

A plan for public trails within and across Fannin County. The Trails Plan supports many different user groups: Hiking, Cycling (Road, Gravel, and Mountain Bike), Water (Kayak and Canoe), Nature Observation, and Equestrian (Trail and Carriage). Existing and proposed trails are identified within the County and possible funding sources are identified.

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

Prepared by the
Fannin County Equestrian Trails Assoc.

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

NOTES –

Online versions of this document and supporting files can be found at [FCRTMP Online](#)

Supporting files include the filesets used by the QGIS software package (<https://qgis.org/en/site/>) to create the maps shown in this document, and the individual track files produced by the GAIA GPS (<https://gaiagps.com/map/>) software package and mobile device app, in both GPX and KML formats.

KML files are used by QGIS and Google Earth to portray tracks. GPX files can be used by mobile apps to provide turn-by-turn directions to users. KML files are provided for all trail types, GPX files are only provided for the bike (hard- and soft-surface) routes.

Datasets for State, County, City boundaries, US Major Roads, Texas roads, County Roads, and water features (stream, river, and lake) were obtained from the 2018 TIGER/Line shapefile database.

Revision History -

Version 3.0 – Draft with revised maps

Version 3.1 – Editing updates to version 3.0

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Prepared under the direction of:

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Randy Moore – County Judge
Edwina Lane – County Commissioner, Precinct 1
AJ Self – County Commissioner, Precinct 2
Jerry Magness – County Commissioner, Precinct 3
Dean Lackey – County Commissioner, Precinct 4

Municipalities Involved

City of Bailey
City of Bonham
City of Dodd City
City of Ector
City of Honey Grove
City of Ladonia
City of Leonard
City of Ravenna
City of Savoy
City of Trenton
City of Windom

Fannin County Equestrian Trails Association

Tahni Ross – President
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Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

1 Introduction

1.1 Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

The Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan (FCRTMP) is intended to provide guidance in the creation of a county-wide trails network. Where individual cities within the County, Federal agencies with jurisdiction within the County, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have already created trails within the area(s) of their control, this Plan attempts to link and integrate those efforts with a regional trail system for the County. Key components of this planning effort will be to identify places where trails already exist, and to identify the means to interconnect those trail systems across the County.

1.2 Master Trails Plan Goal & Objectives

Provide a County-wide trail network that connects already existing trail sites and provides guidance on how future trails should be connected. The proposed trail network should support multiple types of users – hikers, walkers, bird watchers, nature lovers, photographers, cyclists, and equestrians, to name but a few.

In keeping with this goal, the following objectives would be used:

- Build upon existing trails and trail plans
- Ensure that every city and town can be connected into the regional trail system
- Recommend design guidelines for the development of the regional trail system
- Identify opportunities for multiple trail users to effectively share “trail infrastructure” (e.g. trailheads, parking lots, bridges, elevated walkways, and culverts). This would spread the costs of that infrastructure across multiple trail user types for a more cost effective build.
- Create a Trail Advisory Committee to work closely with the County Commissioners to implement and maintain the vision of the FCRTMP. This could develop into a 501(c)3 at some point in the future.
- Provide a tool that allows Fannin County Commissioners and the Trail Advisory Committee to evaluate funding requests

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1.3 Study Area

The study area of the FCRTMP encompasses the entire county. The study area includes the following cities, towns, and unincorporated communities:

- Bailey
- Bonham
- Ector
- Honey Grove
- Leonard
- Pecan Gap
- Ravenna
- Savoy
- Trenton
- Dodd City
- Ladonia
- Whitewright
- Windom
- Bug Tussle
- Duplex
- Elwood
- Gober
- Ivanhoe
- Mulberry
- Randolph
- Telephone

Fannin County is largely unincorporated, so the FCRTMP has included consideration of how to extend the trail system to serve residents in the unincorporated parts of the County, in addition to providing guidance to organizations (public and private) that plan to provide trails in these areas.

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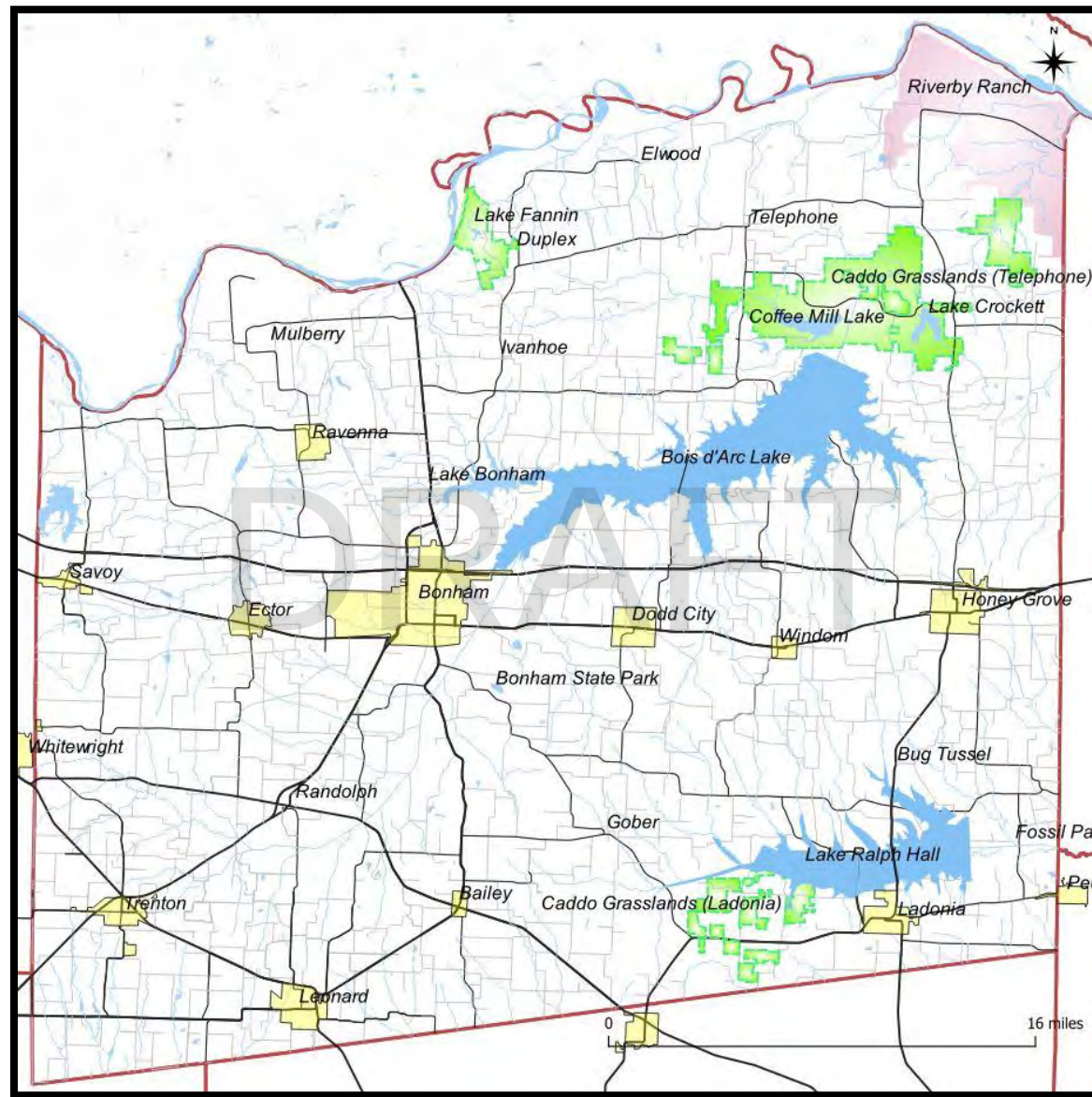


