

NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the US Land & Water Conservation Fund) We have obtained rough consulting estimates ranging from \$30,000-\$50,000. We made a similar request to the Chapel Hill Town Council on November of last year and will also be asking the Orange County Commissioners to assist in this project. We are keenly aware of the success of the New Hope Master Plan which has served as a blueprint in identifying critical parcels for acquisition and protection over the past decade and believe that this approach will yield a similarly useful blueprint to guide the acquisition and preservation of the Bolin Creek Corridor.

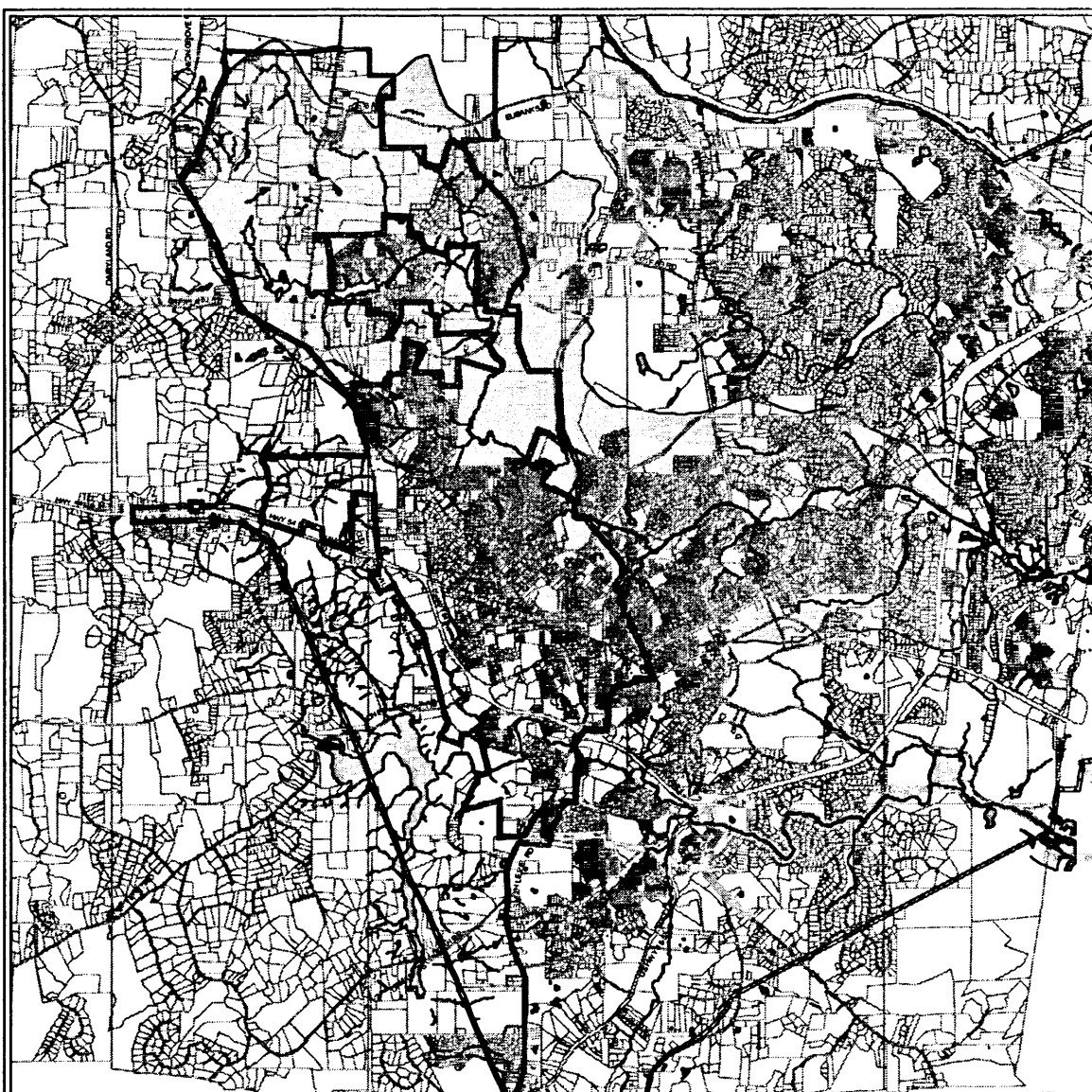
Why should we preserve the Bolin Creek Corridor? We believe the following four reasons are very important:

