

BUCHANAN COUNTY

Buchanan County has tremendous potential for developing a network of OHV trails accessing both the trails being developed in Pike County Kentucky as well as the existing and potential trails in McDowell and Wyoming County WV. They are also the first county in Virginia to have legislation passed that allows ATVs on a state highway. *See Vol.1, Appendix H for wording on this.*

- Encourage the Town of Vansant to become an OHV* friendly community to allow access to Dairy Queen, Subway, the local car wash as well as other restaurants and businesses along Hwy 460.
- There is an existing network of trails currently being used by OHV riders and a preliminary map of the route has been made. Land owners need to be identified and permission sought for public access through these properties. Focus needs to be on developing looped, stacked trail systems whenever possible
- Two potential trailheads include:
 - Public OHV Trailhead #1-located just off VA83 at Bear Branch near Prater. Potential for an extended parking area on vacant land next to the church parking lot. Other option would be to move trailhead across the road for closer access to the trails themselves.
 - Public OHV Trailhead #2 - Located at Poplar Gap, there are already restroom facilities, equipment rooms, concessions and offices. All appear to still be operational. There is also electricity to the site plus a large pavilion and small maintenance building. Excellent roads to site and ample public parking for both campers and trailers. Other amenities such as a playground and additional pavilions and parking nearby.
- ATV trails should be developed that connect the trails in Buchanan County to those in West Virginia. One such trail goes from PeaPatch to Berwind Lake and the Town of War in McDowell County, following the proposed route of the Great Eastern Trail.
- A connecting ATV trail to and from the West Virginia border at PeaPatch to Elkhorn City in Kentucky is also recommended. A preliminary route has been GPS'd and is viewable in *Vol 4: Inventory of Trails*.

Immediate Action: Buchanan and Dickenson Counties (and possibly portions of Tazewell County) have an opportunity to have the Great Eastern Trail (GET) go through their county. This should be pursued and a proposal submitted this Fall to become the southern loop of the trail which, once completed, will go from Alabama to New York. Similar in concept to the Appalachian Trail, the sections through portions of Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia will be unique due to the fact that they will be open to both motorized and nonmotorized traffic.

Note: Letters of support have already been written by many within the county.



Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

SITE VISIT

Russell Lockhart provided a map of Buchanan County featuring a proposed ATV trail which starts on the VA/KY state line into Pike County and ends 90 miles east on the VA/WV Stateline at Peapatch. On April 8th, one of the consultants met with Jack Yates and toured the western portion of Buchanan near the Town of Grundy. In route to the meeting, the consultant passed two buildings on U.S. Hwy 460 worth noting.

As noted on the Mountain Art Works website, (MAW's) is dedicated to the culture and history of the Appalachian mountain region in and around Southwest Virginia, in the Appalachian Mountains. "Throughout Mountain Art Works one will find a wide variety of items. Some for sale, and some a museum of our area and culture. All are a reflection of who we are. Originally located in a building that has been a gathering place for old friends and new since 1937, it is a place where people from our mountain region mingle with neighbors from near and far...and where a world view can be expressed in a friendly atmosphere of home. Just like when you go home to your MAW's." MAW's brick and mortar kitchen is closed but will open for special events and occasions.



Interesting historic building along U.S. 460. Consideration needs to be made in preserving this structure and possibly turning it into a visitor center/museum, general store, or restaurant.

TOWNS OF GRUNDY AND VANSANT



The Town of Grundy is quite interesting and is in the midst of some major road construction and rerouting. Grundy does offer a bicycle trail. The Town of Vansant offers many fast food facilities which could capitalize considerably if it became an "ATV-Friendly" community. Access is already possible from one of the trails without having to cross any major thoroughfare.

Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

POTENTIAL PUBLIC TRAILHEAD #1 - Located just off VA 83 at Bear Branch near Prater.

Current trailhead is in the church parking lot which requires one to cross the highway and drive 3/10ths of a mile to access trails.



