dam at Progress Energy coal-fired steam plant	31.5
Cane Creek river left (confluence inundated)	32.5
Sargeant's Creek river right (confluence inundated)	33.5
South Hyco Creek river right (confluence inundated)	34.5
Cobb's Creek river right (confluence inundated)	35.2
NC Highway 57 bridge. Hyco Marina. Restaurant. <b>ACCESS</b>	35.9
CASWELL COUNTY LINE	37.8
Bridge at Osmond Road #1562	39.9
Bridge at US Highway 158	45.5
Bridge at Grimes Church Road #1710	50.5
Panther Creek right	52.4
Lynch Creek right	54
NC Highway 86 bridge	54.4
Bridge at Gunn Poole Road	56.4
Rise of Hyco Creek in Baynes Community near NC Highway 119	59.2

## THE BANISTER RIVER MILE BY MILE

The Banister River rises in the Callands Community in west central Pittsylvania, County, within two miles of the rise of the Sandy River. The Banister joins the Dan in the waters backed up by John H. Kerr Reservoir 16.1 miles upstream from the now drowned former confluence of the Dan and the Staunton.

The Banister and its tributaries pass through or near and drain the communities of Callands, Banister (Wet Sleeve Creek), Union Hall (Wet Stone Creek, Strawberry Creek), Swansonville (Strawberry Creek), Hopewell (Pudding Creek). Dry Fork (White Oak Creek, Dry Fork). Flint Hill (Bolin Branch), Weal (Bearskin Creek), Chatham (Cherrystone Creek, Green Rock Branch), Markham (Shockoe Creek, Mill Creek, Dry Branch), Vernon Hill (Polecat Creek), Rodden (Spring Bye Creek, Sandy Creek), Ebenezer (Elkhorn Creek), Pickaway (Johns Run, Bar Branch, Lick Branch, Sandy Creek), Meadville, White Oak, Halifax, Dudley (Winn Creek), and Scottsburg (Gibson Creek).

Batteaux plied the Banister as far upstream as Mayfield, the former industrial center of Halifax County, two miles west of US Highway 501. As on the Smith and the Dan, mills and boats on the Banister competed for the use of the river. Mileages on the following chart from the Dan confluence upstream to Motley's Mill at River Mile 52 are based on William E. Trout III's *Dan River Atlas*. From Motley's Mill to the rise of the river, mileages are based on scouting, river running and map study. **ACCESS IN BOLD FACE**=official access place. ACCESS in regular capitals = unofficial or difficult access, usually at road right of way.

WIDTH	ELEV.	DESCRIPTION	RIVER MILE
100'	320'-330'	"Mouth of Banister"; confluence with Dan River	0
		Pipeline crossing	0.4
		Gibson Creek river left	1.4
		Halifax County Road #716. Banister River Wildlife Area river both sides of river <b>ACCESS</b>	1.8
		Railway trestle. Wolf Trap Creek river right	2.3
	333'	US 360 bridge (Terry's Bridge). Possible ford site upstream. Banister River Wildlife Management Area both sides of river.	5.3
		Myers Creek river right	5.9
		Halifax Route #614 <b>ACCESS</b>	8.2
		Straight line of rocks across river (1999)	8.5
		Two straight lines of rocks across river (1999)	8.85
		Straight line of rocks across river (1999)	9.1
		A pair of navigational wing dams	10.2
		Straight line of rocks (1999)	19.5
		Railroad trestle, N & W	10.9
	340'	VA Highway 360 bridge. Gauging station	11.25
		#760 bridge (Old Kings Bridge). Wing dam. Line of rocks (1999)	11.34
		Terrible Creek river left	11.6
		<b>Dam. Obligatory Portage</b>	11.82
0.11	350'	US 501 bridge. Boat ramp river right. Town of Halifax (Banister,	12.1

