

ROANOKE
VALLEY
PRESERVATION
FOUNDATION

2012 Endangered Sites List
Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation



Boones Mill Train Depot

Since 1996, the Roanoke Preservation Foundation has annually announced a list of significant historic, natural, and cultural sites in the Roanoke Valley that are in eminent danger of being lost due to deferred maintenance, demolition, or incompatible development. The intent is not to shame or punish the current owners, but bring attention to these sites and encourage their preservation and stewardship.

In no particular order of severity or significance, these sites are considered endangered:

1. Boones Mill Train Depot - Franklin County

Location: Boones Mill, Virginia

Description: The Boones Mill Depot, built in the 1880's, was once operated by the former Norfolk & Western Railway as a passenger and freight station. The depot represents the vital role the railroad played in the economic history of Boones Mill, serving as the primary shipping point for all agricultural goods. The depot has been identified as a contributing structure to the Boones Mill Historic District, which has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The depot is currently owned by Norfolk Southern Corp. and is vacant.

Threat: Last year, Norfolk Southern (successor to N&W) announced their plans to demolish the building due to its unsafe proximity to the tracks. The Norfolk Southern Corp. has offered to donate the depot to the Town of Boones Mill if they can relocate it to another site.



Current condition of the Boones Mill Train Depot.

Recommended Action: The Town owns a lot directly across the tracks from the depot's current location and is currently looking for funds to relocate the building. Lois Slotnick is organizing Boones Mill Norfolk Western Railroad Depot Restoration to raise \$100,000, the estimated cost of moving the building. The RVPF nominated the depot to Preservation Virginia's Endangered Sites List and it was selected along with nine other sites from around the Commonwealth. Preservation Virginia urged a redoubling of local efforts to raise funds for moving the depot and to develop a sustainable reuse plan. Donations are currently being accepted at the Boones Mill Town Hall.



Boones Mill Train Depot in 1907
Photograph courtesy of Special Collections University Libraries
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

2. St. John's African Methodist Episcopal Church ~ Roanoke County

Location: 3019 Rutrough Road

Description: St. John's African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church is a classic one room, gothic revival building constructed in 1924 and located in the Delaney Court neighborhood of Roanoke County. The church's most distinctive features are its corner entrance tower with pyramidal hipped roof and colored glass lancet arch windows. The African Methodist Episcopal Church was the first independent black denomination in the United States, established in 1787 and officially recognized in 1816 under the leadership of Reverend Richard Allen. The AME Church quickly spread to southern states such as Virginia during the Reconstruction Period after the Civil War. Of the four AME congregations in Roanoke today, St. Johns appears to be the oldest having purchased the property in 1900.



Current condition of St. John's AME.

Threat: The church has been boarded up since 2002 when the congregation constructed a new building at 3020 Ivyland Drive. The roof has begun to fail exposing the interior to the elements and a broken window at ground level provides uncontrolled access to the building which could result in vandalism or arson.

Recommended Action: The building's immediate needs are a new roof and a secure perimeter. To ensure its long-term preservation, an active use needs to be found for the building.



A survey conducted in 1991 identified the building as being in excellent condition.

3. Barn at Waskey's Mill - Botetourt County

Location: U.S. 11 three miles south of Buchanan

Description: The barn at Waskey's Mill dates from the early 1800s. This barn is representative of rural architecture developed during the golden age of agriculture. The Waskey's Mill area was settled by John Beale and once supported a hotel, general store, and a restaurant. The mill was purchased by Christopher Waskey in 1818.



Current condition of the barn at Waskey's Mill.

Threat: The barn at Waskey's Mill represents the countless rural barns in our area suffering from weathering and neglect.

Recommended Action: Property owners should explore programs such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Barn Again! Program to identify preservation options.

4. Oak Ridge Road (Route 641) ~ Botetourt County

Location: Extends between Blue Ridge Turnpike (State Route 606) and Lee Highway (U.S. 11)

Description: Oak Ridge Road, a rural route characterized by scenic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and historic resources such as the Lauderdale Mansion, is representative of numerous rural routes in our region threatened by sprawling development.

Threat: A small family farm was recently auctioned at the intersection of Oak Ridge

Road and Lee Highway, with the purchaser subdividing the roadside acreage into small lots for the construction of four single-family dwellings. These dwellings along with their attendant infrastructure were placed close to the road on a ridge, dominating the view, removing prime agricultural land from productive service, threatening the context of historic resources, and putting further strain on infrastructure and services paid for by the County. Residential development typically costs localities more in road improvements, schools, bussing, emergency services, and utility extensions such as water and sewer lines than the tax revenue generated.

