

6A. MULTI-USE TRAILS PLAN/ BIKE ROUTE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Culpeper County Comprehensive Plan addresses potential locations for multi-use trails and greenways. Green space, parks, and trails are infrastructure (green infrastructure) that contributes significantly to quality of life. It is difficult and costly to go back and "retrofit" green infrastructure. Therefore, it should be planned and preserved such that development can occur in a manner which incorporates it. Green infrastructure adds as much or more value over time to land values and to the tax base as the other types of infrastructure. The focus of the trails remains primarily on recreation. Identifying specific routes, and including them in the Comprehensive Plan, is the first step in providing these facilities for the citizens of our community. There is no commitment on the part of the County to implement all of the trails. Rather, dedication of trail easements by private property owners, on a voluntary basis is needed to fully realize this concept. Some trails, such as those envisioned at Clevenger's Corner, should be implemented by the County when feasible.

This section of the Culpeper County Comprehensive Plan also addresses potential locations for defined bike routes. The plan is intended to accommodate recreational bicycling, but it is also intended to enhance opportunities to utilize bicycles as a mode of transportation. The Bike Route Plan identifies an array of potential on and off road facilities. By adopting this plan, it is the intent that these facilities be included as an aspect of road improvement projects, to be constructed in conjunction with such projects. It may be many years before all of the bike facilities envisioned become a reality. Identifying specific routes in this plan is also a critical first step in providing these facilities for the community.

The Multi-Use Trails Plan / Bike Route Plan identifies a combination of potential on and off road facilities. The plan is intended to address the need for walking, equine, and bicycle facilities. The Culpeper County Bicycle Study, adopted September 1, 2009, is hereby incorporated by reference.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROGRAM TYPES

Multi-use trails are most appropriate and can be most easily realized on County-owned park lands. Trails are perhaps the most well-utilized facilities within parks generally, and as such, they should be implemented in most if not all County parks. The Culpeper Sports Complex, Spilman Park, Lenn Park, and Duncan-Luttrell Park are all planned to include trails, primarily for pedestrians and bicycles. Laurel Valley Park and property which has been proffered for future ownership by the County at Clevenger's Corner should be developed with trails designed for equine and hiking use.

Walking / Bicycle Trails

Walking trails are designed primarily for pedestrians, but bicycles can also be accommodated. These trails should be paved so as to be handicapped accessible. Generally, such trails should be seven (7) to ten (10) feet in width. These trails should link the various areas of parks in a loop system which is both functional and aesthetically pleasing to the user. They should not be designed to be in remote or isolated areas which might raise a concern for the safety of the user.

Equine / Multi-use Trails

Multi-use trails, for the purposes of this plan, shall mean a trail that is designed to accommodate horses and pedestrians. Trails would ideally be made with a stone dust surface. Horse trails make excellent recreational facilities and are very safe if well designed and thoughtfully planned. Generally, such trails should be approximately ten (10) to twelve (12) feet in width. The design standard utilized should be determined based upon insuring the safety of the users and should take into account the impact such a facility will have upon any residents living along the trail route.

Road Crossings

There will most likely be locations along trail routes which will require crossing secondary roads. Such crossings should be well marked with signage both at the crossing, and leading up to the crossing to alert motorists. Changes in texture of the surface should be used where possible. Any crossings will have to be coordinated with VDOT, and must meet VDOT standards.

Signage

Trails should be well marked with signage to direct riders and to warn pedestrian users to be alert. While some signage may be historical or recreational trail markings, formal warning signage which meets all VDOT standards must be utilized whenever necessary. This would be especially true at crossings.

EXISTING FACILITIES

Currently, Culpeper County has little to offer in the way of trails in the community. In 1998, Culpeper County received a grant award under the Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21) program which funded a bike route running from Kelly's Ford along Route 620 to Route 3 (shared lane) and along Route 3 to Germanna Community College (paved shoulder). This facility features primarily signage to alert motorists and includes a few spot improvements. There is a kiosk in Remington (Fauquier County) depicting this route. Similar efforts and additional regional cooperation will help to implement the trails and bike routes proposed in this chapter.