Figure 1 - Fannin County Cities, Communities, and Landmarks

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1.4 Planning Process & Methodology

The FCRTMP as documented here is not set in stone, but should be considered as a working Plan. The FCRTMP, after adoption by the County, will evolve over time as new priorities and opportunities arise.

The process used to create and extend this Plan will consist of many steps, beginning now and stretching into the future.

1. Set the FCRTMP Vision – Create an initial Plan that echoes the desires of the residents and trail users.
2. Adopt the Vision – Once the County Commissioners have adopted the FCRTMP, it can then be included in the planning process of other agencies.
3. Set up Trail Plan Governance – The County Commissioners would set up the Trail Advisory Committee that manages the FCRTMP process going forward.
4. Refine the Vision and Set Priorities – The Trail Advisory Committee refines the details of the different proposed trail projects and sets the priorities of the proposed FCRTMP elements.
5. Determine Funding for high priority projects – The Trail Advisory Committee identifies the sources of funding for the chosen projects and obtains commitments for that funding.
6. The County Commissioners approve the project and funding proposed by the Trail Advisory Committee
7. Implement the chosen projects – The chosen projects are implemented.
8. Re-examine the FCRTMP's Vision and Priorities – The process begins again with another cycle of aligning the FCRTMP with the then current desires and priorities.

This plan document is the product of Step 1 – Set the FCRTMP Vision. This initial version of the FCRTMP was created by identifying individuals and groups that would have a stake or interest in the future FCRTMP. Those individuals and groups were sought out and interviewed for their thoughts on the proposed Trails. The resulting Plan addresses their concerns and their desires for the types of trails that interest them most.

- City governments – Each of the cities in the County was informed of the FCRTMP and invited to participate in the creation of the Plan.
- Federal and State agencies that control land within the County – Representatives of the US Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and TxDOT were interviewed for their thoughts on the FCRTMP
- County departments within the County – Each of the County Commissioners and the County Judge have seen the FCRTMP, and their feedback gathered, as was the County Sheriff's.
- NGO's that manage or control existing trails within the County - Caddo Trail Riders Association, North East Texas Trail (NETT) Coalition, and Lake Fannin Volunteers were informed of the FCRTMP
- Road bicycling groups – Ride organizers of the Autumn in Bonham Bike Rally, and cycling clubs in Collin and Grayson counties were informed of the FCRTMP

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- Equestrian groups – Fannin County Equestrian Trails Association (FETA), Caddo Trail Riders Association, Texas Equestrian Trail Riders Association (TETRA), Lake Ray Roberts Equestrian Trails Association (LRRETA), Trinity Trail Preservation Association (TTPA), Broken Wheel Ranch Project, and Tejas Carriage Association have all seen presentations on the FCRTMP.
- North Texas Municipal Water District – has discussed the integration of the FCRTMP with Bois d’Arc Lake and the Riverby Ranch mitigation property
- Upper Trinity Regional Water District – has discussed the integration of the FCRTMP with Lake Ralph Hall
- Public meetings with the Bonham Rotary, the Gober community, and the Wild Horse Creek Camp to explain the FCRTMP
- Kayaking and Canoe groups – Kayak and canoe enthusiasts were interviewed for their thoughts on the FCRTMP
- Landowners – Presentations of the FCRTMP were given to representatives of Fannin County landowners and the Bonham Economic Development Corporation.

1.5 Agency Input Summary

There is a great deal of enthusiasm within the trails community for the identification and creation of new trails. People are ready to grab their trail building equipment and go make a trail right now.

Major concerns voiced were for safety on road routes, and the costs to implement and maintain the trails and routes. These are addressed in later sections of this document.

Major positives were identified as new business opportunities for County residents who would provide services to the trail users, and economic growth county-wide as trail users from outside the County spend their money in the County. Additionally, the FCRTMP will make Fannin County a “destination”, for recreational trail enthusiasts – resulting in visitors staying *multiple days* to enjoy a network of trails. Increasing the average stay of visitors will stimulate existing businesses and drive new business development in Fannin County. Utilizing the entire Trails network would allow County and City agencies to pursue many different Recreational and Tourism types of events, examples of which are listed below:

- Swimming, Kayaking, Running, and Cycling combined events (e.g. Iron Man-type events)
- Multi-day Cycling events (e.g. Tour de Fannin events)
- Multi-day Equestrian events (e.g. 100 mile rides)
- Multi-day Carriage events (e.g. major American Driving Society (ADS) events)
- Single and Multi-day Educational events (e.g. hands-on nature science classes)

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2 Context

2.1 Current Population & Future Growth

Fannin County's population is just over 34,000, with roughly a third of that number living in Bonham. The County is 899 square miles in size, with roughly 10% of the land area under the control of the Federal Government, State of Texas, North Texas Municipal Water District, and Upper Trinity Regional Water District.