- (1) With burgeoning growth in southern Orange County, this is a **critical period where it is essential to carefully manage urban growth in the Bolin Creek Watershed**. If the watershed is not preserved over the next few years, the opportunity will be lost forever. Although the Chapel Hill sections of the watershed are largely built out, construction upstream in Carrboro and the Northern Transition Zone could have enormous impact on the entire watershed, exacerbating the chronic flood problems in the University Mall/Camelot Apartments area.
- (2) There is an important need to **establish connectivity of natural areas, existing and planned parks and greenways**. Chapel Hill is far ahead of Carrboro in implementing a greenway/bikeway stretching along Bolin Creek from the Community Center on Estes Drive to Airport Road, but it is a long way from there to the headwaters! There is a hauntingly beautiful section of the creek below the bluff at Village West that few have seen or appreciated. It is our dream to continue the Chapel Hill Greenway from Airport Road to Umstead Park and Estes Drive, to have the state DOT restore the streambed under Estes Drive Extension and build a bridge over the creek wide enough to allow wildlife and greenway corridors (as part of the improvements that will be made to Estes Drive to accommodate traffic to the new Horace Williams Campus), connect to Wilson Park and the planned Carrboro Greenway, run connectors to Seawell Elementary, Smith Middle and Chapel Hill High Schools, a possible connector along the tributary which arises on the Greene Tract, and another segment continuing through Winmore up Jones Creek to the planned County Park.
- (3) We want to **preserve the last intact stretches of native forest habitat remaining in southern Orange County**. Two studies by Triangle Land Conservancy within the last five years identified much of the forest areas in the Horace Williams Tract and the Northern Transition Zone as botanically sensitive and ecologically valuable (*A Landscape With Wildlife for Orange County* and *A Landscape With Wildlife for Orange County, Part II* by Haven Wiley, Steve Hall and Livy Ludington). Another natural treasure is the Adams Tract, about 30 acres between Estes Drive and Watters Road in Carrboro. This jewel is an important gateway and access to the park and preserve that we want to establish. Carrboro has already obtaining about 200K from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, has requested 750K bond funds from Orange County, and is exploring a variety of other funding sources to purchase this tract. We view

acquisition of the Adams Tract as the first critical step in realizing the proposed master plan!

- (4) We want to leave a **natural legacy** that our children, our grandchildren and future generations can enjoy. Christopher Alexander and his colleagues have expressed it well in *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*: "When the countryside is far away, the city becomes a prison" and "Every city inhabitant should be within a 10 minute walk of a natural area." We have a critical opportunity to preserve the natural corridor along Bolin Creek before it is engulfed by the rising tide of development in this area. It is essential to act now while considerable open space still exists!

We will be coming to you on Tuesday evening to request your support—political, physical, monetary and spiritual. Realization of this dream will require the joint efforts and support of many people and many jurisdictions—Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Orange County, the State of North Carolina, and perhaps the federal government. It is a dream that has the enthusiastic support of a large cross-section of the local population—hikers, joggers, dog-walkers, bikers and nature lovers. We respectfully invite you to join and support us in our efforts to create a **Bolin Creek Corridor Open Space Master Plan!**



NA: State Plane Coordinate System (NAD83)



TOWN OF CARRBORO  
301 W. Main St.  
Carrboro, NC 27510

2 October 2014  
Public Works Planning Department  
988-7714

THIS MAP IS NOT A CERTIFIED SURVEY AND IS FOR REFERENCE ONLY.  
The user must be aware of data conditions and ultimately bear responsibility for  
the appropriate use of the information with respect to public safety, design, map scale,  
aerial photography, survey data and other conditions specific to the data.

## Bolin Creek Basin

- Streams
- Carrboro Town Limits
- Chapel Hill Planning Boundary
- Chapel Hill Town Limits
- Carrboro Planning Boundary
- Lakes and Ponds
- Parcels
- Creek Basin
- BOLIN CREEK
- Text Road Names (Major)

## ATTACHMENT 4-1

A chronological overview of policy and regulatory actions taken by the Town of Carrboro related to Bolin Creek is presented for review.

Date	Action
1960s	Bolin Creek sewer line was extended from Estes Drive Extension to Chapel Hill High School. Line was owned and operated by the Town of Carrboro until OWASA began operations in 1977
1970	<i>Land Use Study. Brief description of Bolin Creek basin.</i> Emphasis on Morgan Creek due to water and sewer facilities located in that watershed.
1970	<i>Community Facilities and Land Development Plan.</i> "Stream valleys have great value as protection areas between residential areas... Carrboro should adopt a policy of stream valley open space preservation and acquisition." The report did not include any proposals for corridor preservation along Bolin Creek.
1980	<i>Neighborhood Parks and Greenways System Plan (NPGSP).</i> Greenway along Bolin Creek is proposed from Estes Drive to Seawell School Road, with acquisition options provided (in association with development applications) in a corresponding land use ordinance provision. Two purposes for developing a greenway are noted: 1) preserving natural ecological processes, and 2) providing low cost recreation areas. Due to community concerns noted in a public hearing on May 10, 1983, the Board of Aldermen removed the Greenways Plan from the NPGSP.
1980-1989	Bolin Forest, Phases I-IV approved for development along Bolin Creek. Stream buffers established and public pedestrian easements dedicated along creek in association with Phases III and IV.
1983-1987	Fox Meadow subdivision approved for development along Bolin Creek. Dedication of public open space/greenway along Bolin Creek to Orange County (on-site wells and septic).
1984	Spring Valley approved for development along Bolin Creek. Approximately 1.3 acres of private open space designated along Bolin Creek frontage.
1985	Cobblestone subdivision approved for development along tributary of Bolin Creek. Private open space established along tributary.
1985	Wilson Park I, II condominiums approved along tributary of Bolin Creek. Fair Oaks, Sudbury and Waverly Forest also approved along tributaries of Bolin Creeks.
1987	Highlands I-IV approved for development along tributary of Bolin Creek
1987	Buffer requirements for streams located outside of the University Lake watershed enacted.
1987	Joint Planning Area Land Use Plan establishes Town planning jurisdictions and Rural Buffer. Bolin Creek basin defines Carrboro's additional planning jurisdiction not already included in extra-territorial jurisdiction established in 1950s.
1985-1991	Sewer line extended north to serve the Highlands and Camden subdivisions.
1988	Quarterpath Trace subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek.
1988	<i>Inventory of the Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitats of Orange County, North Carolina.</i> Narrow, upland stream valley, along the Bolin Creek stream corridor, from Estes Drive to Homestead Road, is included in the inventory as it represents on the "few remaining wooded stream corridors in the vicinity of Chapel Hill and Carrboro." Recommendations for management or protections