Trail passes a couple of homes on an asphalt road for less than a 1/10th of a mile then turns to a gravel road.



Portions of trail follows a gas road. Excellent condition. Quite wide and meandering.



To the left is a section near the start of the trail which is quite wide and could serve as a trailhead so that one would not find it necessary to ride on VA 83. If that occurs, a larger area will need to be graveled to accommodate additional parking.



A side trip accessible from the proposed route takes one onto more rugged trails.

Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

POTENTIAL TRAILHEAD #2

Accesses hundreds of miles of trails that could eventually connect to those in Dickenson County, Tazewell and on into West Virginia as well as Kentucky. The proposed site was once a baseball complex. The offices, equipment rooms and restroom facilities still remain and are operational. The complex also offers a large pavilion and maintenance building.



Note: Excellent roads lead into proposed trailhead.

Offices, equipment rooms and restroom facilities.



Pavilion



Maintenance Building



Electrical Access



The flat lay of the land, along with the access to restroom facilities, electricity and other amenities makes this an ideal location for a future ATV trailhead and full hook-up campground.

View looking down onto proposed Trailhead #2



Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

CLOSE BY AMENITIES TO PROPOSED 2ND TRAILHEAD

County Recreational Park with playgrounds, athletic facility, pavilions, large equestrian riding ring and much more is located just above proposed 2nd trailhead.



Recreational facility, pavilions, restroom facilities and garages.



Playground area with covered picnic areas and multiple apparatus for children to play.



Very large riding ring with bleachers and other facilities. Used for many equestrian events throughout the year.



View of proposed 2nd trailhead from the recreation area described above.

Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

Coming off the mountain, one comes to the intersection of Lover's Gap and Airport Road.



Intersection of Airport Rd & Gap Road



Intersection of all three roads

Across Lover's Gap is Gap Road which leads to another access point to the trail system networking across the mountain through Buchanan County



Gap Road climbs a steep, windy hill past one or two residential homes.



Gap Road ends at the trailhead.



Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

Another existing trail comes out just south of the Town of Grundy at Rt. 732 which leads to Hwy 460.



Trail is viewable and accesses driveway of a residential home.



View heading south towards trail access on Rt. 732 View heading north towards Grundy from trail

Hwy 460 which is the major road through the Town of Grundy intersects with Rt. 732.



Due to some major rerouting of both the town and the highways, this sidewalk basically starts in the middle of nowhere but leads to a commercial section of the town.



If the Town of Grundy were to declare itself ATV-friendly, this sidewalk could serve as a primary route for trail users which would allow them assess a number of businesses such as restaurants and car washes where they might spend money in the community providing revenue to local merchants.



Dairy Queen, Subway and a carwash are just a few of the businesses that would benefit from the Town of Grundy becoming ATV-Friendly.

Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

Another popular ATV trail starts in Grundy and follows the railroad tracks for about two miles before connecting with a network of trails.



Below are views of Rt. 698 that connects U.S. 460 to the trails.



Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

On a previous visit to Tazewell County, the consultants and Dave Kinder crossed into Buchanan County to view a few potential trails and trailheads in the eastern portion of the county leading into West Virginia. One such trail starts at Peapatch on the West Virginia/Virginia state line following Rt. 636 south. (Rt. 636 is an all weather surface road.)



A unique feature along the route occurs at the intersection of Rt. 636 and Rt. 613 where a pipe protrudes and water flows year-round. This has been a major water source for residents in both Virginia and West Virginia for years.



The intersection of Rt. 635 and Rt. 628 near Whitewood in Buchanan County in another meeting place for those interested in trail riding.

Bear Wallow near the intersection of Rt. 637 and Rt. 616 (which runs along the Buchanan/Tazewell county line) is another popular area to ride ATV. Trails from this area connect with trails in West Virginia.

Buchanan County - SITE VISIT

Additional photos of Buchanan County . . .