With the advent of the two new lakes (Bois d'Arc Lake and Lake Ralph Hall), there has been an influx of new land owners, brought to Fannin County by comparatively lower land prices, attraction of nearby lakes, and a very rural, uncrowded countryside. However, any large increase in population (beyond the sub-1% year-over-year growth experienced now) is constrained by a lack of affordable housing.

2.2 Ability to Plan for the Future

This FCRTMP is a Plan to preserve the rural character and natural beauty of the County before the influx of new residents and "urban sprawl" of North Texas overwhelms the County. Without future planning for green space and trails, growth will drive the County leadership from a "state of planning" to a "state of reacting" – losing control of Fannin County's unique rural feel and family friendly atmosphere.

2.3 Existing Conditions

There are five areas within the county (and outside of the cities) that have existing trails:

- **Lake Fannin** – Kayak/canoe, hiking, and Mountain Bike trails around the historic Lake Fannin Lodge and Lake Fannin. Equestrian access to the USFS lands north of the historic district.
- **Bonham State Park** – Kayak/canoe, hiking, and Mountain Bike trails around the Bonham State Park Lake
- **Caddo Grasslands (Telephone)** – Hiking, equestrian, and kayak/canoe trails within the Caddo Grasslands Telephone Wildlife Management Area (includes Coffee Mill Lake and Lake Crockett)
- **North East Texas Trail (NETT)**– Hiking, gravel bike, and equestrian trail on a 10 mile segment through Ladonia of the 130 mile rails-to-trail NETT trailbed
- **Lake Bonham** – Kayak/canoe trails

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Categorized by use type, the above existing trails total 72+ miles within Fannin County:

- **Kayak/Canoe** – Lake Bonham, Coffee Mill Lake, Lake Crockett, Bonham State Park Lake, Lake Fannin – **23.2 miles**
- **Hiking/Equestrian** (off road) – Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) – **29.7 miles**
- **Gravel Bike/Hiking/Equestrian** – NETT (Wolfe City – Ladonia – Pecan Gap) – **10 miles**
- **Mountain Bike** – Lake Fannin, Bonham State Park – **11 miles**

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3 The Regional Trail System

3.1 Introduction

The Fannin County Equestrian Trails Association (FETA) was formed in 2018 to advocate for equestrian trails in Fannin County. A first step of that advocacy was the insertion of language into the Bois d’Arc Lake Comprehensive Zoning Plan document that supported the creation of trails within the Lake’s zoning district. An important consideration for that language was that the trails in the district were to support all types of trail users, not just the equestrian users.

However, having zoning language that supported trails in the Lake’s district did not meet the needs and desires of the remainder of the County and all the County residents. A broader view was needed, and that view could not be limited to FETA’s advocacy for equestrian trails. FETA offered to the County Commissioners, and they accepted, a proposal that FETA would create an initial Master Trails Plan for the entire county and for all non-motorized trail types and users.

3.2 User Groups and Trail Types

The following types of users are the target audience for the trails within this FCRTMP:

- Pedestrian
- Cyclists
- Equestrian
- Kayak/Canoe

3.2.1 Pedestrian

Pedestrian users include both disabled and non-disabled trail users. Both classes of pedestrian users can have the same recreation goals – exercise and immersion in nature. However, trails designed to accommodate disabled users must be designed to be Architectural Barrier Act (ABA)-compliant.

The trail surfaces that will support pedestrian use can be natural earth, porous surface (e.g. crushed granite), or non-porous surface (e.g. paved with concrete). ABA-compliant trails are usually limited to porous or non-porous surfaces, and with restrictions on the maximum grades allowed during the trail design and construction.

Casual users of the trails are assumed to live near a trail, and can walk to the nearest access point, hence they will not require extensive infrastructure. Non-casual users who have to drive to a trail will require a place to park, and possibly restroom facilities.

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3.2.2 Cyclists

Classes of cyclist users include advanced cyclists (willing to share a road with traffic), casual cyclists (uncomfortable riding on a road, but willing to share a non-road trail with other users), and children.

The cycling trail surfaces vary widely by the intended recreational goal of the cyclist user. Mountain biking users want a natural earth trail, with plenty of variation in terrain. Gravel biking users want a rougher road surface – either a tertiary road that is not paved or a non-road trail that is not natural earth, but has the grades typical of a road. Road biking users want a paved road surface with variation in terrain.

Trails used commonly by children are assumed to be near their home and hence extensive infrastructure is not required. Trails used by Road, Gravel, and Mountain cyclists will require a place to park, and possibly restroom facilities.

3.2.3 Equestrian

There are two types of equestrian trail users – Trail Riders and Carriage Drivers. Trail Riders can be on horses that are comfortable with traffic and other types of trail users (e.g. cyclists, pedestrians), or on horses that are inexperienced in coping with unexpected or unusual situations on the trail. Carriage Drivers can be novice through experienced, driving a one-horse or a multi-horse carriage.

Trails used by Carriage equestrians need to be designed and constructed to the width and turning abilities of the carriages, and if two-way carriage traffic is expected, wide enough to allow safe passing. Carriages can operate on all three surface types, but porous is the most desirable and non-porous the least desirable. Trail Riders can also use all three surface types, but natural earth is the most desirable, with non-porous the least desirable.

It is assumed that equine trailheads will always be required, with room in the parking area to allow trucks and trailers to turn and park, unload, and tack up the horses without crowding, and possibly restroom facilities.

3.2.4 Kayak/Canoe

Paddling users can be casual or trip-bound. Casual users will enter and leave the water at the same point, after paddling for several hours. Trip-bound users will enter the water to embark on a day-long or multi-day trip that has them leaving the water at a different point.

Water trails come in three types in Fannin County. Lake water trails navigate the lake's surface, sometimes along the shoreline, sometimes over deeper water. The River water trail navigates the Red River, encountering significant water flow and sandbars. The Creek water trail navigates the lower Bois d'Arc Creek, encountering many twists and obstructions in the waterway.

