



Strategic Plan 2009-2010

# General Information

The 2009-2010 Strategic Plan is designed to summarize the mission, vision, goals and objectives for the **Kids in Parks** project of the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation. The Project Director, reserves the right to modify, rescind, delete, or add to the provisions of the strategic plan at any time. It is a living document and will be modified based on reality, performance and status of objectives. For more information regarding the Strategic Plan of the organization contact the Board Chair or the Project Director.

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## Introduction

Imagine our National Parks full of kids connected, engaged, and participating in a variety of activities that contribute to and encourage overall health...their health and the health of our parks. **Kids in Parks** (formally known as Healthy Kids/ Healthy Parks) is a project of the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation and the Blue Ridge Parkway (National Park Service). The **Kids in Parks** project works with partners throughout the community to increase the physical activity of children and their families, improve nutritional choices and connect kids to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The problem of obesity is drastic in North Carolina. North Carolina has the fifth highest rate of obese children in the country. The rate of childhood obesity has more than tripled in the last 20 years, with 1 in 3 children in the state currently overweight or obese. Nutritional and recreational choices are having a detrimental and devastating impact on our youth. Children spend about 6.5 hours a day interacting with media, and the most common vegetable they consume is French Fries. In North Carolina, nearly 23% of all children experience no physical activity in their leisure time at all.

Closely linked with the health of our children is the health of our parks. Park use and visitation is declining. What may be missing in our children's health is a connection to the places they play and how they play. The **Kids in Parks** project supports and enables a life change not an exercise program. Our project focuses on modifying existing resources to increase physical engagement and activity. In this case, the existing resource is the Blue Ridge Parkway, the backyard of thousands. Starting with the pilot program here in Buncombe County, we will make families more aware of the wonderful opportunities available along the Blue Ridge Parkway for outdoor recreation, engage them in planned activities, increase their awareness of healthy food choices and provide educational and inspirational reasons to become healthier and more active. This exposure will result in a closer bond with nature, healthier recreation and food choices, and new transformative experiences.

## Mission

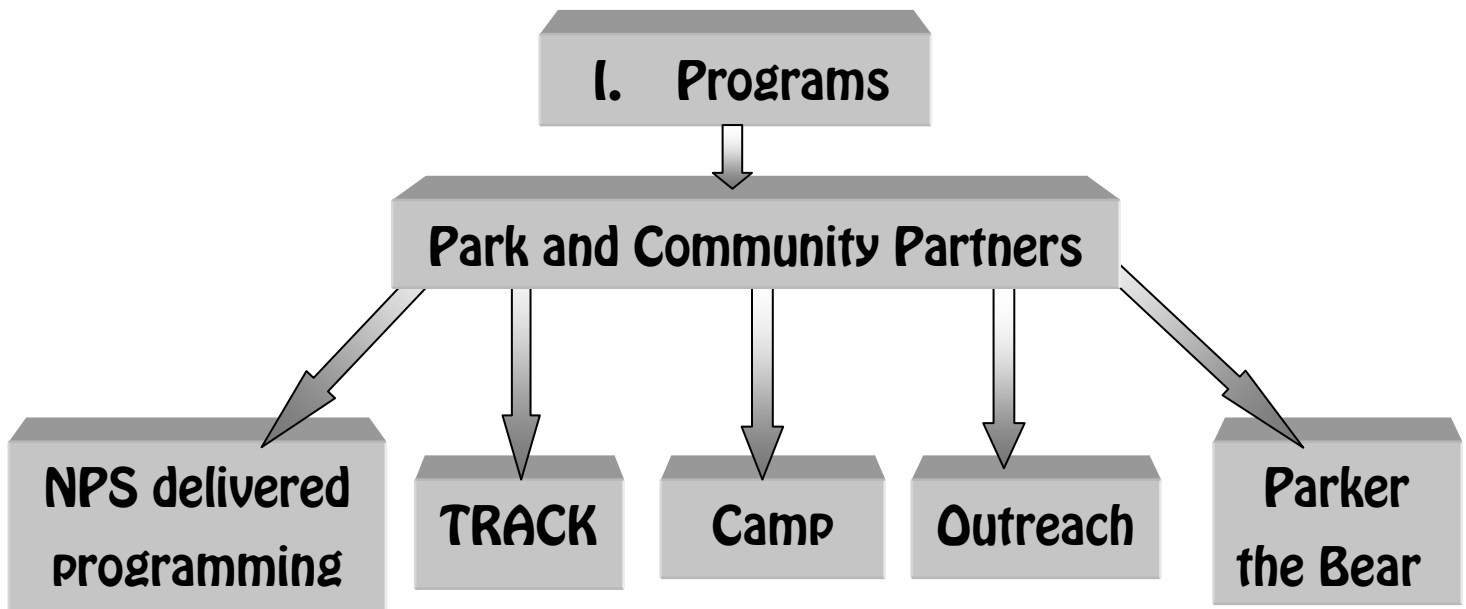
Our mission is to combat childhood obesity and children's lack of connection to natural resources by increasing physical activity, improving nutritional choices, and engaging families in outdoor activities along the Blue Ridge Parkway that foster transformation to a more active lifestyle.