miles		Houston), Halifax County seat	<b>ACCESS</b>
		Keats Creek river right	13.9
		Power line crossing	14.1
		Rock House Cave	15.7
		Polecat Creek river right	16.3
		International cable crossing	19.5
		Horseshoe Bend	18.9- 17.9
		Flat rock	19.6
		"Ivy Cliff"	19.7
		Sandy Creek river right	21.4
	Bridge 376'	#642 bridge. Falls Creek river left. Meadville	22.4
	350'	Lower Great Falls of Banister [1747]. Gone	22.5
		Small shelter cave river right	24
		Bye Creek river right	24.1
		Bradley Creek river left	24.6
	397'	# 667 bridge	28.5
		"Tent Rock" on river right (Trout 1999)	29.1
		Upper Great Falls of Banister [1747] Snag field. Portage (1999)	29.3
		Elkhorn Creek river right	29.9
		Brush Creek river left	30.4
		Site of colonial pipeline crossing	31.2
		PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY LINE. Squirrel Creek river right	31.6
		Stone abutments of old Riceville-Hermosa Road, washed out 1887	33.3
		Allen Creek river left	33.4
		Wing dams with 9' opening? (Trout 1999)	36
		Line of rocks: modern? For fish? (Trout 1999)	37
		Fish dam (1998)	37.3
		Cut stone abutments of original Anderson's Bridge at Riceville's "canoe landing" (Trout 1999)	37.4
		Bird Creek left	37.5
		Cleared channel through site of Fitzgerald's Mill Dam (1999)	37.8
100'- 150'	400'	#640. Anderson's Bridge. Old wagon road ford? (Altman 2005)	38.1
		<b>ACCESS</b>	
		Whitefalls Mill river left. Long class 3-4 rapid (Altman 2005)	38.7
		Site of Whitefalls Mill Dam. Spike in small ledge	39
		Stinking River confluence left	39.1
		Fish dam? (Trout 1999)	39.9
		Flat rock 10' across	40
		Fish dam above ledge? (Trout 1999)	40.5
		Markham Fish dam beside #683, 1000 years old? (Trout 1999)	41.6
50'	BM 495'	#682/686 bridge. Shockoe Creek river right. Put in river right above bridge (Altman 2005)	43
		<b>ACCESS</b>	
		Whitethorn Creek river left	43.7
		Natural 2' ledge	44.1
		Probable fish dam (Trout 1999)	44.3
		Possible fish dam (Trout 1999)	44.7
		Modern rock piles for bank protection (1999)	48.8
		Remains of wall on left bank. Mill site? (Trout 1999)	49.7
		Stone remains. Early Clark's Bridge site> (Trout 1999). Clark was an early owner of Motley's Mill.	5.1
		#632. "Clark's Bridge"	51.5

		25' high stone wall. Motley's Mill built before 1785 by Wm. Pigg (Pigg River). Operated 1900-1955; collapsing. (Trout 1999)	52
		Mill/Georges Creek river left	52.6
		Cherrystone Creek river left	56.5
		Dairy View Road bridge	58.8
		US 29 bridge. Chatham, Pittsylvania County seat      ACCESS	60
		White Oak Creek river right	60.9
		Pudding Creek river right	64
		Lick Branch river left (Little Bearskin Creek, Bolin Branch)	64.4
		Jones Mill Road #834	64.8
		Strawberry Creek river right	66.8
		#612 Banister Road	67.5
		#750 Strawberry Road; Wet Sleeve Creek river right	68.8
		#813 Glenview Drive	69.3
		#831 Elm Road	70.6
		VA Highway 57	72.6
		Rise of Banister River near Berry Road # 812, northeast of Callands, about 2 miles as the crow flies from the rise of the Sandy River	73.8

**ANNUAL FESTIVALS  
DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION FIRST SATURDAY OUTINGS  
&  
OTHER REGULAR EVENTS IN THE BASIN**