ATTACHMENT 4-2

Date	Action
	state: "This site might be best protected by assigning it a status of a "natural area" within the greenway system." Inclusion of approximately 150 acres in this category is noted, as the minimum needed to protect the area's natural and aesthetic qualities.
1989	<i>Year 2000 Task Force Report.</i> "The town should encourage and contribute to the development of greenways or parklands along streams and easements dedicated to public use. These areas should be preserved as much as possible in their natural state."
1990	Meadow Run subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek (on-site wells and septic).
1990s	Water quality monitoring of Bolin Creek initiated in a joint effort with the Town of Chapel Hill.
1991	Wexford subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek.
1992	Cates Farm subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek. Open space/public access dedicated to the Town of Carrboro.
1993	Arcadia subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek.
1994	Lake Hogan Farms subdivision approved along Bolin Creek. Extensive stream buffers and greenways established for public dedication along creek and lake. William's Woods at Cates Farm and Tupelo Ridge approved along tributaries of Bolin Creek.
1994	<i>Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan.</i> Proposal for the "Bolin Creek Greenway," a seven-mile, off-street trail to extend from Estes Drive, up Bolin Creek around Hogan Lake and connecting with a proposed park on Union Grove Church Road. Acquisition of property along greenway corridors was identified as a priority for development throughout the 20-year planning horizon of the document.
1995	Sewer line extension along Bolin Creek to serve the Lake Hogan Farms subdivision.
1995	Sunset Creek subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Creek.
1996	Tupelo Ridge II and Highlands North subdivisions approved along tributaries of Bolin Creek (on-site wells and septic)
1997	The Cedars at Bolin Forest subdivision approved along a tributary of Bolin Forest.
1997	<i>A Landscape with Wildlife for Orange County.</i> Recommends preservation of prime forest areas and wildlife corridor connections between these areas. 500-foot buffers are recommended around prime forest areas located in the northwest corner of Carrboro's planning jurisdiction.
1999	<i>Facilitated Small Area Plan for Carrboro's Northern Study Area.</i> Bolin Creek floodplain is included among the northern study area's unique, natural areas. Aside from descriptive information related to park sites/greenways that are planned along the creek, the plan includes references to Bolin Creek within a number of its goals, including: identifying strategies for acquisition/dedication to protect the creek, and including as a long-term goal, the connection of Homestead Road at Lake Hogan Farms to the Bolin Creek greenway via drainage channel or stream bed. Land Use Ordinance amendments adopted to implement the plan specify preservation of certain natural areas, including floodways, floodplains and steep slopes. New stream buffers for Northern Transition Area established, modeled on University Lake buffers.

## ATTACHMENT 4-3

Date	Action
1999	<i>Rating Land in Orange County by its Wildlife Value – A Landscape with Wildlife: Part II.</i> Report presents a methodology for evaluating land as habitat for native wildlife in Orange County. Based on 1988 aerial photography, forested areas were assigned intrinsic (features of the tract only) and contextual (relationship of surrounding uses to the tract) ratings for wildlife value. The highest total ratings for forested areas within Carrboro's jurisdiction were assigned to areas in the Morgan Creek watershed upstream, and surrounding University Lake. Some forested areas along Bolin Creek were also included in the ratings.
2000	<i>Carrboro Vision2020.</i> Policy recommendations are as follows: 1) The town should encourage and support the development of greenways and parklands dedicated to public use along streams and easements. There should be a network of connected greenways throughout the town. These greenways should serve as nature trails, biking and walking trails, wildlife corridors. All should protect our natural environment. 2) The town should practice and encourage ecologically sound and sustainable maintenance of open space, including parks and greenways
2000	Town of Carrboro initiated a benthic macroinvertebrate study of Bolin Creek to establish a baseline of data for those portions of the creek in Carrboro's jurisdiction.
2000	<i>Cape Fear Basinwide Water Quality Plan.</i> First five-year update of plan for the Cape Fear basin. Bolin Creek is included with Morgan Creek in evaluations of the water quality in the Haw River basin. One NPDES permit is active in the Bolin Creek watershed for groundwater remediation at the Exxon service station on Airport Road. The upper reaches of Bolin Creek are classified as fully supporting for their intended use as a freshwater stream. Water quality indicators for sites within Carrboro's jurisdiction are classified as good in 1993 and 1998. The last mile of stream before the confluence of Booker Creek, is classified as partially supporting, a rating attributed to nonpoint source pollution.
2001	Results of one year (four events) of benthic macroinvertebrate sampling at three sites along Bolin Creek revealed an overall bioclassification of fair to good. This classification indicates fairly good diversity of more and less sensitive insect species, as well as an assessment of the habitat within the creek. The studies revealed impacts associated with recreational and urban uses that occur along the creek.
2002	Friends of Bolin Creek forms to pursue preservation of the Bolin Creek corridor
2002-2003	Macroinvertebrate sampling scheduled on an annual basis.
2003	Winmore development approved along Bolin Creek. A condition of the permit requires that all open space be offered for dedication to the Town.



