

## Trail Tidbits

- Ground Breaking ceremonies were held September 29, 2004
- There are two picnic tables along the trail, four benches, and several trash receptacles.
- The bird houses, feeders, and mile markers were all made by Boy Scout Kevin King for his Eagle Scout project. Kevin and members of Troop 158 in Camden installed project components on April 15, 2006
- The trail runs close to the highway in one area because this is the location of the old Culpepper Locks (1830-1898), causing the canal to be extra wide at this point
- Near mile 1.75, the aged granite marker is the original Mile Marker #19 on the waterway, circa 1820. The numerals are beautifully carved and the stone undamaged.
- Girl Scout Troop #5611 of South Mills adopted the area around Mile Marker #19 as a beautification project in 2007
- The colorful history of the Dismal Swamp Canal has earned it the following historic designations:

*Entered into the National Register of Historic Places;*

*Designated a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark;*

*Recognized as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program.*

*Part of both NC and VA Civil War Trails.*

## Bridge



The bridge on the trail was delivered by flat-bed and lifted by crane onto its foundation April 20, 2005.

### An Opportunity Awaits You ...

Camden County is privileged to offer the trail to residents, visitors, photographers, birders, civic groups, and others, for their enjoyment.

The trail is open 365 days a year from dawn to dusk. Restrooms & water are located at the Welcome Center. Trash should be placed in receptacles provided. *Please keep the trail beautiful.* Pets must be leashed. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets.

For the safety of those using the trail, split-rail fencing was installed in the summer of 2006 with a grant from Albemarle RC&D Council, supplemented by Camden County Tourism Development Authority.



### Trail Contact

DISMAL SWAMP CANAL WELCOME CENTER  
2356 US Highway 17 N  
South Mills, NC 27976  
PH: 252.771.8333 ~ 877.771.8333  
Email: [dscwelcome@camdencountync.gov](mailto:dscwelcome@camdencountync.gov)  
Website: [www.dismalswampwelcomecenter.com](http://www.dismalswampwelcomecenter.com)

# The Dismal Swamp Canal Trail

Camden County, NC



The trail became part of the  
**NC BIRDING TRAIL**  
on December 15, 2005

*"To conserve and enhance North Carolina's bird habitat by promoting sustainable bird watching activities, economic opportunities and conservation education."*



and part of the  
**EAST COAST GREENWAY**  
on November 6, 2006.



*The East Coast Greenway is a series of urban trails and greenways that will eventually connect from Maine to Key West, FL, similar to the Appalachian Trail.*

# The Dismal Swamp Canal Trail



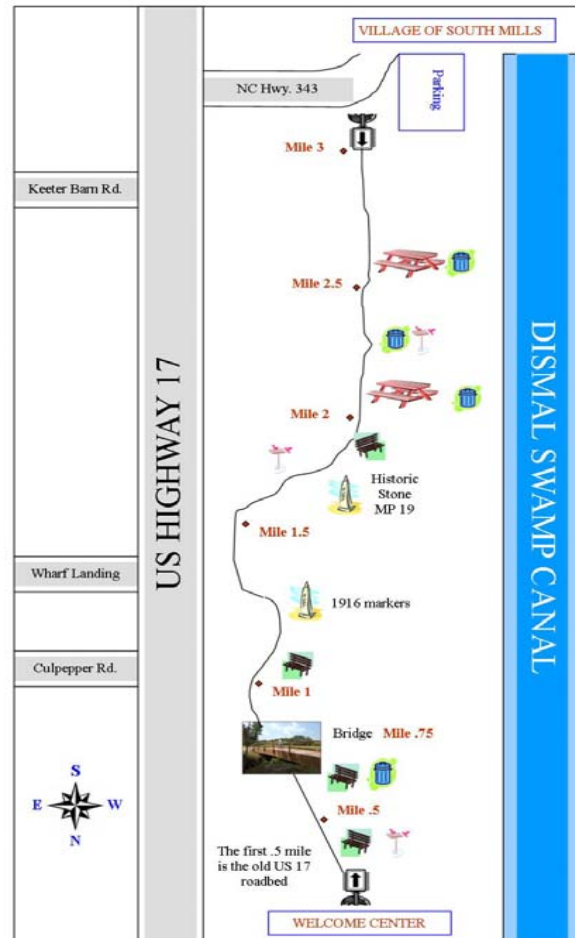
## Description

Total length of the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail is 4.5 miles. Trail mileage is posted along the wooded trail at 0.25 mile increments

The Trailhead begins on the southern end of the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center off US Highway 17. Asphalt tops the 10-foot wide trail ... making it ideal for families and handicapped individuals. The first 3 miles meander through a wooded area between the historic waterway and the historic highway, ending at NC Highway 343. A 5-foot wide highway extension provides access for the trail to the Village of South Mills via NC 343 and Mullen Road, ending at the drawbridge over the canal.

## Parking

Parking areas are provided at the Welcome Center, at the juncture of the trail with NC 343, and at the end of the trail in South Mills.



## Directions

The Welcome Center is located 3 miles south of the NC/VA border on US Highway 17. The Trailhead is accessed from the southern parking lot of the Welcome Center and is designated by signage and yellow posts.

From the North: Follow all signs to “Chesapeake, VA”, on I-64, then take the Elizabeth City, NC, exit to US Highway 17.

From the South: From Elizabeth City, follow US 17 N approximately 18 miles. The Center will be on your left in the “Rest Area.”

## History

The concept of a multi-use trail, running parallel with US 17 from the Village of South Mills to the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center was first discussed in a meeting of the Camden County Planning Board in the fall of 1998. In June 2000, the County submitted an application to the NC Department of Transportation Enhancement Program for this project. The County entered into an Agreement with NCDOT in the spring of 2001, following the award of enhancement monies to fund this project.

Working with the US Army Corps of Engineers, CAMA, and NCDOT, engineers for the project were Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates of Nags Head.

Many thanks go to members of the Advisory Committee who oversaw the project. The project consisted of 14,500 feet of 10 foot wide asphalt, except along NC 343, where 5 foot bicycle lanes border the highway. The project was awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co. in June 2004.

Opened to the public in June 10, 2005, the trail greatly enhances the banks of the historic Dismal Swamp Canal and provides wonderful recreational opportunities for bicycle enthusiasts, walkers, runners, birders, and photographers. It is also a great addition to the Dismal Swamp State Park, to open on the west side of the canal in the fall of 2007.

The trail became part of the NC Birding Trail on December 15, 2005 and part of the East Coast Greenway on November 6, 2006.