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All three types of trails require access to the water body. Parking for the access points should be no farther than 200 yards from the water, within 100 yards would be best. Restroom facilities should be available at the trailhead.

3.3 Opportunities & Constraints

The greatest opportunity for trails in Fannin County lies in its rich and diverse natural elements, replete with recreational assets. The County has 46+ miles of river frontage on the Red River, over 15,000 acres of US Forest Service (USFS) lands in the Caddo Grassland lots (at Lake Fannin, Telephone, and Ladonia), the headwaters of the Bois d'Arc Creek and North Sulphur River, and will have two major lakes (Bois d'Arc Lake - 17,000 acres and Lake Ralph Hall - 12,000 acres) joining an impressive collection of existing lakes. Additionally, there is the 17,000 acres of Riverby Ranch mitigation lands with infrastructure (ranch roads, buildings, historical sites, and ranch facilities) that could be converted to recreational use, without disturbing the growth of the mitigation trees and plants.

Added to the above natural opportunities are the 940+ miles of County owned and maintained roads, 43 miles of US Highways, 125 miles of Texas Highways, 270+ miles of Farm-to-Market roads, and an undetermined number of miles of "field roads".

A major constraint is the lack of access to the shorelines of the Bois d'Arc Lake and Lake Ralph Hall for trails between the shoreline and the boundaries of the NTMWD and UTRWD owned-lands containing their lakes. An opportunity for additional recreational use could be created if a trail easement were created on the lands between the shorelines of these two lakes and their respective 100 year flood high-water elevations.

The other major constraint is the high speed traffic on the major US and Texas highways within the County. For this reason, this plan has avoided using the right-of-way, roadbed, or at-grade crossings on US 82, US 69, and Tx 121. Use of the right-of-way, roadbed, and at-grade crossings is kept to a minimum for the other Texas Highways. Following the avoidance rule for US 82 and Tx 121 has left a broad corridor along those two roads where trails cannot cross them unless there is an over/underpass. Note that dedicated trail underpasses have been created by TxDoT under state highways to avoid an at-grade crossing (e.g. under FM 455 at Lake Ray Roberts).

A lesser constraint is the US Forest Service interim policy of 'no new trails' on Forest Service lands as the USFS lacks the resources to maintain new trails. However, the USFS has been encouraged by Congress to partner with volunteers where backlogs are jeopardizing access to national forest lands, which may create an opportunity for the NGO trail groups to work with the USFS to develop new trails in the future. This Plan's understanding of the current policy is that it means that no new trails will be developed within the Forest Service lands, but that the policy does not preclude the public from entering the land through authorized access points and wandering freely throughout the lot.

Less of a constraint, but more of a reality, is the inability of the County or cities within the County to devote funding to immediate improvements of existing trails or construction of new trails in accordance with the FCRTMP. The Plan takes that into consideration by proposing the use of FM and County roadways as-is for the road-based trails, and the use of existing public and semi-public lands and

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waterways for the remaining off-road trails. It is hoped that as growth happens in the County, that developers and landowners will contribute additional green space (either in outright ownership grants, restricted-use easements, or conservation trusts) towards the enlargement of the FCRTMP to cover even more of the County.

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3.4 Trail Locations

As defined by this version of the FCRTMP, approximately 800 miles of trails will become available when fully implemented.