TOWN OF CARRBORO ATTACHMENT C

# PLANNING BOARD

***301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510***

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## R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

**NOVEMBER 6, 2003**

**Friends of Bolin Creek Proposal for Bolin Creek Master Plan**

**MOTION WAS MADE BY JOHN MARSHALL AND SECONDED BY STAN BABISS THAT THE PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDS TO THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN THAT FUTURE PLANS FOR BOLIN CREEK INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF USING THE GREENWAY AS A NON-MOTORIZED, TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR CONNECTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMERCIAL AREAS, INCLUDING DOWNTOWN CARRBORO.**

**VOTE: AYES (6) (Babiss, Carnahan, Hammill, Ludwig, Marshall, West); NOES (0) ABSENT/EXCUSED (4) (Haven-O'Donnell, Hogan, Paulsen, Poulton).**

John Marshall, Chair (date)

Friends of Bolin Creek  
Statement to Carrboro Board of Aldermen  
November 11, 2003

Re: Agenda Item – Report on FoBC Request

- We would like to thank the Board of Aldermen and Carrboro town staff, particularly Trish McGuire, for consideration of the request from the Friends of Bolin Creek for support and assistance in developing an open space master plan for the Bolin Creek corridor. We recognize and appreciate all the work done recently and in the past related to the Bolin Creek corridor, and the work involved in responding to this request. We especially would like to commend the excellent background report that Trish prepared on planning efforts by the town of Carrboro related to the preservation of Bolin Creek and development of the Bolin Creek Greenway. She has created a useful inventory of documents, reports, ordinances and easements essential for the development of the Bolin Creek Open Space Corridor Master Plan that we envision.
- While we recognize and appreciate the work involved, we think that the recommendation of the report – the development of a “resource guide” to the Bolin Creek corridor – neither addresses the need for an Open Space Master Plan for the Bolin Creek Corridor nor provides a mechanism to create that master plan.
- We maintain our strong commitment to the need for an Open Space Master Plan for the Bolin Creek Corridor to provide a framework for protecting this community resource for future generations in Carrboro, Chapel Hill and all of southern Orange County.
- We would also like to comment on the recommendation from the Carrboro Planning Board to the Board of Aldermen dated November 6. This resolution addresses the Friends of Bolin Creek proposal for a Bolin Creek Master Plan. It calls for future plans for Bolin Creek to include consideration of using the corridor as a non-motorized transportation corridor. While we agree that one function of the proposed Bolin Creek Greenway in Carrboro is transportation, we see this as a secondary function. We are interested in the protection of open space in the Bolin Creek Corridor in as natural a state as possible. The greenway is one component of a larger open space master plan, but is not the end goal.
- We ask the Board of Aldermen to consider and adopt the recommendation for creation of a Bolin Creek Corridor Master Plan proposed in the draft Orange County report, “The Adams Tract and Bolin Creek Corridor: Towards a Possible Master Plan.” That proposal calls for:
  - Appointment of a Master Plan Committee primarily from existing Town and County and UNC committees with an interest in the corridor, along with representatives from Friends of Bolin Creek and Triangle Land Conservancy.
  - An evaluation by the County and Towns as to whether existing staff could provide necessary support to the project.
  - Development of a project timeline and mission/charge.

Finally, we believe that an early stage in that process should be a charrette or workshop to obtain public input and support for the project.

- Thank you for your continuing interest in the future of the Bolin Creek corridor, and for your consideration of our request.



# The Adams Tract and Bolin Creek Corridor

**DRAFT**



## Towards a Possible Corridor Master Plan

Draft - June 17, 2003

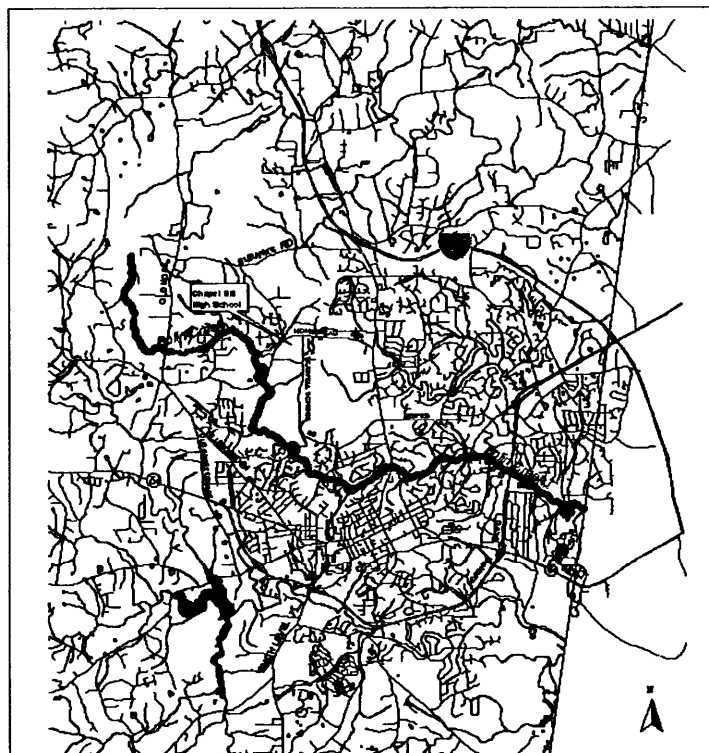
## **Introduction**

The report that follows seeks to address two separate but related topics.