## Vision

The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is dedicated to working with the National Park Service to protect and preserve the Blue Ridge Parkway through building and supporting community connections to the people and the places that make the Blue Ridge Parkway a special and important natural and cultural resource. One key aspect of building that connection is through the next generation of stewards...the children. Working in cooperation with partners throughout the community, we want to reach, connect and foster a life-long relationship between kids and nature. It is through a meaningful personal connection with natural and cultural resources that lasting positive impacts can be achieved both for the children and for the resource. This is accomplished through designing, assessing and marketing effective programs, products and processes that encourage and support a more actively engaged public in and along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

# Goals and Objectives

There are 5 major components of the **Kids in Parks** project. All components must be addressed and developed in order for the overall project to be successful. The **Programs** are the most tangible component of the project and include all aspects of program design, assessment and implementation. **Outreach and Marketing** incorporates all elements used in the promotion and dissemination of the programs, products and partnerships. Another component of the project includes **Policy and Process** level issues. In order to fully meet the intent of the mission, there are institutional level aspects of the project. **Organizational** development at both the staff and board level are also critical components for the overall success of the project. The final piece, allowing for the accomplishment of all other components, is the **Financial** support and security of the project. The following section outlines the organizational structure of individual project components and reviews the goals and objectives of each.



## Programs

There are multiple programs within the **Kids in Parks** project. All programs associated with children that the Foundation either funds or delivers can be considered within the organizational hierarchy of **Kids in Parks** including TRACK, Parker the Bear, and Parks as Classrooms. Other programs could include a Camp, Outreach and the Junior Rangers. The TRACK program has elements of trails, backpacks, web and guided programs. Parker the Bear includes web development, outreach and integration into the TRACK program. The Camp primarily involves completing a feasibility study. Parks as Classrooms and the Junior Ranger programs although NPS designed, delivered, and managed could include web development and integration into the Kids in Parks web site. Outreach is a programmatic aspect associated with all other programs.

## *Goals*

The goals of programs include:

- \*increasing the physical activity of participants in and around the Blue Ridge Parkway
- \*educating participants about natural and cultural resources of the Blue Ridge Parkway
- \*educating participants about nutritional food options and other physical and mental health related messages
- \*connecting participants meaningfully to the Blue Ridge Parkway

