

PULASKI COUNTY *is...*

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# RECREATION & TOURISM

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# RECREATION

Parks, public spaces and recreational activities are vital to the health and fabric of the community. They connect people, promote active living, and shape community identity. Parks and Recreation programs have many economic benefits. Availability and easy access to quality parks and recreation enhance property values. Residents spend money during recreational activities, which directly or indirectly helps local businesses. Tourism benefits from Parks and Recreation as it generates income from visitors. The social benefits of parks, trails and recreational facilities are clear but also hard to quantify. Parks create a healthy and thriving community.

Within the County there is approximately 34,500 total acres of recreational lands. These assets are managed by local, state, federal and private agencies such as Pulaski County, Pulaski County School Board, Town of Pulaski, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Commonwealth of Virginia, U.S. Forest Service and Boys Scouts of America. Notable natural features within the County that provide ample opportunities for outdoor recreation are the New River and Claytor Lake. The George Washington and Jefferson National Forest lie within the County boundaries.

The County desires to make significant investments on trail networks. The New River Pedestrian Trail Connector, a 10 feet wide paved shared use path is being proposed. The trail will begin from Dedmon Center in Radford on the southern end and extend to the north, crossing the New River in Pulaski along an existing railroad trestle. During the development of this comprehensive plan the County was devising strategies to fund this project.

## Pulaski County Owned Parks & Recreation Facilities

The County owns and maintains nine parks with more than 250 acres, including:

- » Belsprings Park - 2 acres
- » Draper Community Park - 6 acres
- » Dublin Lions Club Park - 12 acres
- » Harry Dehaven Park - 2 acres
- » Loving Field - 28 acres
- » New River Community Park - 2 acres
- » Old Riverlawn Elementary Park - 13 acres
- » Randolph Park - 83 acres
- » Smith Farm Property - 100 acres
- » Joseph L. Sheffey River Park - 12 acres



# By the numbers:

## Outdoor Recreation Economic Impact 2017

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation publishes an annual Outdoors Plan, which features economic impact data for the New River Valley as seen below.

### New River Trail State Park

- » Overnight Visitors - 8,100
- » Day-use Visitors - 1,189,127
- » Total Visitors - 1,197,227
- » Economic Impact - \$29.2M

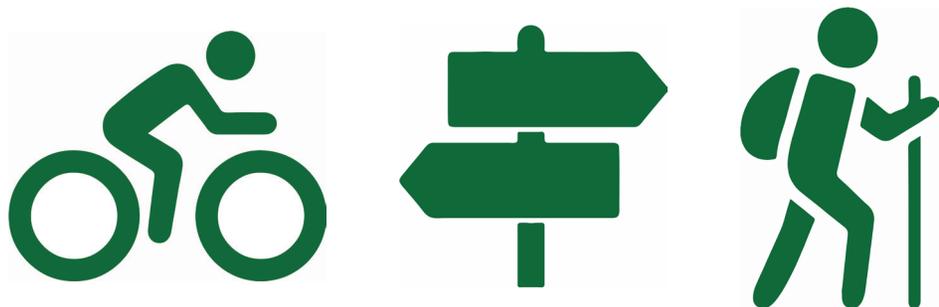
### Claytor Lake State Park

- » Overnight Visitors - 72,062
- » Day-use Visitors - 198,654
- » Total Visitors - 251,485
- » Economic Impact - \$8.1M

### Per-Capita Spending on Parks and Recreation

- » Pulaski County - \$22.78
- » State Average - \$71.09

Source: Virginia State Parks, Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts. County figures exclude State Park spending.



**27 acres**  
Park land per 1,000 people  
National average is 9.5 per 1,000

**\$29.2M**  
Economic Impact of  
New River Trail in 2017

**1.4M**  
Number of Total Visitors between  
Claytor Lake and New River Trail in 2017

What types of recreational resources should Pulaski County **develop** or **enhance**?

## Top 5 Responses on Community Survey

Indoor sports/wellness facility

**67%**

Lake/river/creek access

**51%**

Hiking/mountain biking trails

**43%**

Paved trails

**43%**

Swimming areas/pools

**37%**

“Within the County, 47% of people under 18 live within a mile of a Pulaski playground.”