OPPORTUNITIES

There are certainly opportunities to establish trail and bike route facilities within the County of Culpeper. There are numerous recreational sites, development projects, and privately held properties which lend themselves to trail development as a component. The successful implementation of these facilities will depend on a number of factors. In County parks, funding may be a significant constraint, and grant funds should be pursued diligently. Private dedications of easements and donations could also be a key in developing facilities. There are large tracts of land, the Cedar Mountain and Brandy Station Battlefields for example, which are ideal for trail development and would promote tourism, but these would require the acquisition of easements. In large land developments, trail facilities should be sought for implementation through proffers or other voluntary agreement between the County and the developer.

It should be noted that the bike routes in this chapter and in the adopted Culpeper County Bicycle Study are primarily located along and on roads, linking destinations throughout the County. Equine and multi-use trails are recommended primarily in parks and on rural property through the use of easements, where interaction with automobile traffic will be limited.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Transportation Enhancement Grant Program

The Virginia Department of Transportation administers the Transportation Enhancement Grant Program that is authorized and funded by the Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21). The Transportation Enhancement Program provides matching grants to fund activities or improvements that increase the value or worth of a transportation project or make it more aesthetically pleasing. To be eligible, these projects must relate to the intermodal transportation system in function, proximity or impact.

One of the eligible project categories in the Enhancement Grant Program is the provision of trail facilities. These projects must relate to the transportation function and cannot be solely recreational. In practical terms, this means that these projects must provide connection between two points. As such, the bike routes recommended here are ideal candidates for this funding.

The program provides a grant of up to 80% of the total project cost. The local government or other sponsoring organization must provide the other 20% either in cash or in-kind contributions. The grants are awarded annually on a competitive basis, in which all projects submitted in a given year compete against each other for a limited pool of funds. If trail easements are donated voluntarily, this funding source could be supported to facilitate construction. This plan does not contemplate acquisition of trail easements or right-of-way through condemnation, however some easements could be purchased where funding is available, and there is a willing seller.

Other Grant Opportunities

There are many other recreational trail grants from various sources which should be pursued in an effort to fund trails and bike routes. Additionally, historic resources, as a focal point of a trail, can provide justification for other funding sources.

Donations / Proffers

Active pursuit of private funding and dedication of easements will be necessary. Rezoning applicants should be expected to consider proffers which would assist with trail development.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Multi-use Trails

GOAL: PROVIDE TRAIL FACILITIES WHICH PROMOTE HORSEBACK RIDING AND WALKING FOR PRIMARILY RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and provide trails within County parks and on open lands through the use of easements.
2. Identify and provide trail routes which connect historic resources, parks and other destinations when feasible.

GOAL: DEVELOP TRAIL FACILITIES WHICH EMPHASIZE SAFETY.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Design facilities for maximum safety such that motor vehicles do not conflict with horses and pedestrians.
2. Design facilities such that they do not conflict with adjacent land uses.

GOAL: PROMOTE TOURISM THROUGH UNIQUE TRAIL RIDING AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop trails near historically significant areas which emphasize historic attractions and other recreational and tourist oriented opportunities in the vicinity of the trail.
2. Link existing lodging and restaurants to trail promotion.

Bike Routes

GOAL: PROVIDE A NETWORK OF BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES WHICH PROMOTE BICYCLING AND WALKING FOR BOTH TRANSPORTATION AND RECREATION PURPOSES.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and provide connections to attractive recreational destinations throughout the Town and County.
2. Identify and provide connections between concentrated areas of employment or shopping and residential communities.
3. Provide connections to all Culpeper County public schools.

GOAL: DEVELOP A NETWORK OF BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES WHICH EMPHASIZES SAFETY.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Design facilities for maximum safety where bicycles and motor vehicles share the road.
2. Design facilities appropriate to the skill levels of the projected users.
3. Design facilities that primarily avoid vehicles for maximum safety.
4. Include emergency vehicle access points in trail site plans.

GOAL: COORDINATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NETWORK OF BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES BETWEEN THE TOWN AND COUNTY OF CULPEPER.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Ensure coordination between the location and sequence of construction of facilities in the Town and County.
2. Identify and pursue grant opportunities for the implementation of facilities that benefits both the Town and County.