MONTH	DAY	LOCATION	EVENT
January	1	Any river	New Year's Day Float: "Starting the New Year right": Triad River Runners, Troublesome Creek Outfitters
			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
		Critz	Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration, Reynolds Homestead
February			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
			Outings, Rockingham County Naturalist Club
March			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
			Wildflower walk, Rockingham County Naturalist Club
	20		Vernal Equinox
April			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
			Wildflower walk, Rockingham County Naturalist Club
	22		Earth Day
	25		National Arbor Day
May			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
			Nature Hike, Rockingham County Naturalist Club
		Wentworth	Rockingham County Folk Festival 1-800-316-7625
		Clarksville	Native American Heritage Festival, Clarksville Lake Country Chamber of Commerce
		Noland	Country Fair. Nannie Banks 434-484-8962
		Virgilina	Summerfest
		Madison	Artists-on-the-Sidewalk
June			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
	21		Summer Solstice
July			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
	4	Eden	Old-Fashioned 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, 336-623-3336
	4	Milton	Independence Day in Historic Downtown Milton
		Wayside	Patrick County Bluegrass Festival, Lover's Leap Wayside
		Turbeville	Virginia Cantaloupe Festival; Halifax County Chamber of Commerce
		Clarksville	Virginia Lake Festival, Clarksville Lake Country Chamber of Commerce
		Claudville	Kibler Valley River Run, Red Bank Ruritan Club
August			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing' call Outings Chair</b>
		Madison	Dan River Race, Madison-Mayodan Recreation Department
		Danbury	Annual Triathlon (bike, run, tube), Stokes County Recreation Department. Call YMCA.
September			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing—call Outings Chair</b>
		Roxboro	Person-ality (336-599-8333)
		Stuart	Patrick County Agricultural Fair
		NC Counties	Big Sweep, clean-up of roadways and waterways
		Halifax	Homes Tour, Halifax Women's Club
	23		Autumnal Equinox
		Danbury	Stokes Stomp (336-583-8150)
		Stoneville	Merchants Fall Festival (336-573-9255)

		Yanceyville	Brightleaf Hoedown (336-694-4193)
		South Boston	Southern Heritage Folk Festival
October			<b>DRBA first Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
		Clover	Fall Festival. Clover Volunteer Fire Department
		Woolwine	Apple Festival, Volunteer Fire Department
		Reidsville	Antique Alley Street Festival (336-394-1945)
		Stuart	Apple Dumpling Festival, Patrick Fire & Rescue Association, 276-694-3811
		King	Kingfest (336-983-9038)
		Eden	Apple Festival
		Gretna	Old Timer's Jubilee (434-656-1288)
		Halifax	County Fair
		Madison	Artists-on-the-Sidewalk (336-427-7099)
		Pelham	VFD Fall Festival (336-388-5671)
		Danville	Coca-Cola Fall Fest (434-773-8160)
		Callands	Potpourri (434-432-1650)
November			<b>DRBA First Saturday Outing; call Outings Chair</b>
		King	Annual Art Auction, Stokes County Arts Council
		Ruffin	Whistlestop
		Critz	Christmas Craft Bazaar, Reynolds Homestead
December			<b>First Saturday Outing: Mistletoeing Float (336-234-8556)</b>
		Danbury	Christmas in Historic Danbury, Stokes County Arts Council
		Wentworth	Dan River Art Market Open House (336-349-4099)
		Critz	Victorian Christmas, Reynolds Homestead
		Stuart	Annual Christmas Homes Tour
	22		Winter Solstice
		Chatham	Christmas in Colonial Chatham (434-432-1650)

## PERPETUAL ATTRACTIONS OF THE DAN RIVER BASIN

### **Floyd**

Morrisette Winery; Rocky Knob Recreation Area

### **Patrick**

Blue Ridge Plateau, Blue Ridge Parkway, Dan River, Smith River, Mayo River, Talbott Reservoir, Townes Reservoir; Reynolds Homestead. Lord's Acre Sale for Missions, Annual Beach Music Festival; Lover's Leap Wayside; Hart Nature Park, trout fishing, nationally sanctioned turkey calling contest

### **Stokes**

Sauratown Mountains, Dan River, Dan River Trail, Hanging Rock State Park (hiking, camping, fishing, picnicking, rock climbing, boating), Moratock Park, Moratock Iron Furnace. Horne Creek Living History Farm, Historic Danbury, Dan River Art Market, Moravian settlements

### **Henry**

Turkeycock Mountain, Smith River, Mayo River, Philpott Lake, Virginia Museum of Natural History; Piedmont Arts Association, Historic Courthouse, Smith River Valley Canoe Club.

### **Rockingham**

Dan River, Smith River, Mayo River, Batteau Trail, Historic Wentworth, Madison Dry Goods and Museum. Wright Tavern Restoration, future Mayo River State Park

### **Caswell**

Dan River, creeks, historic houses, Game Lands, Farmer Lake, Hyco Reservoir, Historic Courthouse (built 1857-61), historical museum, Thomas Day Restoration (free Black cabinet maker fl. 1830-1869), historic downtown Milton, Caswell Civic Center, Bicycle Trail.