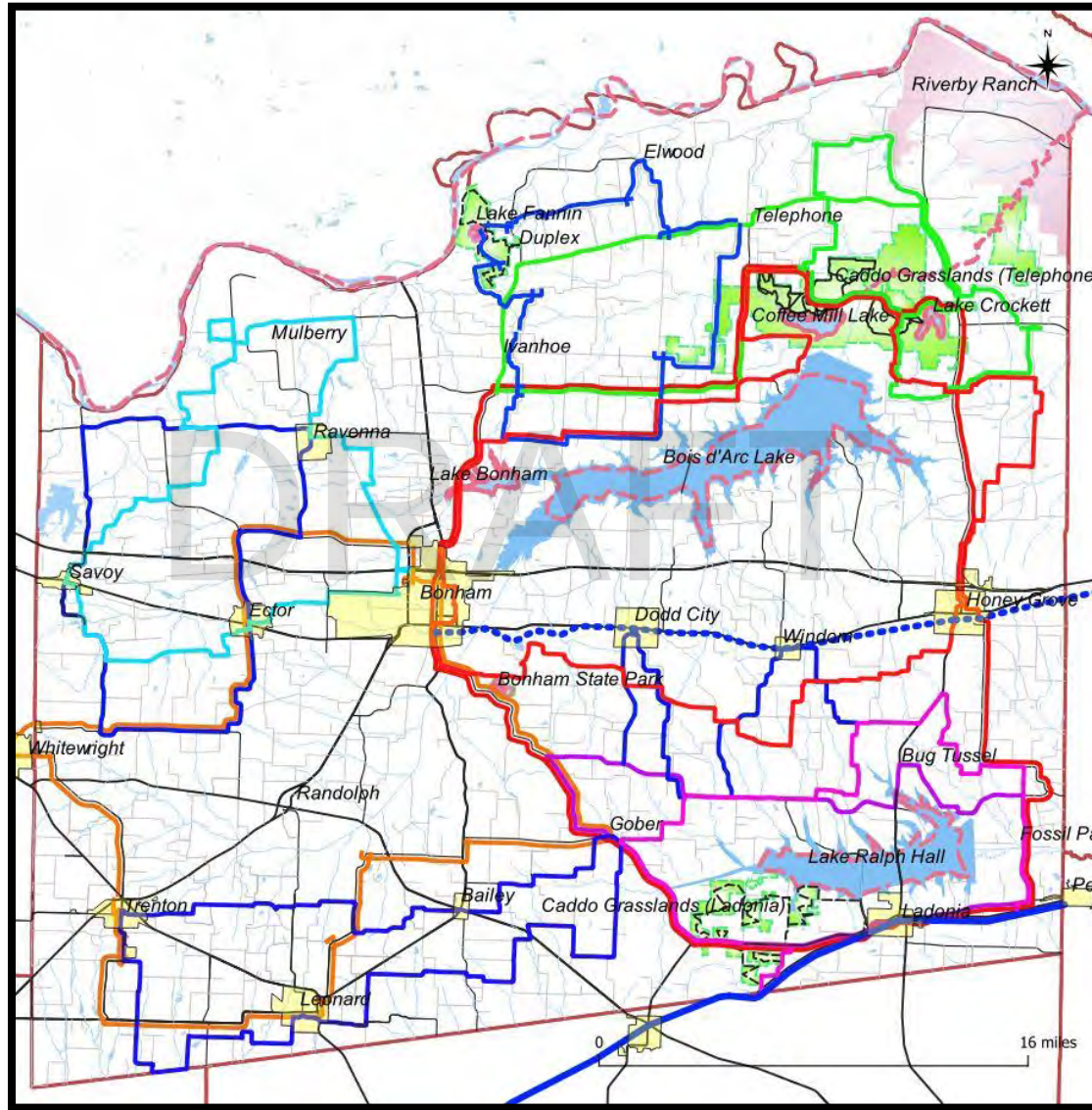


Figure 2 - All Trail Types

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3.4.1 Railbed Trails

There are two railbed routes in Fannin County that are or could be used as trailbeds.

- The North East Texas Trail (NETT) - A 10 mile segment across the southeastern corner of Fannin through Ladonia is part of the 130 mile trail that stretches from Farmersville to New Boston. Segments of the NETT are owned by eight rail bank agencies, with much of the renovation and maintenance work done by volunteers. The rails and cross ties have been removed from the trailbed, and the railroad bridges have been renovated and improved to provide a safe trailbed for hikers, cyclists, and equestrians.



Figure 4 - NETT segment through Ladonia

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- The Bonham-to-Paris railbed – This 34 mile railbed leaves Bonham and passes through Dodd City, Windom, and Honey Grove before leaving Fannin County to arrive in Paris. The railbed is approximately 19 miles from Bonham to the County line, TxDOT is the owner of the railbed and has no immediate plans for the route. There is still some question within the County as to whether the railbed should be converted to a multi-use trailbed, or re-furbished to carry commercial train traffic. If the railbed is converted to a trailbed, the rails and crossties must be removed, and the railroad bridges renovated and improved to provide a safe trailbed for hikers, cyclists, and equestrians. The removed rails and crossties can be sold for scrap to create funding for this trail. Additionally, a County-sponsored railbank agency must be created to take ownership of the railbed from TxDOT.



Figure 5 - Bonham to Paris Railbed

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3.4.2 Hard Surface Bike Routes

There are 276+ miles of hard surface roads used to create the hard surface bike routes in all the sections of the County. Most of those roads are FM roads; occasionally a Texas or US highway is used for a short distance to get from an FM road on one side of the highway to an FM road on the other side. As much as possible, the FM roads that have been chosen are not main traffic corridors.

Over time, it is expected that the FM road routes will be improved with:

- 1) Bike route signage (route name, distance(s), and directions)
- 2) Bike safety signage (e.g. “Share the Road”)
- 3) Bike shoulder (4 foot shoulder on the roadbed reserved for cyclists)
- 4) Multi-use trailbed separate from the roadbed but within the FM road right of way

This version of the RCRTMP has defined 5 hard surface loops and three hard surface access routes that touch on every city within the County:

- Lake Ralph Hall Bike Loop
- Fannin Lakes Bike Loop
- Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Bike Loop
- SW Fannin Bike Loop
- NW Fannin Bike Loop
- Dodd City Bike Access Route
- Windom Bike Access Route
- Bois d’Arc Lake Access Route

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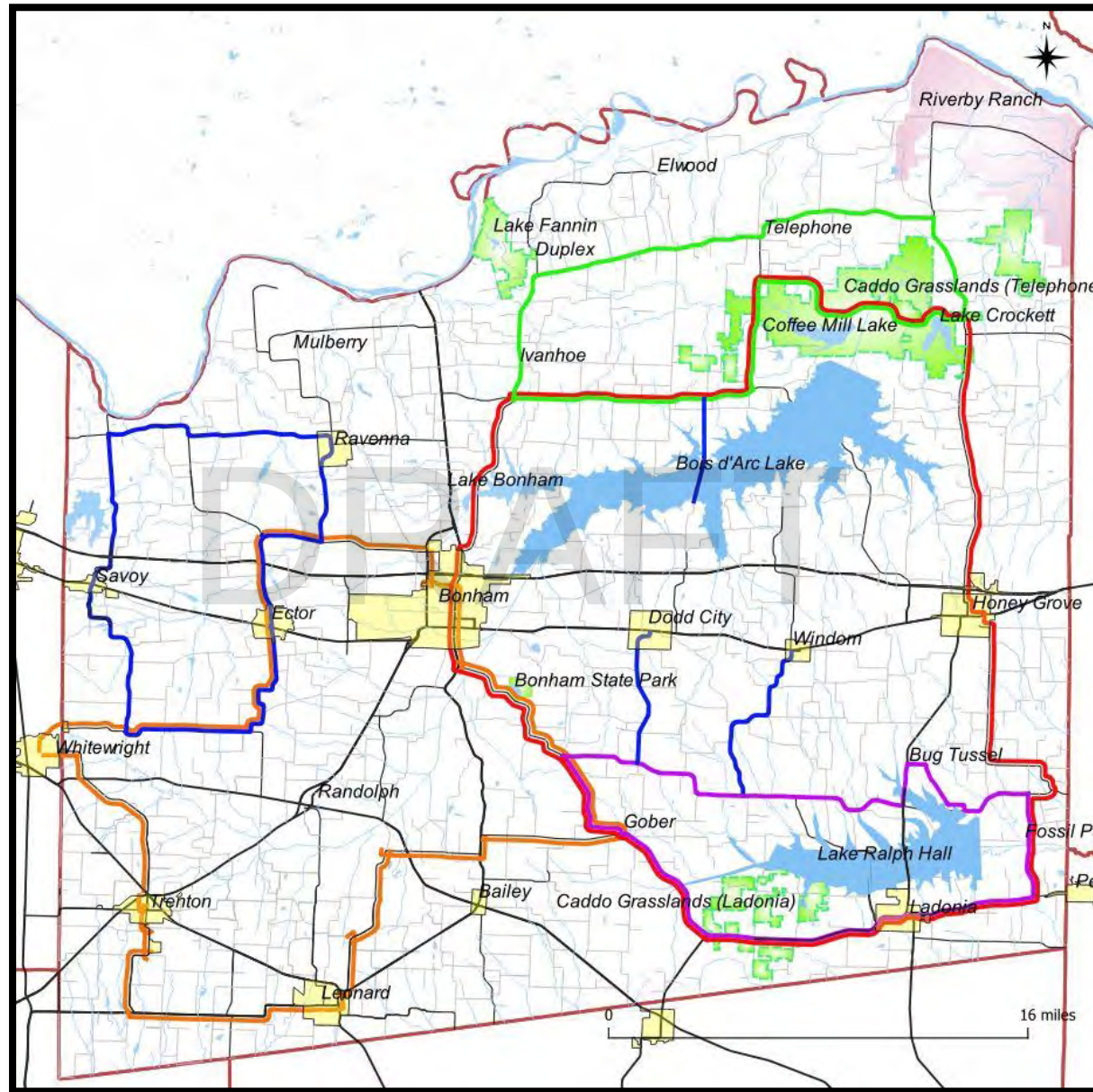