According to Pulaski County Parks and Recreation Plan 2018

### ***Where you can learn more!***

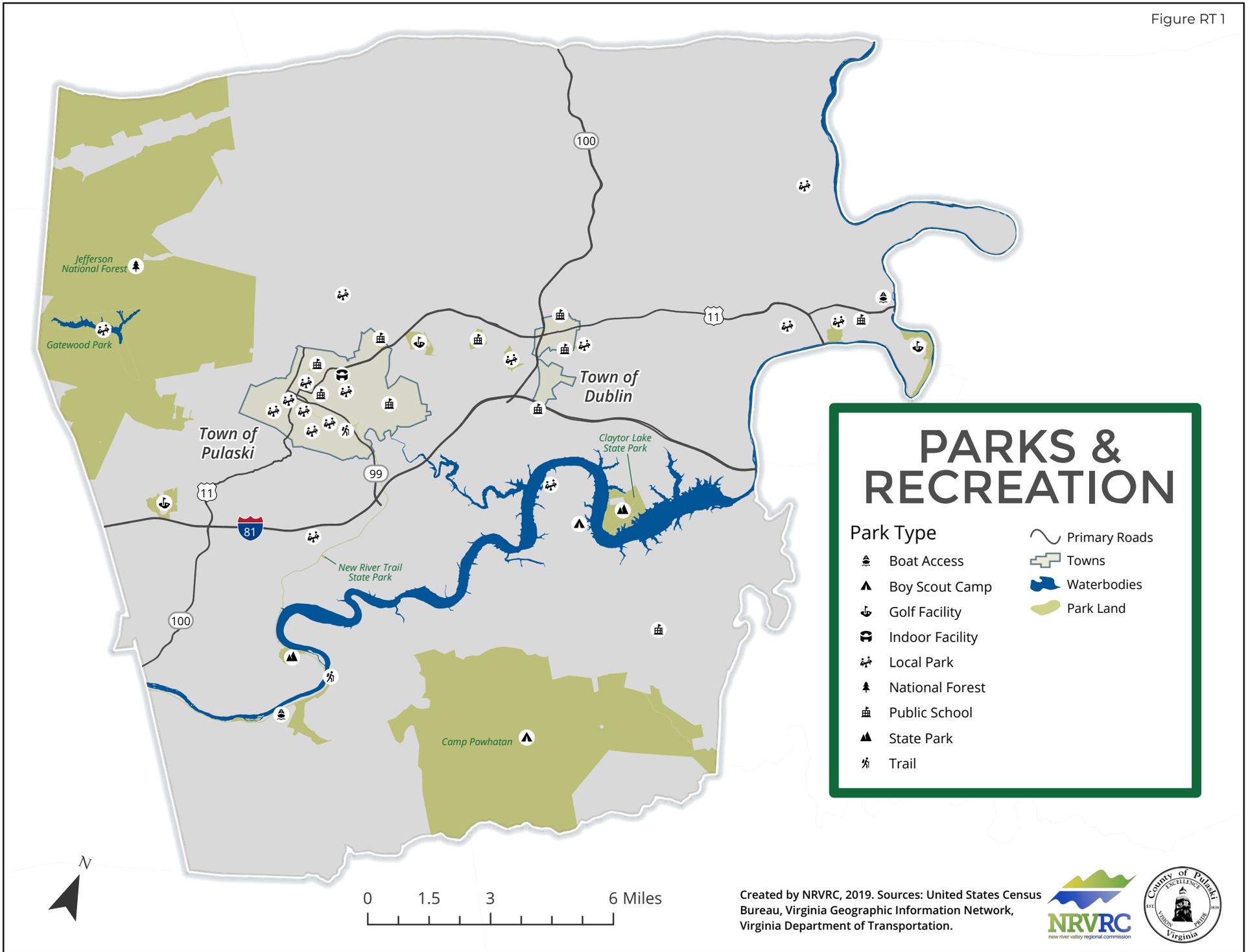
#### ***Pulaski County Parks & Recreation Master Plan***

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan is a first edition planning document. This document establishes a vision for parks and recreation and identifies a series of goals and objectives that are intended to guide future investments and program development.