### **Pittsylvania**

Dan River, Sandy River, Banister River, active Danville outdoor program, Last Capital of the Confederacy, art & history museum, parks, Civil War sites, Science Center, Dan Daniel Park, river trails, science museum at The Crossing, Richmond & Danville Rail-Trail, White Oak Mountain preserve, Saponi Trail.

### **Person**

Hyco Reservoir and state park, Hyco River, Mayo Lake Park; Mayo Game Lands, Piedmont Community College, nature trail, bicycle trails, history museum, Kirby Auditorium.

### **Halifax**

Dan River, Banister River, Hyco River, Staunton River State Park, Museum of Fine Arts and History, The Prizery, Historic Mountain Road, Historic River Road, South Boston walking tour, Historic Homes Tour, Revolutionary War sites, "Buggs Island Lake."

### **Mecklenburg**

Occaneechee State Park

## CONTACTS

### EDUCATION, RECREATION, STEWARDSHIP, TOURISM

[including camps, chambers of commerce, museums, outfitters, parks and recreation departments]

- Big Sweep, 1-800-27SWEEP;  
[www.ncbigssweep.org](http://www.ncbigssweep.org)
- Carolina Canoe Club, P. O. `2832,  
Raleigh NC 27605;  
[www.carolinacanooclub.org](http://www.carolinacanooclub.org)
- Caswell County Chamber of  
Commerce, P. O. Box 29m  
Yanceyville NC 27379, 336-  
694-6106
- Caswell County Civic Center, P. O.  
Box 609, Yanceyville NC  
27609, 338-694-4591, FAX  
336-694-4965
- Caswell County Historical  
Association & Museum, P. O.  
Box 278, Yanceyville NC  
27379, 336-694-4965
- Clarksville Lake Country Chamber of  
Commerce, 434-799-5200
- Dan River Anglers Association, Jim  
Moorefield, 336-234-7505
- Dan River Art Market, 502 Main  
Street, Danbury NC 27015,  
336-593-2808
- Dan River Art Market, Wentworth,  
336-349-4099
- Dan River Basin Association, P. O.  
Box 103, Wentworth NC  
27375.336-342-1415,  
[members@danriver.org](mailto:members@danriver.org)
- Dan River Campground, 724  
Webster Road, Stoneville NC  
27048. 336-427-8530. Boat  
rentals, shuttle
- Dan River Company, 336-593-  
BOAT,  
[www.danrivercompany.com](http://www.danrivercompany.com)
- Danville Area Chamber of  
Commerce, 635 Main Street,  
Danville VA 24541, 4340793-  
5422,  
[danchamb@gamewood.net](mailto:danchamb@gamewood.net)
- Danville Museum of Fine Arts and  
History, 434-793-5422
- Danville Museum of Natural History,  
434-2222
- Danville Parks, Recreation and  
Tourism, P. O. Box 3300,  
Danville VA 24543, 434-773-  
8160,  
[specialevents@gamewood.net](mailto:specialevents@gamewood.net)
- Danville Parks, Recreation &  
Tourism Outdoor Program, P.  
O. Box 3300, Danville VA  
24543, 434-799-5215; Parks  
Maintenance 434-799-5200,  
[parksrec@ci.dabville.va.us](mailto:parksrec@ci.dabville.va.us)
- Danville Science Center, The  
Crossing, 677 Craghead Street,  
434-791-5160
- Danville Welcome Center, 645 River  
Park Drive, Danville VA 24540,  
434-773-8160,  
[specialevents@gamewood.net](mailto:specialevents@gamewood.net),  
[www.visitdanville.com](http://www.visitdanville.com)
- Eagle Falls Outfitters, 742 Eagle  
Falls Road, Madison NC 27035,  
336-427-8530. [www.eagle-falls-outfitters.com](http://www.eagle-falls-outfitters.com), canoe/kayak  
rental, shuttle service
- Fairy Stone Park, Bassett VA 276-  
930-2424