Figure 6 - Hard Surface Bike Routes

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3.4.2.1 Lake Ralph Hall Bike Loop

This 41 mile loop goes around the future Lake Ralph Hall basin, using only hard surface roads. Note that this route assumes that CR 3444 will be paved at some time in the future to connect the eastern portion of FM 1550 to Tx 34. This route does not traverse the new Tx 34 bridge over Lake Ralph Hall, but that bridge can be used a shortcut to shorten the loop into a western half and an eastern half. The primary trailhead for this loop would be in Ladonia, but Dodd City and Windom have access routes to the loop.

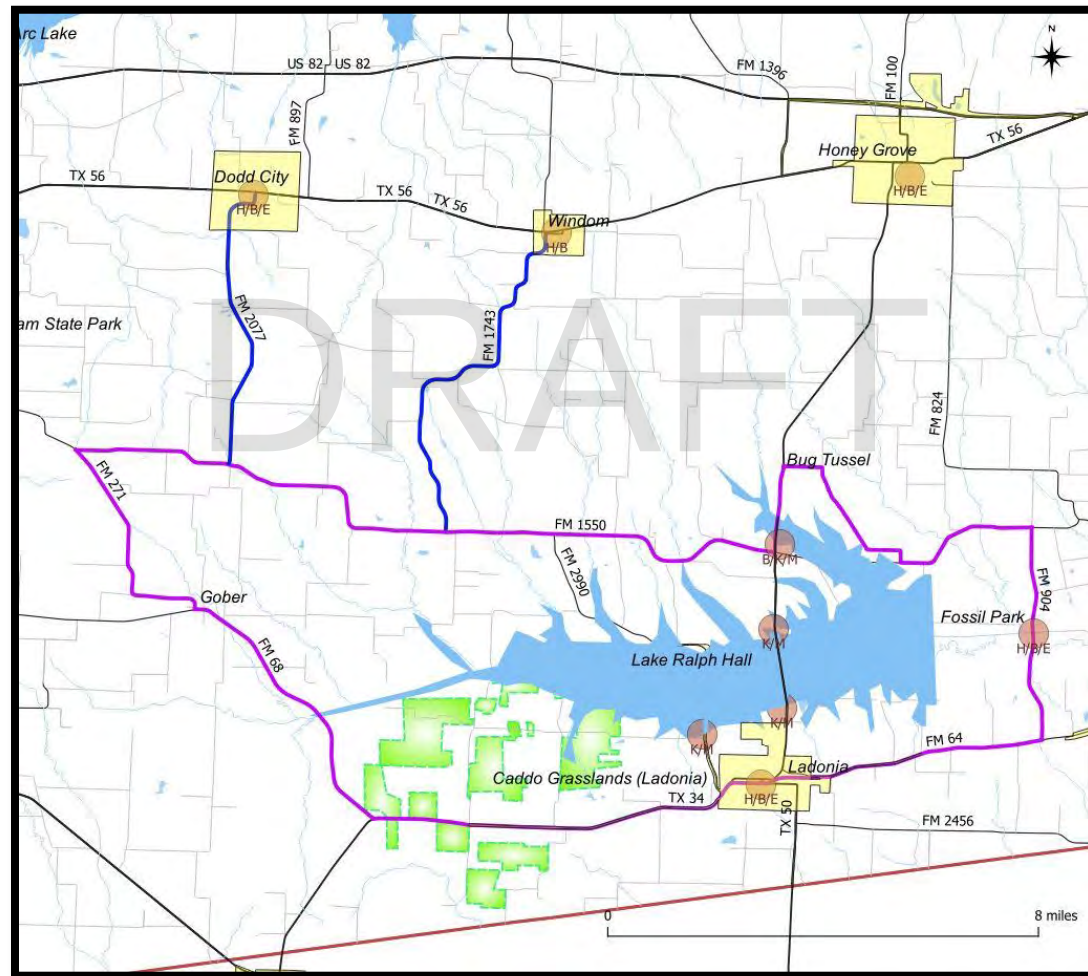


Figure 7 - Lake Ralph Hall Bike Loop

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3.4.2.3 Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Bike Loop

This 40 mile loop uses the trailhead on FM 409 or the Bois d'Arc Bridge trailhead, and winds around and through many of the USFS Grassland lots on hard surface roads. If the entrance to Lake Fannin is ever paved, this loop could use the Lake Fannin trailhead.

