



SOUTHWEST REGIONAL RECREATION AUTHORITY

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SPEARHEAD TRAILS' "COAL CANYON" MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEM OPENS WITH A RIBBON CUTTING ON SATURDAY, MAY 16.

The new system will open with just over 20 miles in phase one and is planned to have over 100 miles of trail connecting the town of Grundy to the town of Haysi.

NORTON, VA – MAY 11, 2015 – Representatives from Spearhead Trails and Stakeholders from Buchanan County and the region will gather at **10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 16th** to officially open the Coal Canyon multi-use trail system with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The event will take place at the system's trailhead adjacent to Popular Gap Park; signs will be posted. The trailhead will eventually include bathroom facilities and office space. In addition, electric service, sewer and water will be part of the project for future events and entrepreneurial opportunities. This will be the first step of a multi-phased project that will bring over 100 miles of trail to this system, and it is hoped, will eventually connect the town of Grundy to the town of Haysi.

"The large field of view you get on this reclamation area makes it perfect for a mixed-use system," says Chris Sturgill, Field Operations Supervisor for Spearhead Trails. "Riders will be able to see each other from great distances. We're also looking at building some "braided trails" where equestrian riders would have their own trails but would share intersections. There are several trail systems like this across the country, including one in Knott County, KY."

Spearhead Trails creates trail experiences that are rider centric by design, making them Family Friendly. Riding is only permitted during daylight hours; helmets and a trail rider permit are required. Riders also need to sign a waiver and agree to all the trail rules. Spearhead Trail rules can be found online at www.SpearheadTrails.com. Trail Rangers will patrol the system day and night and \$100 fines will be issued for each rule violation. No alcoholic beverages or firearms are allowed on the trail system. Safety while having fun is a top priority for Spearhead.

"The purpose of our trail systems has, and always will be, economic development and job creation," says Chuck Riedhammer, Executive Director of the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority, aka Spearhead Trails. "We are confident that this system will result in increased private investment and a more robust tax base for both Buchanan County and Grundy as visitors flock to the area, creating a demand for collateral goods and services related to OHV and equestrian riders. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the County Management Team and the Board of Supervisors, including Buddy Fuller and Craig Stiltner who have pushed to get this system funded and open."

In 2008, the General Assembly formed the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority (SRRA – dba Spearhead Trails). The mission of Spearhead Trails is to develop and manage multi-use trails in the Southwest Regional Recreation Area to stimulate, enhance, and sustain economic development and job creation through entrepreneurial opportunities in Southwestern Virginia.

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