#### ***Virginia Outdoors Plan 2018***

The Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) is the state's comprehensive plan for land conservation, outdoor recreation and open-space planning. The VOP serves as a guide for protection of lands through actions of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and assists local governments, local and regional planners and private sector partners with recreation and land conservation planning. To learn more about the VOP, visit [www.dcr.virginia.gov](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov).

Figure RT 1



# TOURISM

Nestled up against the Blue Ridge Mountains, Pulaski County provides ample opportunities and refreshing getaways to recreation and outdoors activities. Walker Mountain, Little Walker Mountain and the Claytor Lake State Park adorn the beautiful landscapes of Pulaski County. The New River, and its tributaries such as the Little River, flow uncommonly north through the region. New River Trail State Park was built on an abandoned railroad right-of-way with 13 miles falling within Pulaski County. Of the 57-mile linear park about 37 miles runs parallel along the New River through Grayson, Carroll, Wythe, Pulaski Counties and City of Galax. The County provides a number of unique experiences in hiking, biking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, horseback riding and dining. The abundance of outdoor recreational assets attracts many visitors from within and outside the region every year.



AWAITING YOU

# Heritage & Agritourism

## Heritage Tourism

Pulaski County boasts many natural, cultural and historical heritage sites that bring visitors to the County. Visitors can combine unique cultural events, dining, wineries, and more, during their stay. Continuing to maintain and enhance the linkages between cultural and historical heritage is essential to fully experiencing and celebrating the uniqueness of the area and to ensure that the past continues to remain vibrant. Organizing local cultural event and festivals around creative themes that incorporate historical resources such as buildings, structures, neighborhoods, historic districts and traditional streetscapes is one approach to providing linkages to attract tourists and promote heritage tourism.

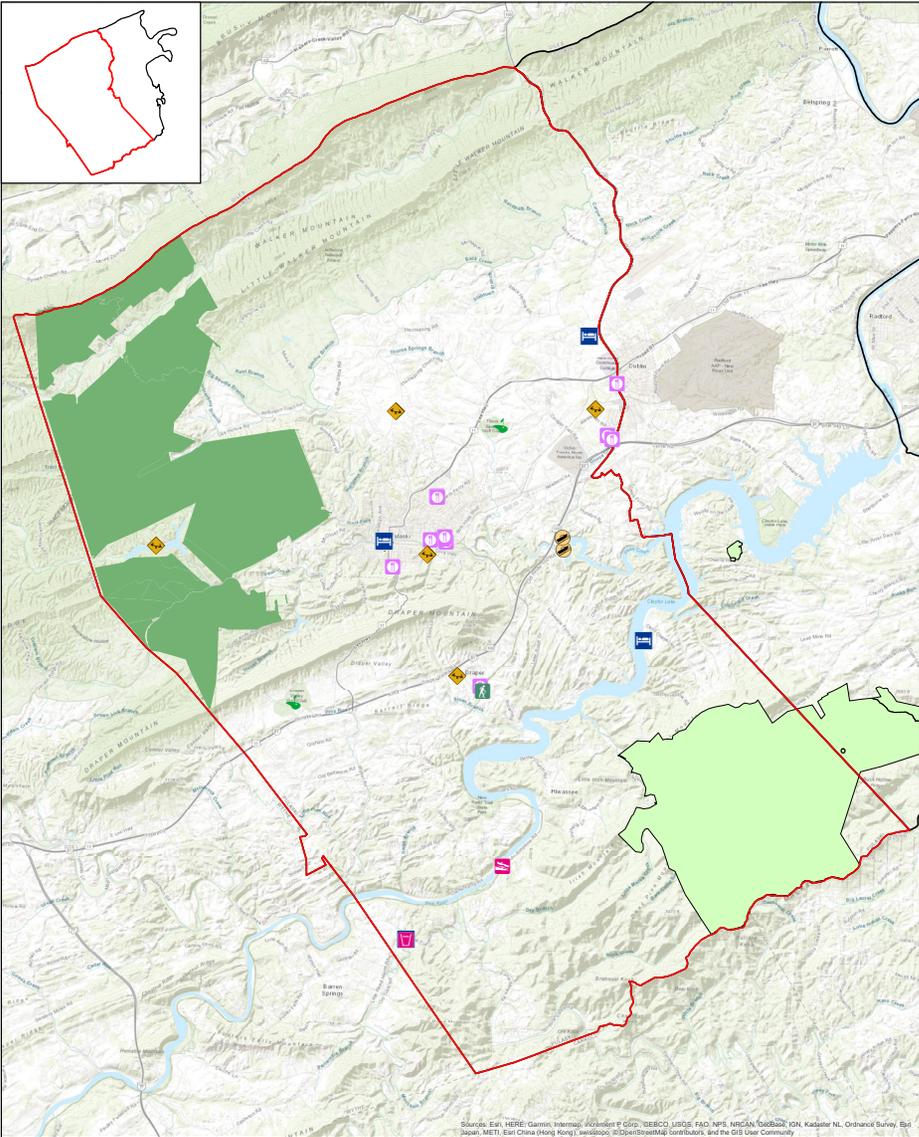
Cultural and heritage assets are vulnerable to rapid changes, and without special and deliberate attention and management, they can easily be forgotten. Inventorying and documenting the different arts, cultural, and heritage assets of Pulaski County is key in understanding the resources that need protection and developing effective preservation strategies. The Tourism Asset Map highlights various natural, cultural and tourism assets of the County.