Recommended Action: The Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan states the importance of preserving scenic views by limiting ridgeline development and using conservation design for new developments. One of the most effective ways of accomplishing this is through the adoption of a more progressive Zoning Ordinance by the County that results in the thoughtful placement of new development. Property owners interested in preserving their land should also consider donating a conservation easement to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation through the Western Virginia Land Trust.



Views from Oak Ridge Road.



5. Bent Mountain Road (U.S. 221) ~ Roanoke County

Location: Back Creek and Poages Mill in southwest Roanoke County

Description: U.S. Route 221 is a popular scenic road that has historically served as a connection between the Roanoke Valley and the Blue Ridge Parkway and Floyd County. The Virginia Department of Transportation is currently working on a \$20-million project which will widen approximately one mile of road to four-lanes and eliminate an S-curve to address numerous wrecks and traffic delays. Approximately 28 acres of farmland, seven homes, and one business were lost to accommodate the expanded right-of-way.

Threat: As this area becomes more accessible additional development can be expected, further threatening the area's scenic, historic, and agricultural resources. For now, the five mile section of two-lane highway which runs in front of the historic Poages Mill Farm to the foot of Bent Mountain will remain.

Recommended Action: Maximize the use of land within the specified boundaries of the Suburban Village as identified in the Route 221 Area Plan to prevent further encroachment into the rural landscape. Traditional design principles should be implemented to ensure land resources are used efficiently. It is also recommended that VDOT donate or provide an easement on portions the existing right-of-way to Roanoke County for use as a park and greenway connection once vacated.



The addition of two lanes will increase the accessibility of Back Creek and Poages Mill.



Construction along and over Back Creek.



Historic Poages Mill Farm recently sold to the Roanoke County School Board

6. Read Mountain - Roanoke County

Location: North Roanoke County

Description: Read Mountain is the only mountain in the Roanoke area without any utility towers. Through the work of the Read Mountain Alliance, a grass roots group led by Ron Crawford, approximately 320 acres has been protected through conservation easements. However, much of the mountain is still unprotected and vulnerable to insensitive development.

Threat: Read Mountain narrowly escaped approval as a site for a proposed monopole tower recently planned by the Western Virginia Water Authority for a network to check water meters. While the plan was denied by the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors it demonstrates the continued development pressures threatening the mountain.

Recommended Action: The County should continue to adhere to the Future Land Use Guide of the Comprehensive Plan when considering rezoning and special use applications. When towers are approved, however, consideration should be given to their appearance. Timber monopoles with flush mounted antennas that extend just above the tree line have been a successful alternative in other localities such as Albemarle and Nelson Counties.



Photograph courtesy of Trail Work Database

7. Joseph Goodwin Cabin - Roanoke County

Location: 3081 Harborwood Road

Description: The Joseph Goodwin Cabin, also known as the John Tate House, is one of the few remaining pre-Civil War structures which once stood on this road. It appears on Major General Quincy Gillmore's Civil War maps as surveyed by 1st Lieut. Engineer Walter Izard in 1864. The original log beam structure is hidden by the addition of a two-story, I-frame structure with double



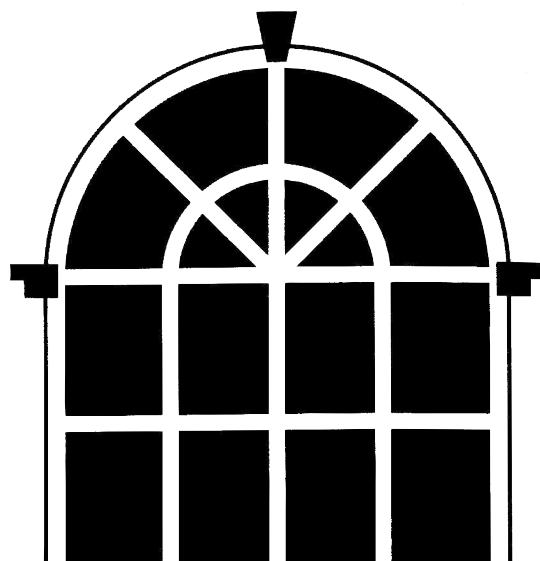
porch.

Threat: The cabin suffers from neglect due to a lengthy estate settlement. It has been vacant for several years since the death of its owner. Log cabins are rapidly disappearing, often because they are obscured by later additions and not identified in time to save them.

Recommended Action: The estate needs to be settled quickly to allow the heirs or a new owner to stabilize and preserve the building.



Current condition of the Joseph Goodwin cabin.



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The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation is a non-profit, 501c3 organization created for the purpose of promoting the preservation of the historic, natural, and cultural resources of the Roanoke Valley.

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