- Get:Outdoors, 1515 West Lee  
Street, Greensboro, 800-450-  
6819. historic river trips,  
[www.getoutdoors.usa](http://www.getoutdoors.usa)
- Halifax County Chamber of  
Commerce, 515 Broad Street,  
P. O. Box 399, South Boston  
VA 24592, 434-572-3985, FAX  
434-597-1733,  
[info@halifaxchamber.net](mailto:info@halifaxchamber.net)
- Hanging Rock Outdoor Center, 3466  
Moore Springs Road,  
Westfield NC 27053, 336-593-  
8293
- Hanging Rock State Park, P. O. Box  
278, Danbury NC 27016, 336-  
593-8480
- Henry County historic Courthouse,  
276-632-8401
- Henry County Parks & Recreation  
Dept., Roger Adams, Director.  
[wherethefunbegins.org](http://wherethefunbegins.org),
- Historic Downtown Milton, 336-234-  
0010, 234-9192, 234-7737
- Home Creek Living History Farm,  
336-325-2298
- Humphrey's Ridge Family Camp  
Ground, Belews Lake, 336-427-  
3949
- Hycos Make Natural Learning Area,  
Person-Caswell Lake Authority,  
205 Kelly Brewer Road,  
Leasburg NC 27291
- Izaak Walton League of America,  
Inc., 702 Conservation Lane,  
Gaithersburg MD 29878. 301-  
548-0150, [www.iwla.org](http://www.iwla.org)
- J. R.'s Outdoor Gear, 1158 Mt.  
Cross Road, Danville, 434-799-  
0900
- Lake Reidsville, 639 Water Works  
Road, Reidsville NC 27320,  
336-349-4738
- Madison Dry Goods Store and  
Museum, 336-427-7099
- Martinsville-Henry County Chamber  
of Commerce, 115 Broad  
Street, P. O. Box 709,  
Martinsville VA 24114, 276-632-  
5401, [www.martinsville.com](http://www.martinsville.com)
- Neal, Mike, ROSE OF NELSON  
BATTEAU rental, 422 Perkins  
Hollow Lane, Faber VA 22438,  
434-263-4324
- North Carolina Office of  
Environmental Education,  
Department of Environment and  
Natural Resources, 800-482-  
8724, 919-733-0711,  
[www.ee.enr.state.nc.us](http://www.ee.enr.state.nc.us)
- North Carolina Natural Heritage  
Foundation, P. O. Box 11105,  
Raleigh NC 27604 (directory of  
natural areas)
- North Carolina Division of Parks &  
Recreation, Ann Sinclair  
Coughlin, Piedmont Regional  
Trail Specialist, 12700 Bayleaf  
Church Road, Raleigh NC  
27415, 919-846-0991
- North Carolina Division of Tourism,  
Film and Sports Development,  
Dept. of Commerce, 4324 Mail  
Service Center, Raleigh NC  
27699-4324, 1-800-  
VISITNC.com (calendar of  
events)
- North Carolina Division of Travel &  
Tourism, Dept. of Commerce,  
Raleigh NC 27611, 919-733-  
4171, 800-VISITNC (camping &  
outdoors directory)
- North Carolina Visitors Center, 700  
NC Highway 700, Pelham NC  
27311, 336-388-0830, 336-388-  
0838
- Patrick County Chamber of  
Commerce, 101 Stonewall  
Court, Stuart VA 24171,  
[pcchamber@sitestar.net](mailto:pcchamber@sitestar.net)  
[www.patrick.va.us](http://www.patrick.va.us)
- Patrick County Historical Association  
Museum, P. O. Box 1845,  
Stuart VA 24171, 276-894-2480
- Person-Caswell Lake Authority,  
Hycos Lake / Carolina Power  
Reservoir, P. O. Box 343,  
Roxboro NC 27573-0343, 336-  
599-4343
- Person County Museum of History,  
309 North Main Street, P. O.  
Box 1792, Roxboro NC 27573,  
336-577-2884,  
[www.visitroxboronc.com/heritage/museum.htm](http://www.visitroxboronc.com/heritage/museum.htm)
- Person County Dept. of Parks &  
Recreation, 425 Long Avenue,  
Roxboro NC 27573, 336-597-