## Agritourism

Agritourism in Virginia has become increasingly popular over the past 5 to 10 years. This new interest is creating demands for enjoyable experiences for visitors in different types of agricultural activities. It serves as a great educational tool for the public to learn about origins of food, as most people are removed from farms. Agritourism is of great interest to people who support local food and new economy initiatives. The additional income from agritourism benefits farmers. In Pulaski County visitors can explore various agritourism activities such as farms, winery, brewery, farmer markets, and educational experiences such as aquaponics and a robotic dairy. The County has 219 farms covering 77,504 acres according to 2019 agriculture census.

**219** Farms

**77,504** Acres



### Outdoor Adventure

- Draper Community Park
- Draper Valley Golf Course
- Draper Overlook
- Thompspring CC
- Trans VA Bike Route
- Gatewood Park
- New River State Park Access
- Randolph Park
- Jackson Park
- Loving Fields



### Southern Lifestyle

- Af's on First
- Big Belly Pizza
- Chang Hui Chinese
- Compadres Mexican Restaurant
- The Dawg House
- Grinza Asian Fusion
- Open Road Roastery
- Iron Heart Winery
- Tom's Drive In
- The Coffee Grinder
- The Blue Ridge Fudge Lady
- Draper Blooms Tea Garden



### Entertainment

- The Marketplace
- Pulaski Yankees
- Pulaski Theatre
- Pulaski Bike
- Pulaski Farmer's Market
- New River Valley Fairgrounds
- Cloyd's Mt Civil War Battlefield
- Draper Village & Bike Rental
- Fine Arts Center
- NRV Regional Theatre
- Bluegrass Jam Session
- Pulaski Courthouse and Museum



143 Third Street, NW, Suite 1  
Pulaski, VA 24301  
(540) 980-7710

### PULASKI COUNTY TOURISM WESTERN PULASKI

Pulaski, VA  
July 26, 2019

### Legend

- Parks
- Golf Courses
- Boy Scouts
- State Parks
- Wineries
- National Forest
- Boat Ramps
- Local Lodging
- Pulaski West
- Marinas
- Dining

