

# GASTON COUNTY CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

## STAFF REPORT

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### APPLICATION SUMMARY

**Request:**

To amend the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan to include the addition of Dutchman's Creek as a designated blueway

**Applicant(s):**

City of Mount Holly

### BACKGROUND

Dutchman's Creek is an approximately five-mile waterway within Mount Holly's city limits that begins at the intersection of Sandy Ford Road and Dutchman's Creek and ends in the Catawba River. At Dutchman's Creek confluence with the Catawba River, this future blueway will connect to the existing 27-mile Catawba River Blueway – Lake Wylie Section.

For the first 2.5 miles of this stretch of Dutchman's Creek, paddlers experience a rural and quiet connection with nature. The upper Dutchman's is characteristic of a Western NC paddle, with little development, a tree canopy covering most of the river, rocky shoals, and Class I-II rapids depending on the water level.

The lower Dutchman's or back half of the five-mile paddle affords paddlers the opportunity to experience the rich textile history of Mount Holly as the river meanders into the heart of Mount Holly. As the water reaches lake level and flattens out, Dutchman's Creek slowly flows by the Historic Woodlawn Mill, an original Mount Holly Fire Station turned restaurant, the Historic Mount Holly Cotton Mill known as Muddy River Distillery, and many other great points of interest.

This entire stretch of waterway is home to large rock outcroppings, river boulders, multiple bird and fish species, and the remnants of two old dams. The City of Mount Holly has recognized the importance of this waterway by completing the Dutchman's Creek Blueway Study, commissioning the Dutchman's Creek Wayfinding Study, and identifying it in the Parks and Recreation Masterplan as "one of Mount Holly's greatest assets."

**Attachments: Resolution, Map, and Letters of Support**