GENERAL MAPS

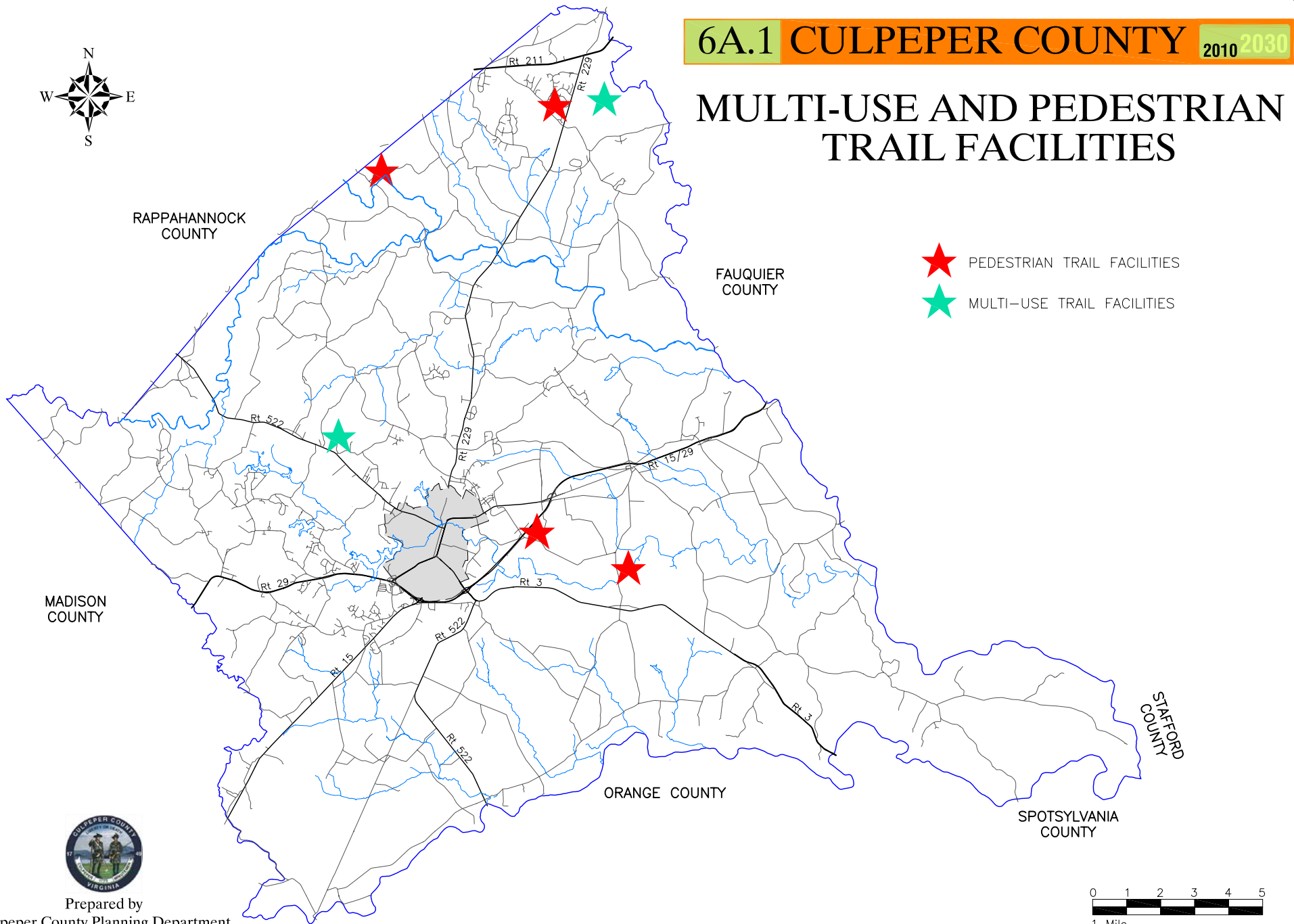
Maps 6A.1 and 6A.2 depict the general locations of County parks and the facility types best suited for implementation at those parks; and the general Bike Route Plan for the County as recommended in the adopted Culpeper County Bicycle Study.

MULTI-USE TRAIL DETAIL MAPS

Two locations have been identified in this Chapter as having near term potential for the implementation of multi-use trails, to include equine use. Those two locations are Laurel Valley and Clevenger's Village. Maps 6A.3 and 6A.4 are intended to depict conceptual trail layouts for the respective properties. These multi-use trails should be considered to have a high priority relative to implementation of parks and recreation facilities. These are not the only two locations appropriate for multi-use trail development. However, they appear to have the most immediate potential based upon current County ownership or anticipated County ownership.