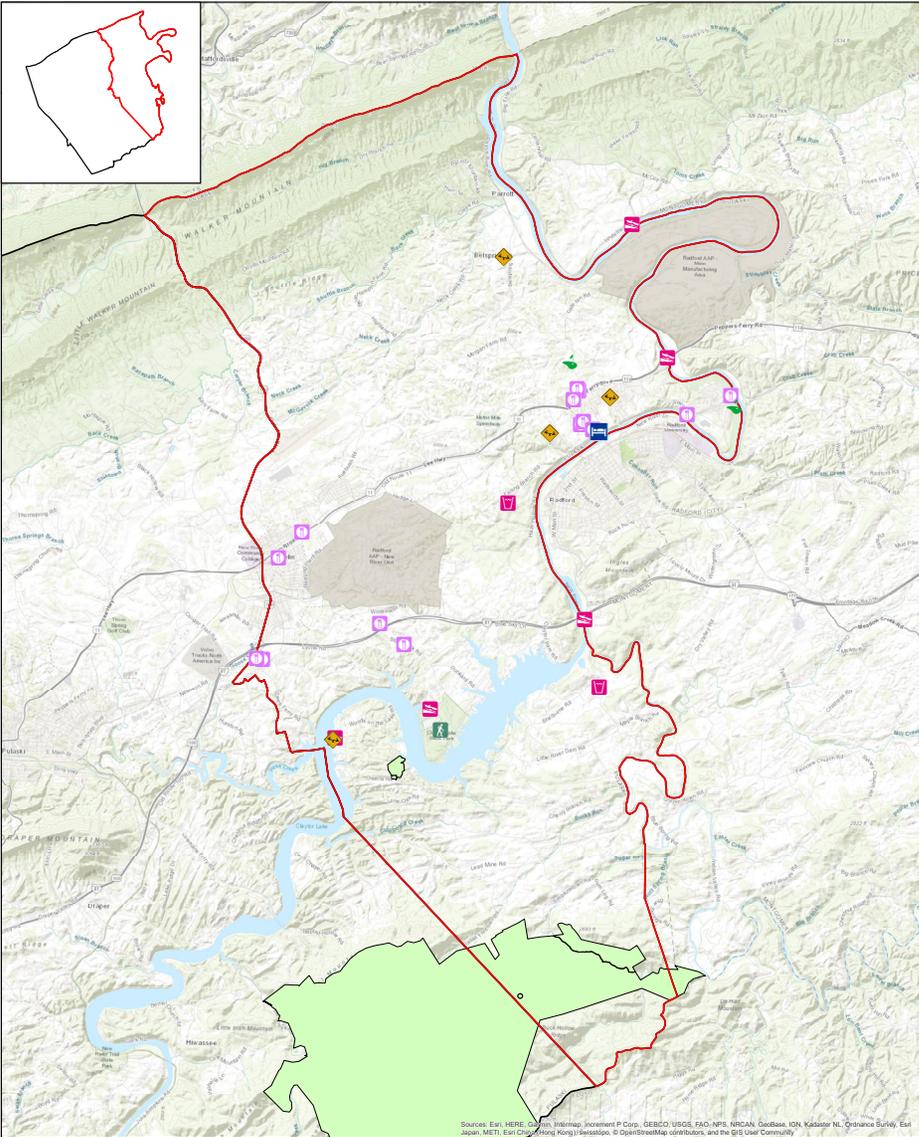


Images Obtained from  
Official Visitor's Guide for Pulaski County  
pulaskivatourism.org

Map created by Pulaski County GIS



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### Outdoor Adventure

- Claytor Lake State Park
- New River Community Park
- Old Riverlawn Park
- Belpreing Park
- Pete Dye River Course
- Loch Lowman Golf Course
- DelHaven Park
- Mountain 2 Island Paddleboard Company



### Southern Lifestyle

- Sal's Jr.
- Falz Southern Kitchen
- Verona's Pizzeria
- Roca's Mexican Grill
- Hank's Drive In
- New River Vineyard & Winery
- Preston's at the River
- The River Company
- Troy's Steak Sub & Pizza
- Rayhold's Pizzeria
- Patty's Kitchen
- JBR Vineyards & Winery



### Entertainment

- Scarrette's Cinema
- Motor Mile Speedway & Dragway
- St. Alban's Sanitorium
- Fiddle, Banjo, & Dance Club



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### PULASKI COUNTY TOURISM EASTERN PULASKI

Pulaski, VA  
July 26, 2019

#### Legend

- Parks
- Golf Courses
- Dining
- State Parks
- Wineries
- Boy Scouts
- Boat Ramps
- Local Lodging
- Pulaski East



Images Obtained from  
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# Tourism Trends

Tourism in Virginia is an important industry. In 2017, it generated approximately \$25 Billion in domestic visitor spending and generates \$1.7 Billion from state and local taxes, making it a strong economic driver.

