



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Blue Ridge Parkway
199 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

IN REPLY REFER
A38

31 July 2015

Mr. Bill Lane
Atlanta Federal Center
National Park Service – RTCA Program
100 Alabama Street, SW- 1924 Building
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Bill,

I was excited to learn of Smoky Mountain Host's application for RTCA technical assistance as next step in their work of linking the southwest region of North Carolina through a potential National Water Trails designation.

Every day on the Blue Ridge Parkway we are reminded of the important role the tourism industry has in the economy of this region. The abundance of state and federally designated public lands has served this region's tourism economy well for decades, while balancing important conservation and protection of the rich natural and cultural resources. Constructing a blueways system linking the water resources of the Upper Little Tennessee Watershed is a wonderful evolution of this vital balancing act.

Smoky Mountain Host has a long history of partnering with public and private organizations to carry out initiatives such as the Smoky Mountain Blueways and based on this track record, their work on this blueways initiative will likely be a model for others across the region and nation. The Blue Ridge Parkway is happy to be involved with RTCA and Smoky Mountain Host in the work ahead on this project.

Thank you for your consideration of their request.

Sincerely,

Mark H. Woods
Superintendent

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