6A.1 CULPEPER COUNTY 2010 2030

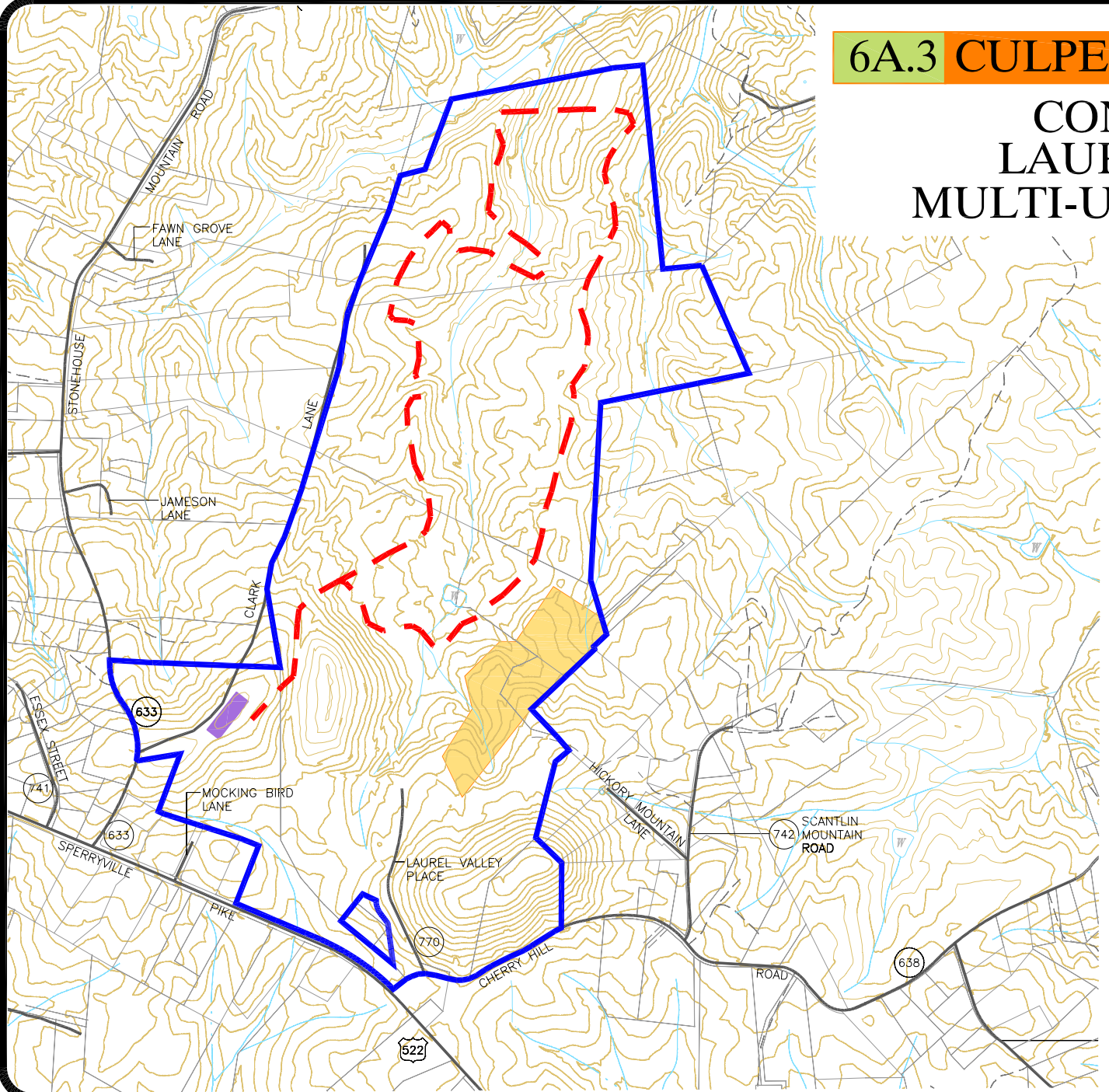
MULTI-USE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAIL FACILITIES



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1 Mile

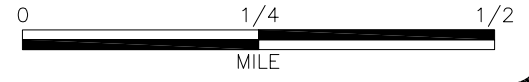
CONCEPTUAL LAUREL VALLEY MULTI-USE TRAIL PLAN