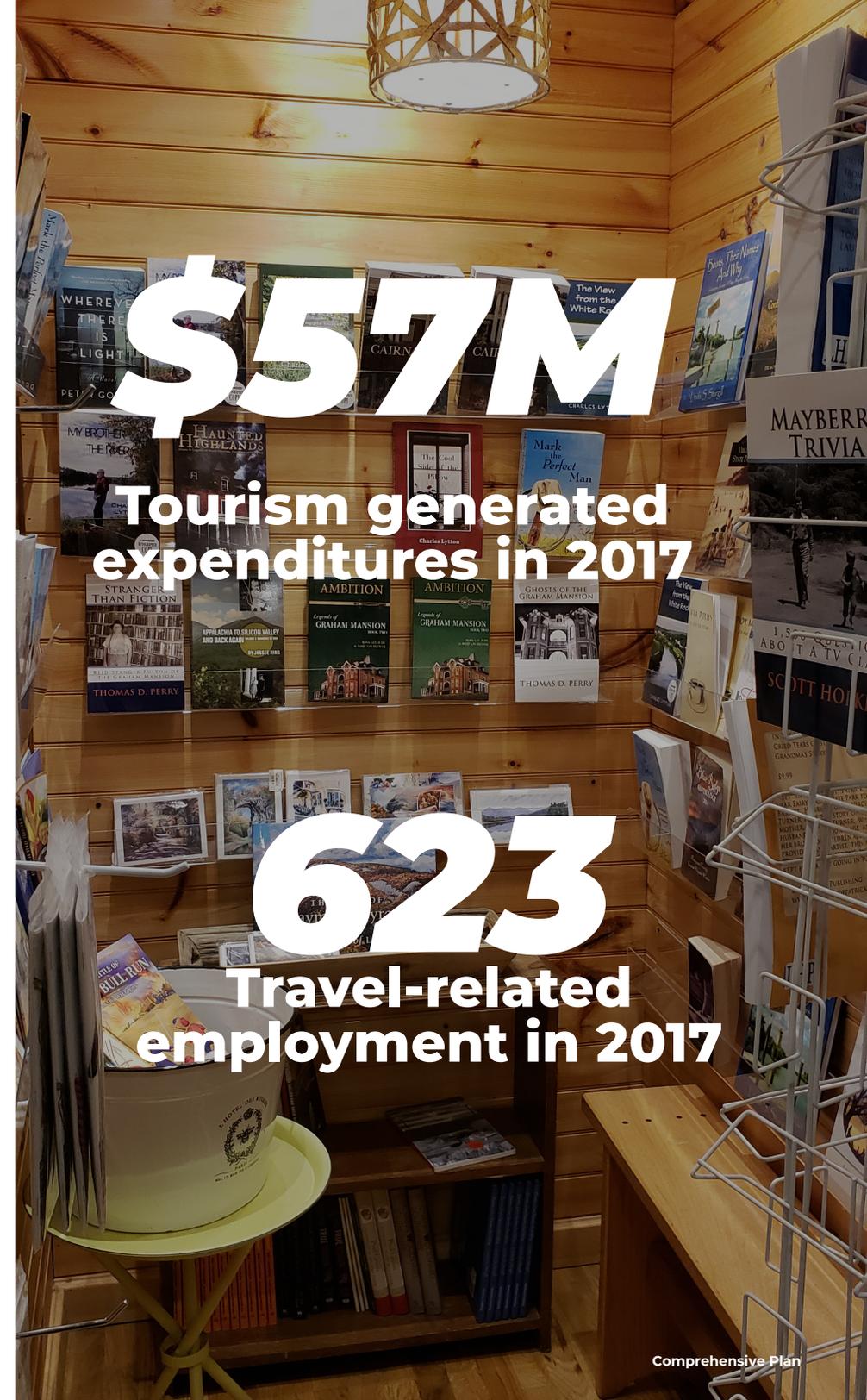
The Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce is a champion for growing the tourism industry throughout the County. In 2018, the Chamber launched a new branding campaign 'Pulaski County is...!', a series of promotional materials focusing on the southern charm, outdoor adventure, entertainment, and rich history that can be found in the County. The Chamber also maintains the County's calendar of events.

In Pulaski County, from 2013 to 2017, tourism related jobs increased by 6 %, but between 2016 to 2017 there were some jobs that were lost. Tourism related expenditure has seen a steady increase in the last five years. It increased by 11.6% from approximately \$51.4 million in 2013 to \$57.4 million in 2017, while tourism related payroll increased by 16.4%.