1. In November 2002, the Board of Commissioners considered a request from the Town of Carrboro for financial participation in the acquisition of a 30-acre tract of land known as the Adams Tract. After discussion by the Board and a meeting of the Mayor and BOCC Chair, in February 2003 the County began discussions with the Adams Tract owners through the Lands Legacy program. This tract of 30 acres, located along Bolin Creek near Estes Drive, was the focus of attention by a Town of Carrboro "Adams Tract Preservation Committee" in 2001/02.
2. Shortly on the heels of this activity, in March of 2003, a new group entitled the "Friends of Bolin Creek" made presentations to Town and County elected boards about the potential for a comprehensive look at the conservation possibilities in the entirety of the Bolin Creek corridor via a corridor master plan.

Given the inter-relationships between the two projects, the Board of Commissioners (with Town concurrence) asked staff to negotiate the purchase of the Adams Tract, and prepare a report on a possible design for the Adams Tract, using work to date by the Town committee and evaluation with County staff. Staff was also asked to look at the Bolin Creek Corridor master plan concept as well.

### **Bolin Creek Vicinity Map**



## **Abstract**

Bolin Creek flows through the heart of Chapel Hill Township, from Bald Mountain along Old NC 86, through the Joint Planning Area, Carrboro and Chapel Hill to the Durham County line near Meadowmont. Over the years, a variety of different initiatives, both from conservation and development standpoint, have been undertaken in the corridor. And in fact, there are several groups and projects currently underway that will have an impact on the ultimate disposition of the Bolin Creek Corridor:

- CHATPEC Master Plan
- Northern Transition Area Committee
- Proposed Winmore development
- Proposed Carolina North
- Adams Tract
- IP Work Group Greenways Subcommittee
- Town parks and greenway committees

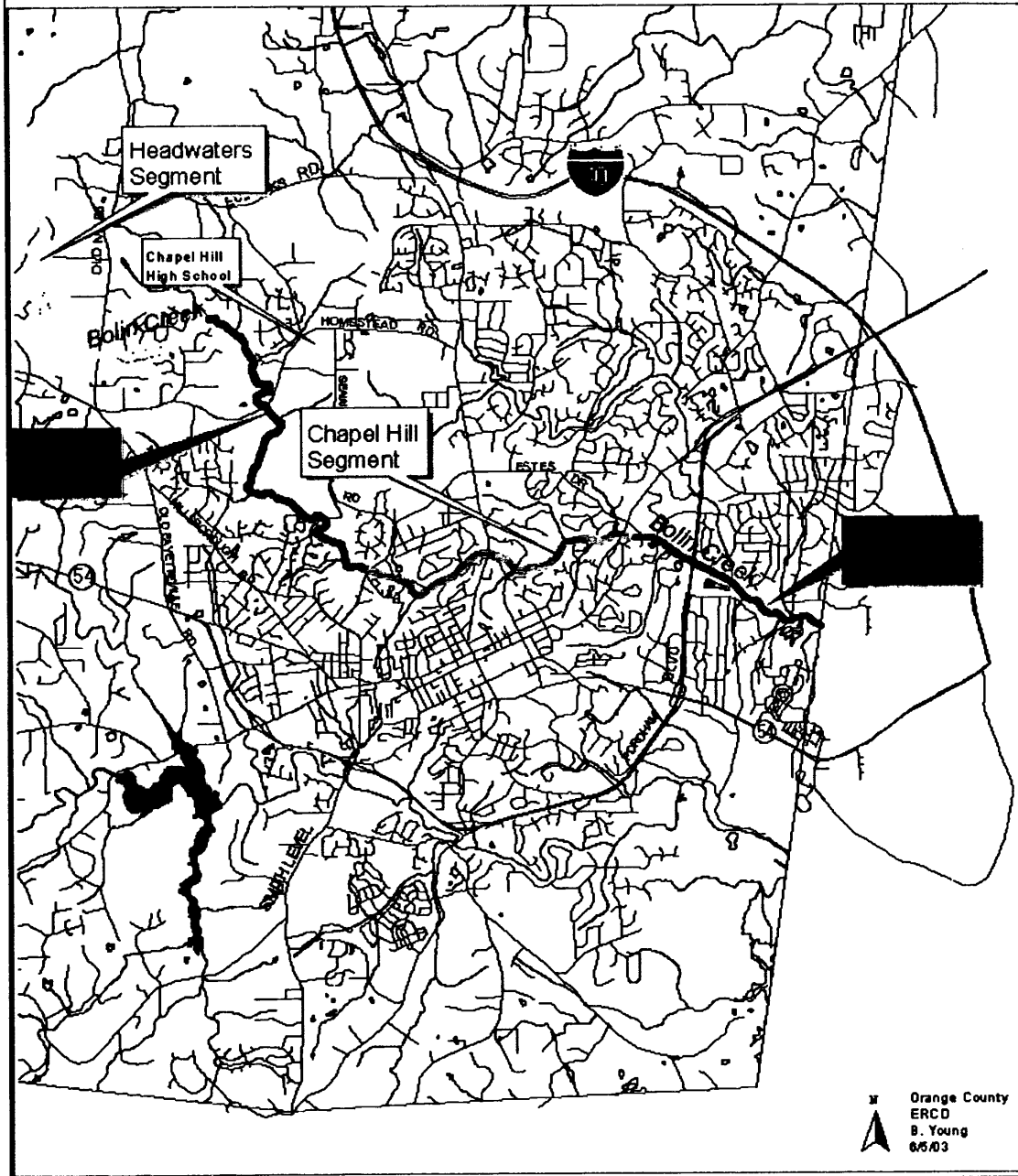
In staff's evaluation, it was preferable to separate the corridor into four segments – each of which contains a node or special place(s) that have either conservation values or planned development or recreation significance. The four segments as defined for this report were:

1. The **Headwaters Segment** (focal points – Lloyd-Andrews Historic Farmstead, CHATPEC, Lake Hogan Farms)
2. The **Carrboro Segment** (focal points – Winmore, Carolina North, Adams Tract)
3. The **Chapel Hill Segment** (focal points – Umstead Park, Bolin Creek Trail, Community Center)
4. The **Confluence Segment** (focal points – University Mall, Booker Creek confluence, Meadowmont)

The idea of a comprehensive Bolin Creek Corridor Master Plan has recently been introduced by a group known as the "Friends of Bolin Creek."