- CONCEPTUAL TRAIL LOCATIONS
- PARKING AREA
- SOAP BOX DERBY LEASE AREA

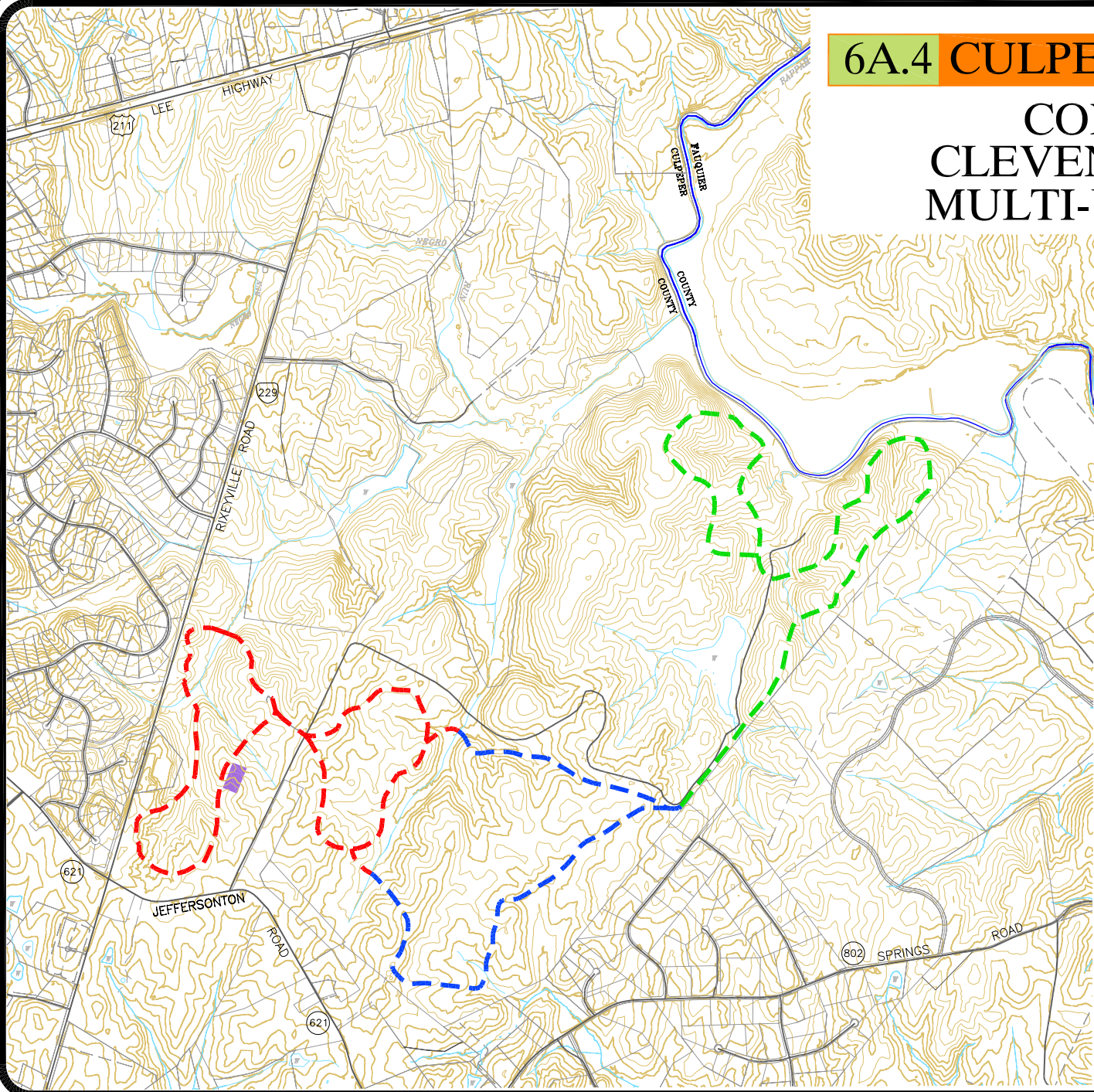


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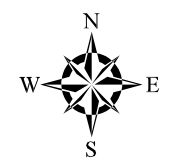


6A.4 CULPEPER COUNTY 2010 2030

CONCEPTUAL CLEVINGER'S CORNER MULTI-USE TRAIL PLAN



- PHASE 1 (APPROX. 3.0 MILES)
- PHASE 2 (APPROX. 1.8 MILES)
- PHASE 3 (APPROX. 2.9 MILES)
- PARKING AREA



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