Tourism Related Expenditures in Pulaski County



Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation Economic Impact Report 2017



# Meals & Lodging

The amount of lodging tax revenue being generated in Pulaski County increased by almost 26% from 2011 to 2018. The significant increase in recent years can be attributed to new tourist attractions and may also be due to new lodging facilities such as the boutique hotel - Jackson Park Inn - located in historic Downtown Pulaski. The meals tax revenue increased at an annual average growth rate of 4.4% between 2011 and 2018. This equates to \$1,133,023 in 2011 to \$1,522,601 by 2018.

Given the increase in revenue generated through tourism, the County should pay close attention to the various grants offered by Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) for tourism marketing such as the marketing leverage grant. Pulaski County can explore the possibility of enhancing and strengthening their brand by capitalizing on the various opportunities offered by VTC Public Relations such as the Media Blitz, advertising opportunities at Virginia Welcome Centers, and Bus tours to encourage visits.

## Meals Tax Revenues



## Lodging Tax Revenue



Source: Virginia Public Auditors Local Government Comparative Report

*“The baseball park in Pulaski is a great amenity already, so just continuing to build on that, and build up the Towns of Pulaski and Dublin to support that.”*

Citizen response on Community Survey

# Recreation Goals, Objectives, Policies

**Goal 1: Enhance the quality, availability and access of parks, trails and recreational opportunities for the community's well-being and to continue to make Pulaski County a desirable recreational destination.**

## **Objective 1.1: Expand parks and facilities.**

**Policy 1.1.1:** Prioritize new facilities in parts of the County that currently have a limited presence of parks and recreation.

**Policy 1.1.2:** Connect the New River Trail eastward to Pulaski.

**Policy 1.1.3:** Connect Draper Mountain hiking and mountain bike trails to the New River Trail State Park.

**Policy 1.1.4:** Connect nearby neighborhoods and employment centers to parks via trails and sidewalks.

**Policy 1.1.5:** Establish affordable user fees for new or improved facilities to offset government costs, as needed.

**Policy 1.1.6:** Diversify facility inventory by investing in non-traditional sports, such as: water access, shooting, expanding the trail network, creating spaces for community events, and year-round programs for all citizens.

**Policy 1.1.7:** Increase native bass population and maintain fishing environments.

**Policy 1.1.8:** Improve existing boat access and increase the number of access points to the New River and Claytor Lake.

## **Objective 1.2: Maintain existing parks and facilities.**

**Policy 1.2.1:** Establish a capital improvement program to prioritize funding for recreation facility needs.

**Policy 1.2.2:** Maintain, develop, and modify facilities to increase accessibility for people with all abilities.

**Policy 1.2.3:** Create opportunities for local businesses to sponsor existing facilities and recreational equipment annually.

**Policy 1.2.4:** The County will pursue partnerships with State Parks to enhance recreational opportunities associated with the parks.

**Policy 1.2.5:** Consider site specific plans for each park.

## **Objective 1.3: Keep the public informed and actively engaged.**

**Policy 1.3.1:** Increase outreach regarding events, facilities, and programs through social media platforms and department website.

**Policy 1.3.2:** Create opportunities for the public to regularly share their ideas about potential programs, venues, and personal experiences.

**Policy 1.3.3:** Partner with parks and recreation departments throughout the region to host leagues, events, and tournaments that are beyond the capacity of one department.

**Policy 1.3.4:** Develop appropriate department policies that properly address customer service.

# Recreation Goals, Objectives, Policies

**Goal 1: Enhance the quality, availability and access of parks, trails and recreational opportunities for the community's well-being and to continue to make Pulaski County a desirable recreational destination.**

## **Objective 1.4: Promote outdoor recreation opportunities as visitor destinations.**

**Policy 1.4.1:** Partner with the local tourism office and State Park managers to increase annual visitation to County parks, Claytor Lake, and New River Trail State Park.

**Policy 1.4.2:** Create partnerships with local businesses through sponsorships of events, tournaments, recreational venues, and other community events.

**Policy 1.4.3:** Earn a reputation as a parks and recreational destination - develop suggested itineraries for visitors interested in spending the day or multiple days in and/or around the County.

**Policy 1.4.4:** Promote local recreational assets that are within the towns of Dublin and Pulaski, and under private ownership such as New River Fair, Gatewood Park and Motor Mile Speedway.