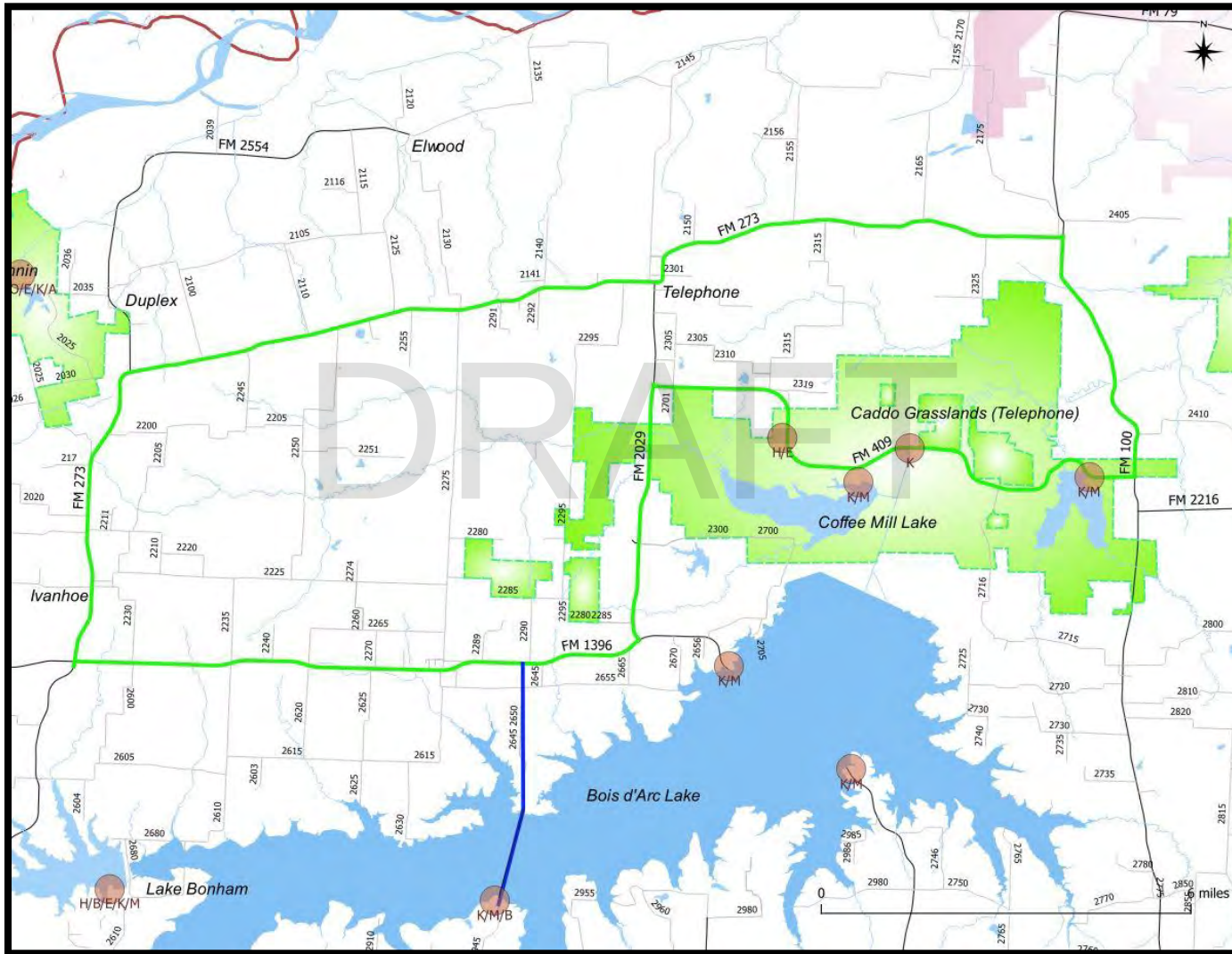


Figure 9 - Caddo Grasslands Bike Loop

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3.4.2.5 NW Fannin Bike Loop

This 37 mile loop goes through Ravenna, Savoy, and Ector, any of which can be used as a trailhead. Note that US 82 is crossed using overpasses, not an at-grade crossing.

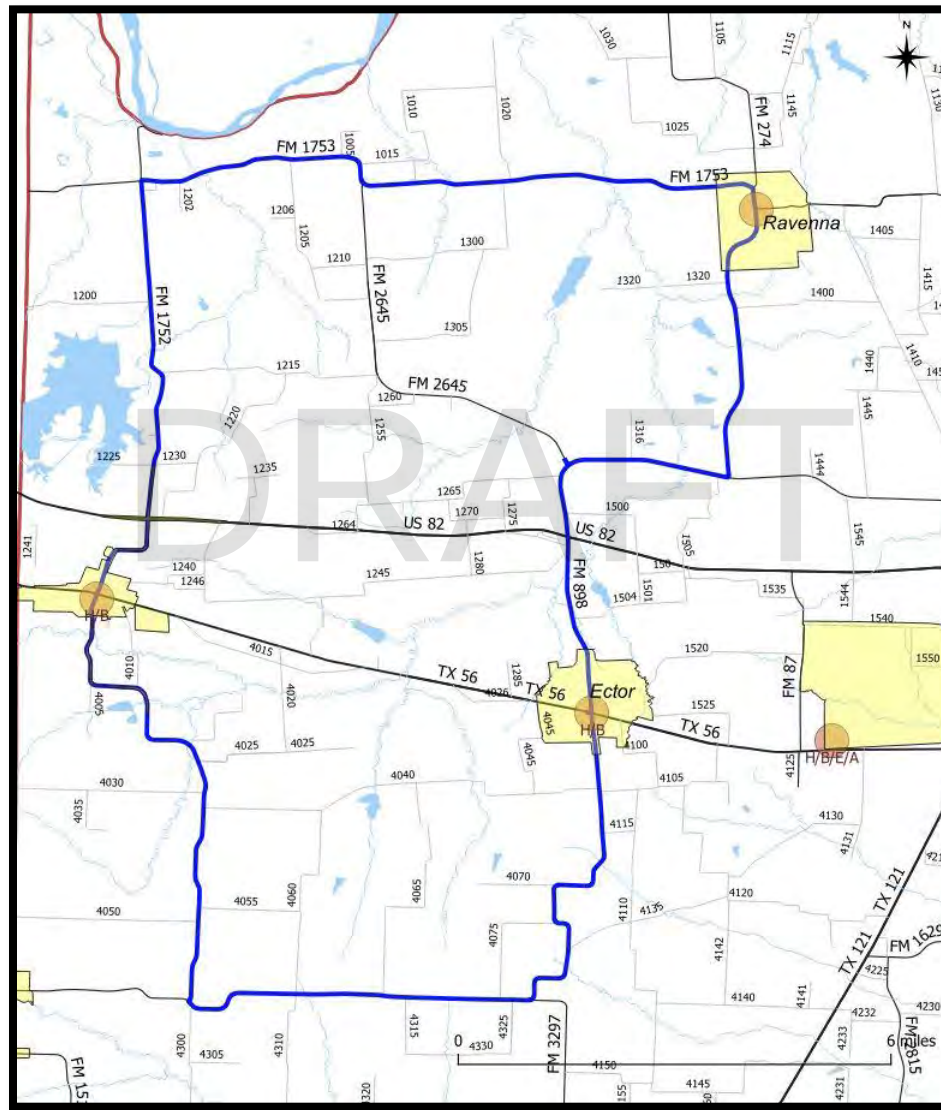


Figure 11 - NW Fannin Bike Loop

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3.4.3 Soft Surface Bike/Horse Routes