1755,  
[pcprd@personcounty.com](mailto:pcprd@personcounty.com),  
[www.personcounty.com](http://www.personcounty.com)  
 Person County Tourism  
 Development Authority, 304  
 South Morgan Street, Room  
 219, Roxboro NC 27573,  
[www.visitroxboronc.com](http://www.visitroxboronc.com)  
 Philpott Lake, Rlyte 8, Box 140,  
 Bassett VA 24055, 276-829-  
 2703  
 Piedmont Arts Association, 215  
 Sterling Avenue, Martinsville  
 VA24112, 276-632-3221  
 Piedmont Land Conservancy. P. O.  
 Box 4025, Greensboro NC  
 27494, 336-691-0088 FAX 336-  
 691-1144,  
[info@piedmontland.org](mailto:info@piedmontland.org),  
[www.piedmontland.org](http://www.piedmontland.org)  
 Pittsylvania County Chamber of  
 Commerce, 25 North Main  
 Street, Chatham VA 24531,  
 434-432-1659,  
[chamber@gamewood.net](mailto:chamber@gamewood.net)  
 Recreation Development  
 Foundation, P. O. Box 870,  
 Yanceyville NC e7379  
 Reidsville Parks & Recreation, 336-  
 349-1941; Recreation  
 Department 336-349-1090  
 Reynolds Homestead, 463  
 Homestead Lane, Critz VA  
 24082276-604-7031  
 Roanoke River Basin Association,  
[www.rba.org](http://www.rba.org)  
 Rockingham County Historical  
 Society, 336-342-5001  
 Rockingham County Naturalist Club,  
 Mike Vaughan, 336-342-0438  
 Rockingham County Partnership for  
 Economic Development and  
 Tourism, 371 Highway 65, P. O.  
 Box 205, Wentworth NC 27375,  
 336-342-8138, FAX 336-342-  
 8375. [www.ncnorthstar.com](http://www.ncnorthstar.com)  
 Roxboro Area Chamber of  
 Commerce, 336-599-8333  
 Sertoma 4-H Campground, P. O.  
 Bopx122, Moores Spring Road,  
 Westfield NC 27053, 336-593-  
 8057  
 Smith River Valley Canoe Club, Bev  
 Bryant, Route 2, Box 62,  
 Martinsville VA 24112, 276-638-  
 4306  
 South Boston-Halifax County  
 Museum of Fine Arts &  
 History 1540 Wilborn Avenue,  
 South Boston VA 24592, P. O.  
 Box 383, 434-572-9200,  
[sbhcm@halifax.com](mailto:sbhcm@halifax.com),  
[www2.halifax.com/museum](http://www2.halifax.com/museum)  
 Staunton River State Park, Route 2,  
 Scottsburg VA 24580  
 Stokes County Arts Council, 500  
 Main Street, Danbury NC  
 27016, 336-592-8159, Fax 336-  
 593-3799  
 Stokes County historical Society, P.  
 O. Box 617, Walnut Cove NC  
 27016, 336-583-8739  
 Stokes County Recreation Dept.,  
 managed by Stokes County  
 Family YMCA, P. O. Box 39,  
 Danbury NC 27016, 336-593-  
 9165, Fax 336-593-8201  
 Stream Watch Program, NC Division  
 of Water Resources,  
 Department of Environment and  
 Natural Resources, 919-733-  
 4064, [www.ncwater.org](http://www.ncwater.org)  
 Triad River Runners, P. O. Box  
 24094, Winston-Salem NC  
 27114-4094, 336-733-8064  
 (paddling line)  
 Three Rivers Outfitters. 336-627-  
 6215, [www.3-r-o.com](http://www.3-r-o.com), river  
 trips, sales, batteau rides  
 Trading Path Preservation  
 Association,  
[info@tradingpath.org](mailto:info@tradingpath.org)  
 Troublesome Creek Outfitters, 320  
 Farmington Road, Reidsville NV  
 27320, 336-342-1897,  
[www.troublesomecreek.com](http://www.troublesomecreek.com),  
 river trips, canoe sales  
 Virginia Canals & Navigation  
 Society, Lynn Howlett,  
 Membership Chair, 6826  
 Rosemont Lane, McLean  
 VA22101  
 Virginia Civil War Trails, 1-888-  
 CIVILWAR,  
[www.civilwartrails.org](http://www.civilwartrails.org)  
 Virginia Department of Conservation  
 & Historic Resources, Division  
 of Parks & Recreation, 1201  
 Washington Building, Capitol  
 Square, Richmond VA 23218,  
 434-786-2134  
 Virginia Museum of Natural History,  
 1001 Douglas Street,  
 Martinsville VA 24112, 276-666-  
 8600

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