## **Objective 1.5: Offer programs for all ages and abilities.**

**Policy 1.5.1:** Create new programs for older adults - increase social opportunities and improve public health.

**Policy 1.5.2:** Increase programs for youth, especially those older than 14 - encourage continued personal development and growth.

**Policy 1.5.3:** Explore new programs such as on/in-water activities, shooting sports, pickleball, disc-golf, dance, martial arts, general exercise, etc.

**Policy 1.5.4:** Create new programs that focus on personal wellness, nutrition, and financial well-being.

**Policy 1.5.5:** Encourage an active arts program in Pulaski County for all ages.

**Policy 1.5.6:** Create new programs for subject areas such as home maintenance, plumbing, and outdoor lawn care.

## **Objective 1.6: Provide adequate staffing resources to manage department activities.**

**Policy 1.6.1:** Maintain an organization structure that balances program offerings and maintenance of facilities.

**Policy 1.6.2:** Create opportunities within the department for continued professional development and regular skills training (interacting with the public, using social media, small engine repair, plumbing, etc.).

**Policy 1.6.3:** Develop strategies to attract and retain volunteers to support existing programs and expand opportunities throughout the community.

## **Objective 1.7: Multiple uses of facilities, such as schools, should be encouraged as an efficient use of public resources for parks and recreation programs.**

**Policy 1.7.1:** Use local school facilities to supplement, not replace County recreational facilities.

# Tourism Goals, Objectives, Policies

**Goal 2: Make Pulaski County an attractive tourism destination. Promote and enhance Pulaski County's natural assets, traditions, culture and outdoors. Strengthen community character and provide high quality experiences.**

## **Objective 2.1: Grow tourism through partnerships, marketing and infrastructure improvements.**

**Policy 2.1.1:** Encourage regional alternative transportation projects that will enhance quality of life, regional recreational opportunities, and support tourism.

**Strategy 2.1.1.1:** Support efforts to connect the New River Trail State Park to Randolph Park.

**Strategy 2.1.1.2:** Support efforts to connect the County's trail networks to the Valley to Valley Trail Initiative, linking communities throughout Southwest Virginia.

**Policy 2.1.2:** Promote and support the expansion of the New River Water Trail tourism initiative to develop and enhance recreation and tourism services along the New River and Claytor Lake through marketing efforts, signage, and enhanced river and lake access.

**Policy 2.1.3:** Continue to work with State agencies and tourism organizations to promote Claytor Lake, the New River, the New River Trail State Park, and the Jefferson National Forest as tourist destinations.

**Policy 2.1.4:** Promote the County's activities and events to businesses and work with businesses to capitalize on new market opportunities.

**Policy 2.1.5:** Sponsor a detailed study on sources of tourism tax receipt and identify ways to promote these tax revenue sources.

**Policy 2.1.6:** Collect and maintain data about tourism activities to understand trends, support decision making, make sound investments, and to consider and adjust to new opportunities.

**Policy 2.1.7:** Explore the possibility of forming a tourism advisory board with representatives from local businesses, tourist destinations, tourism service providers, as well as representatives from the County government and other agencies.

**Policy 2.1.8:** Strengthen and promote Pulaski County brand by encouraging the wide spread use of the brand in the County's activities, and product and service offerings, while adhering to brand guidelines. Identify clearinghouse to enforce compliance to branding guidelines.

**Policy 2.1.9:** Incorporate County branding in wayfinding signage.

**Policy 2.1.10:** Continue partnering with the Town of Pulaski to promote recreational assets such as the Draper Mountain Bike Trail and Dora Trail.

## **Objective 2.2: Protect natural assets, recreational areas and scenic vistas.**

**Policy 2.2.1:** Identify natural areas and ensure adjacent uses are compatible.

**Policy 2.2.2:** Develop support for tourism businesses and assets around key recreational areas to enhance their visitor appeal.

**Policy 2.2.3:** Identify tourism corridors and develop land use strategies to protect them.

**Policy 2.2.4:** Develop a Tourism Strategic Plan.

## **Objective 2.3: Promote heritage tourism through educational tools, recreational areas, cultural tourism destinations, and economic development tools.**

**Policy 2.3.1:** Catalog arts, culture and heritage sites in Pulaski County and explore efforts to place historic sites on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Policy 2.3.2:** Develop promotional materials to highlight heritage tourism.