

Draft Concept

# Loudoun's Emerald Ribbons

Bringing people and nature together through a shared network of greenways that reveals the beauty of Loudoun County.



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Proposal developed by a committee of the *Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition*, which is made of up over 40 county-wide organizations.

# Problem: Strong Citizen Demand for Parks & Trails, but no Funds

The first Envision Loudoun public input session had almost 1000 comments mentioning the environment. Of those comments, the topics most often mentioned related to more trails (hiking, equestrian, walking), more bike paths and more parks.

— Analysis of Comments by Conservation and Preservation Coalition of Loudoun  
Author: Owen Snyder



## 2017 Virginia Outdoors Survey Results for the Northern Virginia Region Most Needed Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Outdoor Recreation Opportunity	Percentage response
Natural areas	53%
Parks	51%
Trails	46%
Water access	39%
Historic areas	34%
Playing fields, sports and golf facilities	28%
Scenic drives for driving pleasure	19%

Table 1

Source: 2017 Virginia Outdoors Demand Survey (Virginia Outdoors Plan, the state's comprehensive plan for land conservation, outdoor recreation and open-space planning)

- Loudoun comprises 521 square miles, yet only **1.6% of this is public parkland.**
- Loudoun has only 87 miles of hiking trails, which does not meet **County standard** of 0.65 miles/1000 population or ~226 miles for 380K people.
- Open spaces and nature corridors are rapidly disappearing due to development.

Walking & Running



Bicycles & Strollers



Horseback Riding



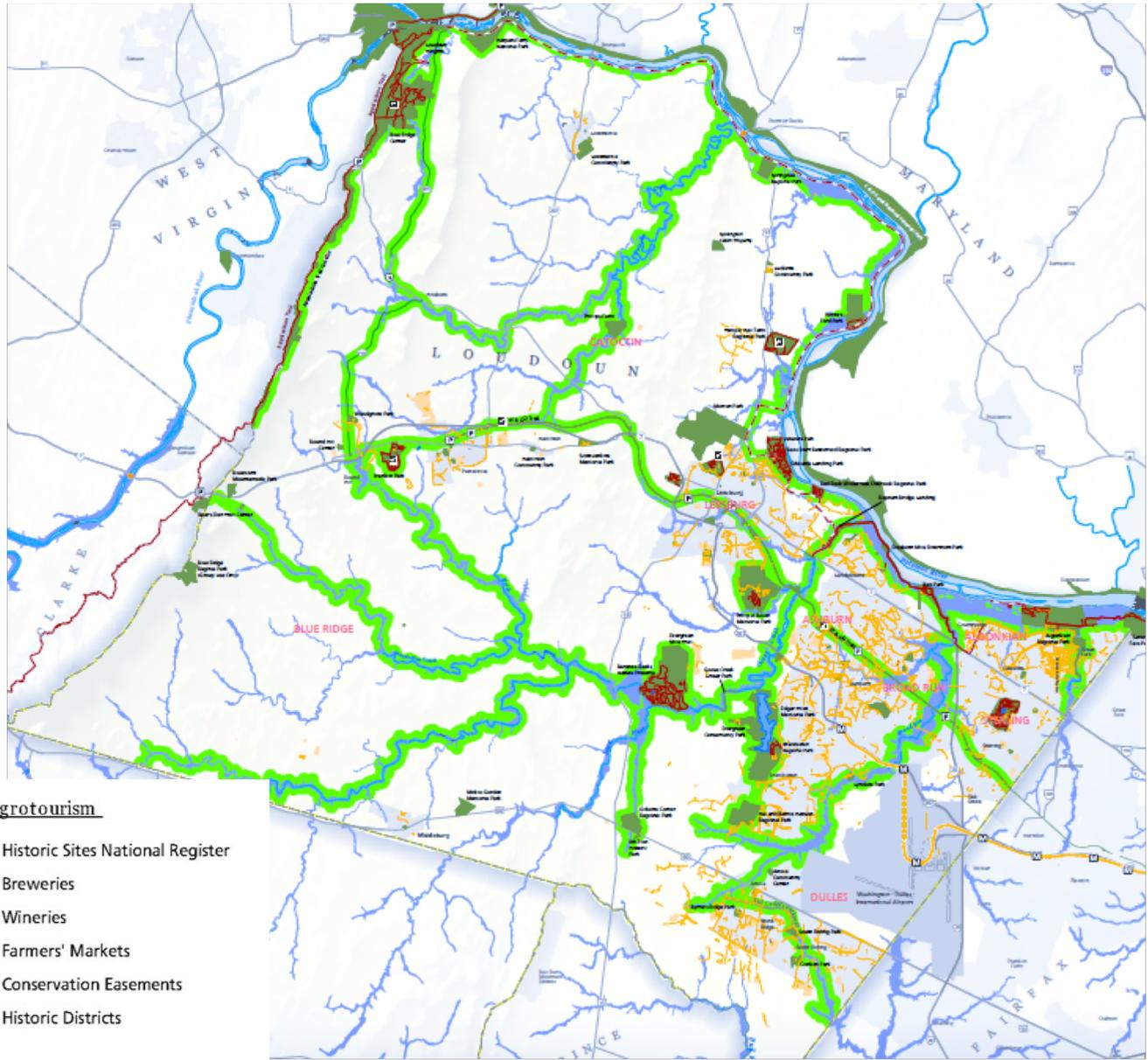
Protection for Wildlife & Water



# Solution: Emerald Ribbons

- A set of linear parklands or “*Ribbons*” that provide opportunity for outdoor recreational use and protection of natural resources. A “*Ribbon*” is a publicly accessible linear corridor / park along a waterway and / or other natural corridor.
- Floodplains along stream valleys, especially those along Broad Run, Goose Creek, and Catoctin Creek can be ideal Ribbon candidates.
- Stream valley floodplains can be designated as Ribbons at time of development approvals. These corridors should be deeded as public land, reserved for public benefit.
- Other parcels could be included through easements, parklands, donations and other methods from willing landowners
- Connecting all these stream valleys corridors would lead to a county wide network of parks and trails.

# Ribbons Network Becomes a Premier County Asset



## Outdoor Recreation

- Emerald Ribbons
- Public Boat Access
- P Trail Parking
- Sidewalks
- Hard Surface Trails
- Dirt Trails
- Gravel Trails
- Existing Trails
- - - Planned Trails
- Parks
- Flood Zones FEMA

## Community / Commuting

- Libraries
- Schools
- Churches
- Park and Rides
- Dulles Rail Stations
- Future Silver Line
- County Owned Land

Not to scale

## Agrotourism

- ▲ Historic Sites National Register
- Breweries
- Wineries
- Farmers' Markets
- Conservation Easements
- Historic Districts

Concept map provided by:



# Loudoun Would Benefit from Emerald Ribbons



1. Increased Economic Development



2. Increased Property Value



3. Increased Safety on Corridors



4. Protection of Natural Resources



5. Improved Health & Wellness