With all of the many different stakeholders in the Bolin Creek basin, an effort to join in a common goal of preservation of the corridor seems worthwhile, and one method of accomplishing the task is outlined here - a work group comprised largely from representatives from existing groups (including the Friends of Bolin Creek) to work with County and Town staff on the development of a Master Plan. A plan for the Adams Tract and how it could accommodate the Bolin Creek Greenway and other trails as a hub of recreation/conservation activity is also proposed.

## Bolin Creek Corridor - Stream Segments



## **I. General Evaluation of the Bolin Creek Corridor**

As noted, Bolin Creek runs northwest to southeast through Chapel Hill Township. The creek itself is a tributary of Jordan Lake, and is thus a part of the Cape Fear River basin. While it is important to consider the corridor holistically as well, for descriptive purposes the stream is broke into four segments as shown below:

### **A. Headwaters Segment**

The Headwaters Segment of the Bolin Creek Corridor may be defined as the area from the beginnings of Bolin Creek and its initial tributaries to the confluence with Jones Creek near Lake Hogan Farms (please see map 1).

The northernmost tributaries of Bolin Creek, Buckhorn Branch and Jones Creek, extend west of Old NC 86, as does the main stem of the creek. Jones Creek begins on the southern slopes of 762-foot Bald Mountain, part of the Blackwood Division of Duke Forest. The main stem of Bolin Creek begins slightly to the south, east of Union Grove Church Road.

The land use pattern in the area is primarily rural, but as part of the Orange County-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Joint Planning Area / Carrboro Transition Area, the corridor is becoming more suburban in nature, and the expected extension of urban services in upcoming years will likely expedite this transition. One large subdivision, Lake Hogan Farms, is located within this area and contains over 200 homes.

There are a number of sensitive or special places of natural resources within this segment. An identified natural area exists at Bald Mountain in Duke Forest, with features of geologic, archaeological and natural interest. Areas of prime forest exist between Bald Mountain and Bolin Creek as well, as identified in the report "A Landscape with Wildlife" (1997). A conservation easement is held by Triangle Land Conservancy on 121 acres of the Lloyd-Andrews Historic Farmstead, which contains an antebellum log cabin and notable natural resources including upland depression swamps and portions of the Creek. Both OWASA and Orange County also have landholdings in this segment of the corridor.

The dominant future feature of this segment is the planned Chapel Hill Township Park and Educational Campus. This 193-acre site lies near the center of this segment, and will contain a 76-acre schools campus co-located with a 96-acre park.

### **B. Carrboro Segment**

The Carrboro Segment runs from the confluence with Jones Creek in Lake Hogan Farms downstream to Estes Drive. This segment of the stream runs

first through land currently proposed for development (Winmore), crossing Homestead Road just west of Chapel Hill High School and continuing south through the western portions of the Horace Williams Tract (also referred to as Carolina North) before winding its way past subdivisions and the Adams Tract, where it reaches Estes Drive. For this and downstream portions of Bolin Creek, only the main stem of Bolin Creek is considered part of the corridor (there are a number of smaller tributaries from Lake Hogan Farms south that branch out to cover much of the Carrboro and Chapel Hill municipal limits).

Land uses in this area of the corridor range from undeveloped but pending development in the "Winmore" area. South of Homestead Road the creek runs for 2/3 of a mile through land owned by UNC that is considered part of the Carolina North project. The last stretch of this segment alternates between bordering urban residential areas to the west, and then the east, with undeveloped properties also located along alternate sides of the creek. One of these properties, the Adams Tract, is considered to be centrally located and an important focal point for conservation in the area.

One natural area and areas of prime forest (some of which have been lost to development in the last 15 years) are found along this stream segment. The Bolin Creek Natural Area, first identified in the Orange County Inventory of Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat (1988), centers on and around the UNC lands and the Adams Tract.

The Adams Tract property is strategically located along the corridor as both the mid-point and a "hub" of conservation and low-impact recreation activity. Because of its significance, this property is dealt with in a special section on page 7.

### **C. Chapel Hill Segment**

The portion of the corridor defined herein as the Chapel Hill segment picks up at Estes Drive, where Bolin Creek crosses under the roadway and continues eastward into the heart of Chapel Hill. The residential areas that border Bolin Creek through this segment are among the most densely-populated of the corridor. The Bolin Creek Greenway picks up at Airport Road and extends along the stream east to the Town's Community Center, crossing East Franklin Street near the intersection with Estes Drive.

The creek corridor runs past and through a number of existing subdivisions, as well as sites such as Umstead Park, the Chapel Hill Police Department, and commercial areas along East Franklin Street.