## Objectives

- ✓ Develop pilot TRACK trail at the Destination Center by July 2009 (see Appendix A)
- ✓ Develop assessment strategy for TRACK program by June 2009 (see Appendix B)
- ✓ Develop TRACK Pack program by June 2009
- ✓ Develop application process for TRACK program by June 2009
- ✓ Develop web application components for TRACK trail by December 2010
- ✓ Enroll 200 participants into the TRACK program by Summer 2010
- ✓ Develop one community TRACK trail by June 2010
- ✓ Develop second Parkway TRACK trail by June 2010
- ✓ Develop template for TRACK program by June 2010
- ✓ Double the programming of the Parker the Bear educational material by December 2009
- ✓ Integrate the Parker the Bear web site and interface with the TRACK program by June 2010
- ✓ Develop the **Kids in Parks** web site with all components including Parker the Bear, TRACK, Junior Ranger, and Parks as Classrooms by June 2010
- ✓ Complete a feasibility analysis of a **Kids in Parks** Camp by December 2010
- ✓ Conduct at least four guided programs or public events each calendar year



### **Outreach and Marketing**

Outreach and Marketing includes all aspects that involve direct interface with the public. There are four primary components of outreach including events, media, merchandise, and partnerships. Events are defined as all tasks involving direct interface with the general public such as holding community meetings, conducting guided programs, and participating in or attending events. Media includes all mediums of communication but will primarily focus on web, print and televised communication. Partnerships incorporate all groups, individuals and organizations with which the organization works to achieve goals and objectives. Merchandise includes all products produced or sanctioned by the **Kids in Parks** project.

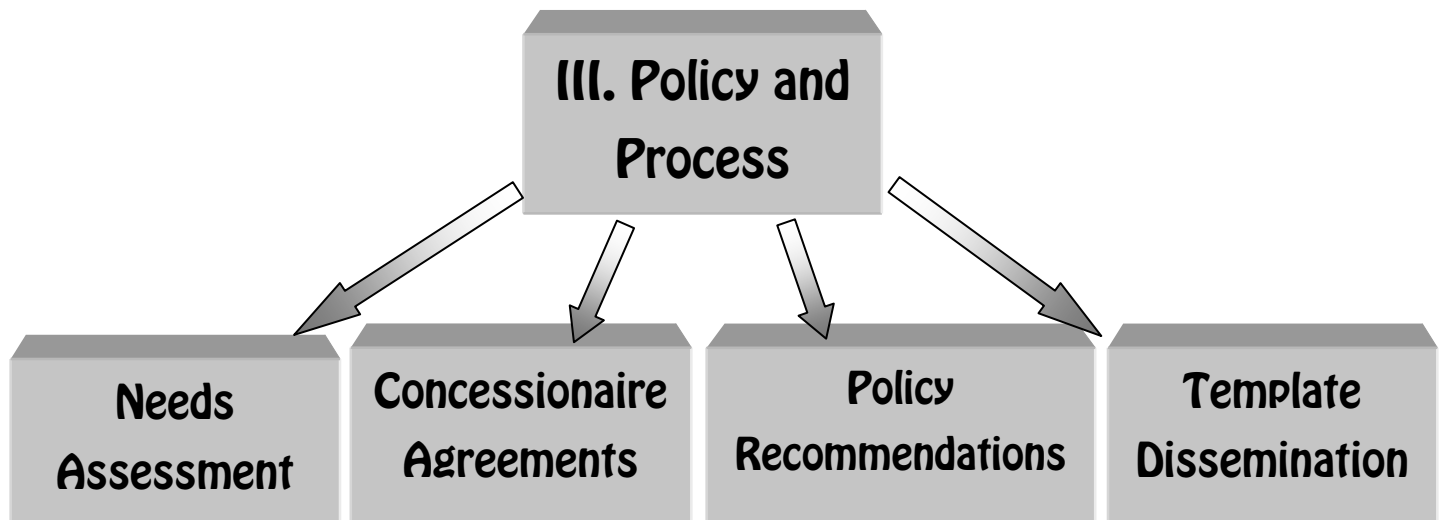
### *Goals*

The goals of outreach and marketing are to:

- \*build a constituency and community awareness
- \*educate partners and the public about program benefits
- \*design an effective outreach program
- \*increase fundraising potential
- \*increase the functionality, community support and integration of programs into the community

### Objectives

- ✓ Hold six community meetings (three in 2009 and three 2010) with targeted populations incorporating program design, dissemination and assessment components
- ✓ Form partnerships with at least six major groups or organizations that service targeted populations by March 2010
- ✓ Conduct at least four public events or guided programs each year
- ✓ Design marketing campaign and outreach programs and materials to reach target populations by December 2009. Mediums should include web, print, and video. Programs to be promoted include TRACK and Parker the Bear
- ✓ Maintain systematic public appearance and promotion of programs throughout 2009-2010
- ✓ Develop three branded promotional merchandise items to be used for program incentives and sales by December 2009



**Policy and Process**

The policy level tasks include review and recommendations regarding visitor food choices and preferences focusing on healthy and local options in and along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Process level tasks include the creation of a template of the entire **Kids in Parks** project allowing for ease of implementation in other locations in and along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

*Goals*

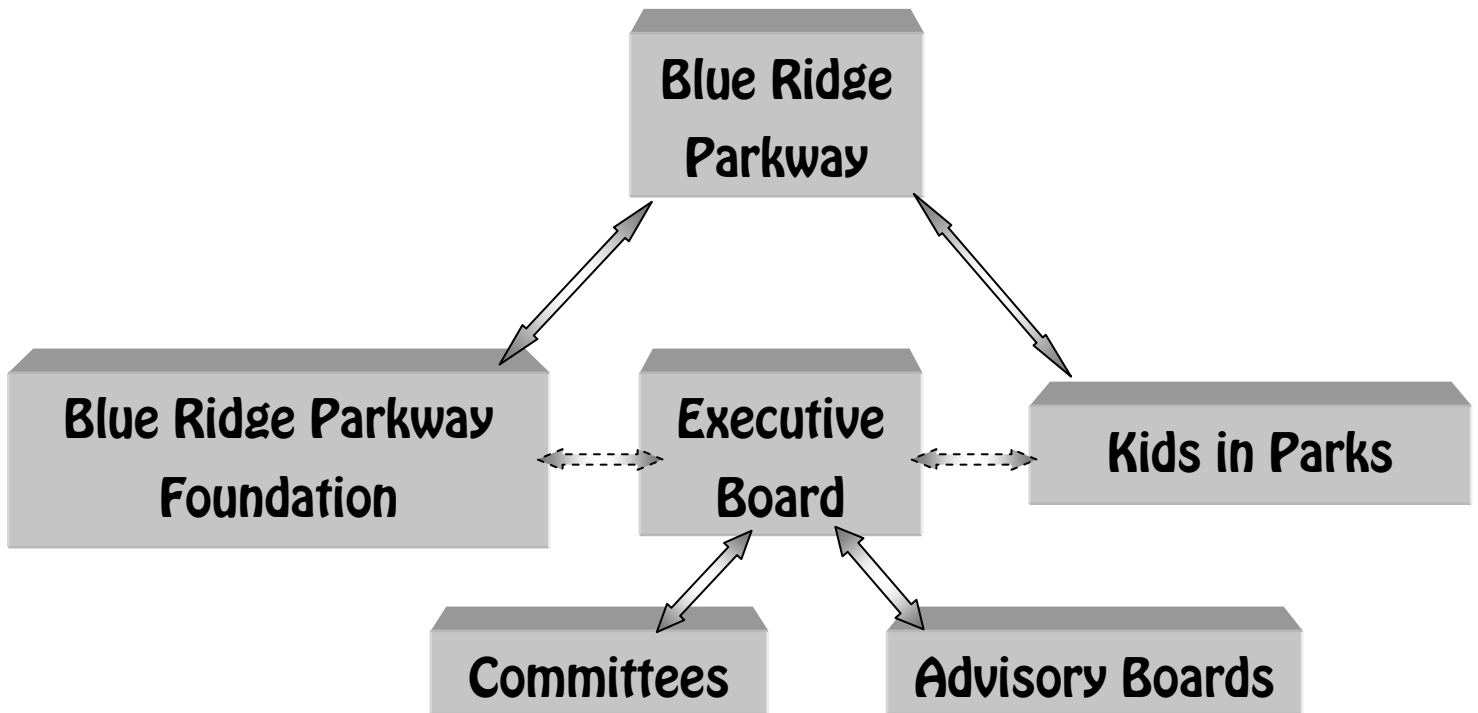
The goals of the policy and process level aspects of the project are to:

- \*improve the nutritional food options of recreationists in and around the Blue Ridge Parkway
- \*provide a plan for the implementation of food policy recommendations and agreements
- \*create a template allowing for dissemination of the successful components of the project to other locations

Objectives

- ✓ Conduct needs assessment and visitor preferences for healthy food options by June 2010
- ✓ Complete feasibility study of providing local healthy food options in and along the Parkway by December 2010
- ✓ Make policy level recommendations enabling healthy nutritional and local food options whenever feasible
- ✓ Create a template of all successful programs, processes and procedures allowing for ease of replication in other locations by December 2010

**IV. Organizational Structure**



### **Organization**

Components covered under the organizational section of the Strategic Plan include all management aspects that are staffing and board related. The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation has fiduciary and monitoring responsibilities. The Executive Boards' primary responsibilities include program and financial advice, assistance and expertise. There may be Committees and Advisory Boards as the project grows in scope, function and outreach. Program direction and oversight is created in conjunction with Parkway staff.

### *Goals*

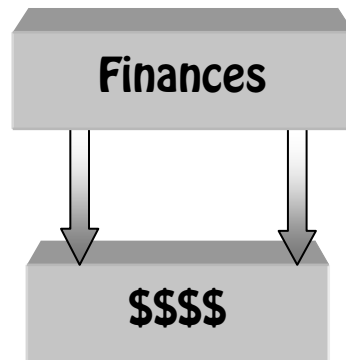
The organizational goals are to:

- \*encourage and support Executive Board development and recruitment
- \*create advisory boards and committees as necessary
- \*provide resources and development opportunities for staff
- \*create sufficient staffing structure to conduct organizational business and programs
- \*ensure appropriate reporting and accountability
- \*Facilitate integration with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation and the Blue Ridge Parkway programs and staff

### Objectives

- ✓ Create a volunteer and community action and involvement program by December 2009
- ✓ Conduct one Executive Board Retreat for the 2011-2012 Strategic Plan before December 2010

- ✓ Create sub-committee structure of the Executive Board by June 2009
- ✓ Create Executive Board policies and procedures manual by June 2009
- ✓ Create staffing structure necessary to fulfill goals and objectives of the 2009-2010 Strategic Plan by June 2009
- ✓ Hold quarterly Executive Board Meetings
- ✓ Annual budget and program report will be presented to the Foundation Board at the regular December budget meeting or if special needs arise.
- ✓ Provide quarterly and annual reports to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation Board, Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation Executive Director, and the Management team of the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- ✓ Meet monthly with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation staff and the Blue Ridge Parkway staff to ensure integration and program efficiency



### **Financials**

Financials include all aspects of programming, products, outreach, fundraising and grants that have any income potential. It also includes all expenses associated with the program, staff, materials, etc.

### *Goals*

The financial goals are to:

- \*establish a balanced and sustainable budget
- \*allow for full development of programming, outreach and community involvement

### Objectives

- ✓ Create a sustainable budget for 2010 that allows for full program development as outlined in the 2009-2010 Strategic Plan
- ✓ Submit at least two grants per year
- ✓ Design and produce merchandise in support of programs
- ✓ Integrate programmatically and financially with other Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation projects involving children including Parker the Bear