

Fonta Flora County Park – Progress Update

Contractors for Duke Energy were busy this summer completing construction of the 0.7 mile access road that will eventually lead to the new Fonta Flora Access Area. They completed construction in July and paved the road. This fall the contractor will install guardrails, remove silt fencing and other erosion control measures, and reseed the road banks.

The first amenity that will be available to the public at the park is an approximately five mile loop trail that extends to the current Linville Access Area and Southpointe Community entrance. It is part of the larger Fonta Flora State Trail – Lake James Section.



Destination by Design, a planning, design, and promotions firm, is currently working on engineering plans for the first trailhead for the Fonta Flora State Trail near the entrance of Fonta Flora County Park. The trailhead will include twelve parking spaces, one accessible parking space, small shelter, vault toilet, and kiosk with custom trail map. An entrance sign has also been designed and is being fabricated by Oak Hill Iron.

Burke County Community Development staff are working on a site specific master plan for the Fonta Flora County Park. A few park plans have been completed in the past, and staff plan to revise these with public input through stakeholder groups and others. This will allow Burke County to apply for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grants and other funding sources to assist with development of the park.

Development of the eastern half of the park on property owned by Burke County is dependent on construction of a planned access road that will lead from the existing entrance road to the southern-most point of the park. This access road will lead to a parking area, vault toilet, asphalt trail, large picnic shelter, and Eagle's Nest lookout platform. Future plans include a treehouse village for overnight park visitors. The lookout platform will offer 360 degree panoramic views of Lake James and the eastern ridge of Linville Gorge and Shortoff Mountain. It will give park visitors a new and different perspective on the lake and surrounding forests.

The western half of the park property owned by Duke Energy and leased to Burke County will be available for development in approximately two years. Duke Energy plans to construct the new Fonta Flora Access on this property. Picnic shelters, Frisbee golf, fishing pier, and event pavilion are possible park amenities that may be considered for this area as well.