As previously noted, the Bolin Creek Greenway runs along the stream for much of this segment. A paved greenway, this trail is heavily used by

residential areas adjoining the stream and is the oldest and most-used portion of the Town of Chapel Hill greenways system. However, the western section from Estes Drive to Airport Road is not constructed – although some lands have been acquired by the Town along the route of the proposed greenway extension for future trail expansion.

Since it is located within areas long developed within the Town, there are no identified natural areas or areas of prime forest, although the greenway corridor does provide some urban and edge habitat for a number of common species.

#### **D. Confluence Segment**

The final downstream portion of the Bolin Creek corridor in Orange County may be defined as beginning near University Mall, running eastward across Fordham Boulevard (US 15/501) towards the north side of the Meadowmont development and the Durham County line. This segment is dubbed the Confluence Segment here because it is in this area, just east of US 15/501, that the other major stream corridor for north and east Chapel Hill, Booker Creek, joins with Bolin Creek. Partially because of this confluence, the areas around University Mall and eastward to the Durham line have much larger areas of 100-year floodplain.

Major features in this segment include University Mall and adjoining multi-family neighborhoods, Oakwood Park (located east of US 15/501) and adjoining residential areas, the Chapel Hill Country Club and The Oaks subdivision, and the Meadowmont development (which is just south of the stream).

There are no identified natural areas in this segment of the stream corridor, although an area of prime forest was identified on Town-owned land on the future Meadowmont Park site and may still exist.

After the confluence with Booker Creek, the stream becomes known as Little Creek, and enters the Federally-owned Jordan Lake lands soon after entering Durham County. A Federal waterfowl impoundment exists on Little Creek just inside the Durham County line.

## II. Recent Activities and Those On the Horizon

In the last decade, there have been a number of projects and initiatives of both a conservation and development nature that impact Bolin Creek. These include, but are not limited to:

- The identification of the Bolin Creek Natural Area (B01) as part of the County's Inventory of Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat. Some of the natural area has been lost to land conversion, but most portions remain intact.
- The Carrboro Northern Study Area Plan, which was developed in the mid-1990's and incorporated into the Joint Planning Area Land use Plan – the governing plan for much of the Headwaters Segment, in 199\_. This plan led to the creation of the Northern Transition Area Committee.
- The plans for UNC's Horace Williams Tract (now called Carolina North), a large tract of roughly 1000 acres through which the creek flows (in the creek's Carrboro segment). A previous master plan for this property was created in 1994, and a new set of University committees are currently engaged in creating a new plan ([www.carolinanorth.unc.edu](http://www.carolinanorth.unc.edu) ).
- The potential development of the property known as "Winmore", which contains a portion of the main stem of Bolin Creek.
- The Town of Chapel Hill Master Greenways Plan, completed in 1998, makes a number of recommendations regarding the future extension of the Bolin Creek Greenway. The Town's Master Parks and Recreation Plan, adopted in 2001, also addresses future needs along the corridor.
- The provision of funds in the County's 2001 Parks and Open Space bonds for greenways. The Intergovernmental Parks Work Group and its Greenways Subcommittee have recently been working on developing ideas on priorities among greenway projects.
- The development of Meadowmont, near the Durham County line.
- The recent work on a master plan for the 193-acre Chapel Hill Township Park and Educational Campus, in the headwaters segment
- Work currently underway in the Town of Carrboro to further define the greenways system outlined in the Northern Study Area Plan
- The Town of Carrboro's "Adams Tract Preservation Committee" and recent discussions and activities toward the acquisition of this property in the middle of the Bolin Creek corridor

In addition to the above, a number of committees in both the Towns and County exist: with interests in greenways, parks and recreation, environmental conservation and long-range planning. All of the above activities have combined to create new pressures – but also new opportunities – for the Bolin Creek corridor. Groups and committees that might have an interest in plan for Bolin Creek would include (but not be limited to):

- The elected boards of each jurisdiction (Carrboro, Chapel Hill and Orange County)



- The Intergovernmental Parks Work Group and Greenways Subcommittee
- The Carrboro Northern Transition Area Committee
- The Greenways and Parks and Recreation Commissions from each jurisdiction
- The Orange County Commission for the Environment
- The Town of Carrboro Environmental Affairs Board
- UNC's Carolina North committees
- The Friends of Bolin Creek
- The Adams Tract Committee
- The Planning Boards of each jurisdiction

### **III. The Adams Tract As A Conservation and Recreation Hub – A Possible Plan**

There are many unique and interesting places along the Bolin Creek corridor from Old 86 to the Durham County line, but few are arguably as integral to the corridor from a conservation and recreation standpoint as the Adams Tract in Carrboro.

This property, while privately owned, has long been the “hub” of activity for mountain bikers, hikers and others interested in low-impact recreation and enjoying the natural setting of the Adams Tract – which is only approximately ½ mile from downtown Carrboro. When looking at a larger-scale map, the Adams Tract may be a hub of many different types of activity in Carrboro, with the railroad line, Bolin Creek, Estes Drive and Wilson Park all coming together at this spot. The map on page 9 shows the existing conditions on the Adams Tract.

The Adams property is bounded by Wilson Park, Estes Drive, Southern Railroad track, Bolin Creek and an 8-acre wooded property that is being planned for residential development. The 30-acre tract is entirely wooded except for a cleared area (about 2 acres) around the historic Weaver House. The forest cover is fairly good condition having been left to mature since the land was last farmed in the 1930-40s. The southern ¾ of the property is dominated by loblolly pine (40-60 years old) with mixed hardwoods growing in the understory. The northern ¼ is composed primarily of mixed hardwoods along a narrow bottomland and lower slopes, grading into dry oak-hickory forest on areas farther above Bolin Creek. That northern section of the property (including the bottomland, hardwood slope and upland transition area) has been identified as part of a significant County natural area associated with the Bolin Creek corridor. Trees along this bottom include tulip poplar, cherrybark oak, white oak, red oak, willow oak, sweetgum, pignut hickory, and mockernut hickory. The northwest slope (steep and moist) is host to beech, white oak, shagbark hickory, tulip poplar, sourwood, and umbrella magnolia. The latter is a very uncommon tree in Orange County. A description of the natural area (Site B01) is provided as Attachment 2. This portion of the natural area has remained intact since it was first identified in 1988.

## THE ADAMS TRACT AND BOLIN CREEK CORRIDOR – Draft

There is a small rock outcropping upstream from the railroad trestle, where the stream takes a 90-degree bend. This highly scenic section of Bolin Creek attracts stream walkers to pause at this site on their walk up and down the wooded stream corridor. Above this rocky bend, the forest is dominated by beech trees and other hardwoods, which descend to the creek. The slope is also host to several wildflowers that show themselves each spring.

Narrow trails enter the property from three locations to the south (Wilson Park, OWASA sewer line easement, and Estes Road) and then wind their way to the north end and join the linear trail system along Bolin Creek. Two other trails enter the property from the west and east, and then join the main trail (please see map, page 9). There is a well-worn trail along the northern boundary with Bolin Creek, which continues upstream, passing through relatively mature mixed hardwood forest. Siltation into Bolin Creek and tributaries is evident at crossing points.

The Adams property has served as a “trailhead” point for hikers and mountain bikers to access the informal but widely used trail network upstream in the UNC Horace Williams (Carolina North) property. Finally, as noted, the tract is nearly at the mid-point of the Bolin Creek corridor.

Staff from the County's Environment and Resource Conservation Department have worked to prepare a plan for the Adams Tract – in the context of the overall Bolin Creek corridor. The plan attempts to recognize the strategic location and special natural and cultural features that the property offers.

Given the Town's request for greenways bond funding for the Adams Tract purchase, staff has also reviewed a possible route of the Bolin Creek Greenway, using adopted Town plans, to see if a segment of the greenway would in fact be located on the Adams Tract.

# THE ADAMS TRACT AND BOLIN CREEK CORRIDOR - Draft



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Adams Tract</li> <li> Existing Trails</li> <li> Carboro Open Space</li> <li> Chapel Hill Open Space</li> <li> OWASA Property</li> <li> Wilkos Park</li> <li> Dedicated for Public Use/Access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Streams</li> <li> Sewer Line</li> <li> Sewer Line Easement</li> <li> Railroad</li> <li> Parcel Boundary</li> <li> Streets</li> <li> 1998 Orthophotos</li> </ul>	<h2>Adams Tract</h2> <h3>Draft</h3> <p>Existing Conditions            PIN 0779-80-1616            TMBL 7.30.11            30.86 Acres</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p style="font-size: small;">City of Chapel Hill            Department of Planning and Development            100 South College Street, Suite 200            Chapel Hill, NC 27514            919.966.7000</p>
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### **Proposed Adams Tract Plan**

Using work previously developed by the Adams Tract Preservation Committee and ideas from interested citizens, the plan on page 12 attempts to emphasize the protection of natural resources present on the site, while still providing for the important recreation component that the property serves.

Mountain bike riders and pedestrians are the primary current users of the Adams Tract – using the site to access the informal trails network on UNC lands further north. Our proposed plan separates the two uses by designating trails specifically designed for pedestrian use and a separate trail to allow mountain bike riders access to trails north of the Adams Tract.

The plan takes advantage of the existence of Wilson Park as the access point for entry into the property. The trailhead for the proposed pedestrian trail – which could be considered as a loop of the future Bolin Creek Greenway - would begin at the existing access at Wilson Park and follow the existing trail north through the pine forest portion of the site, towards Bolin Creek. Where the existing trail enters into the hardwood forest, there are proposed two options for spurs to continue to a possible segment of Bolin Creek Greenway.

The first option (Option 1 on page 12) follows the existing trail, paralleling the steep contours in this area down to the creek floodplain. The steepness of this trail may warrant construction of a stairway both for public safety and to reduce adverse environmental impacts. Option 2 extends the existing trail through the steep slopes, spurs off to the north, and continues down the less severe slopes in a switchback alignment to access the creek floodplain. One existing segment of the trail is proposed to be eliminated, because it is located on a very steep slope of the identified natural area, and this has adverse effects on erosion of the soil and vegetation. The existing loop trail continues west along the ridgeline, where at the top of the ridge a proposed trail would continue south and connect into the existing trail leading to Wilson Park.

The proposed trails on the Adams Tract that spur off from the proposed greenway would create a 0.5-mile loop trail. The loop trail would have several junctions where the trail would spur off into smaller “overlook oxbows.” These small loops off of the main trail would provide scenic over-look and educational station opportunities. The two existing pedestrian trailhead spurs are proposed to remain, one along the OWASA sewer easement connecting to Wilson Park, and one along Estes Drive.

The proposed mountain bike trail uses the existing OWASA sewer easement at Wilson Park, continues north along the easement along Estes Drive, crosses the railroad tracks, and follows the OWASA easement down the slope, then northwest across the creek. It then heads north along the west side of Bolin Creek, to access the public lands to the north of the Adams Tract.