There are 311+ miles of soft surfaced County roads used to create the soft routes that are suitable for both cyclists and equestrians. Most of those roads are County roads, occasionally an FM road is used for a short distance to get from a County road on one side of the highway to a County road on the other side. As much as possible, the County roads that have been chosen are not main corridors. The condition of the existing County roads varies between coarse gravel, bladed dirt, and natural earth. Water crossings may use concrete, metal, or wood for the bridge deck, and there are a few low-water crossings.

Over time, it is expected that the County road routes will be improved with:

- 1) Route signage (route name, distance(s), and directions)
- 2) Bike and Horse safety signage (e.g. “Share the Road”)
- 3) Multi-use trailbed within the County road right of way

This version of the RCRTMP has defined 6 soft surface loops and two soft surface access routes that touch on every city within the County:

- Lake Ralph Hall Bike/Horse Loop
- Bois d’Arc Lake Bike/Horse Loop
- Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Bike/Horse Loop
- SW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop
- NW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop
- Lake Fannin Bike/Horse Loop
- Dodd City Bike/Horse Access Route
- Windom Bike/Horse Access Route

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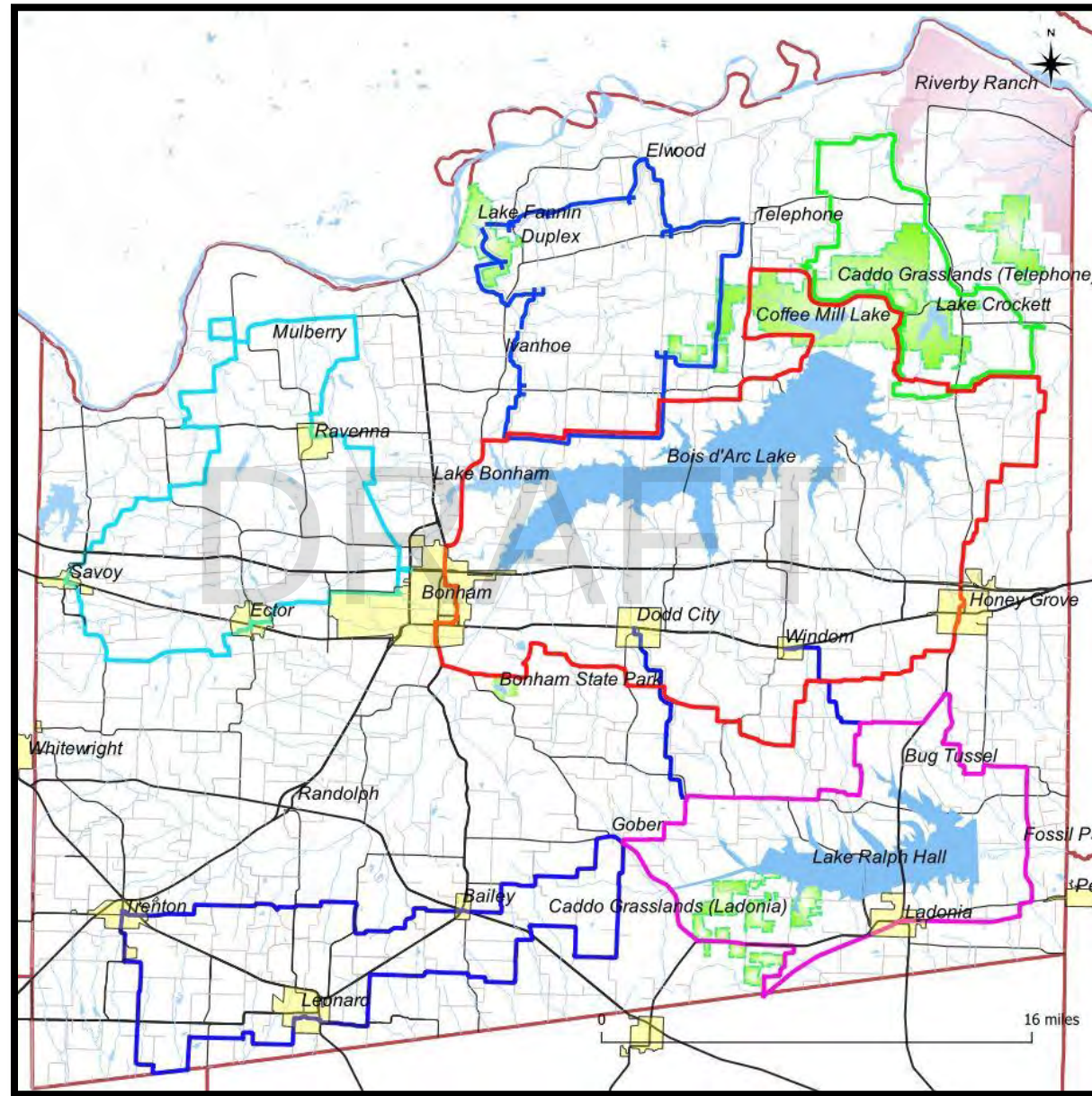


Figure 12 - Soft Surface Bike/Horse Routes

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.3.1 Lake Ralph Hall Bike/Horse Loop

This 44 mile loop uses County roads, occasionally using an FM road where no County road provides east-west access to the next County road. This loop uses the NETT trail, and the primary trailhead is in Ladonia. Dodd City, Windom, and Honey Grove have access to the loop.

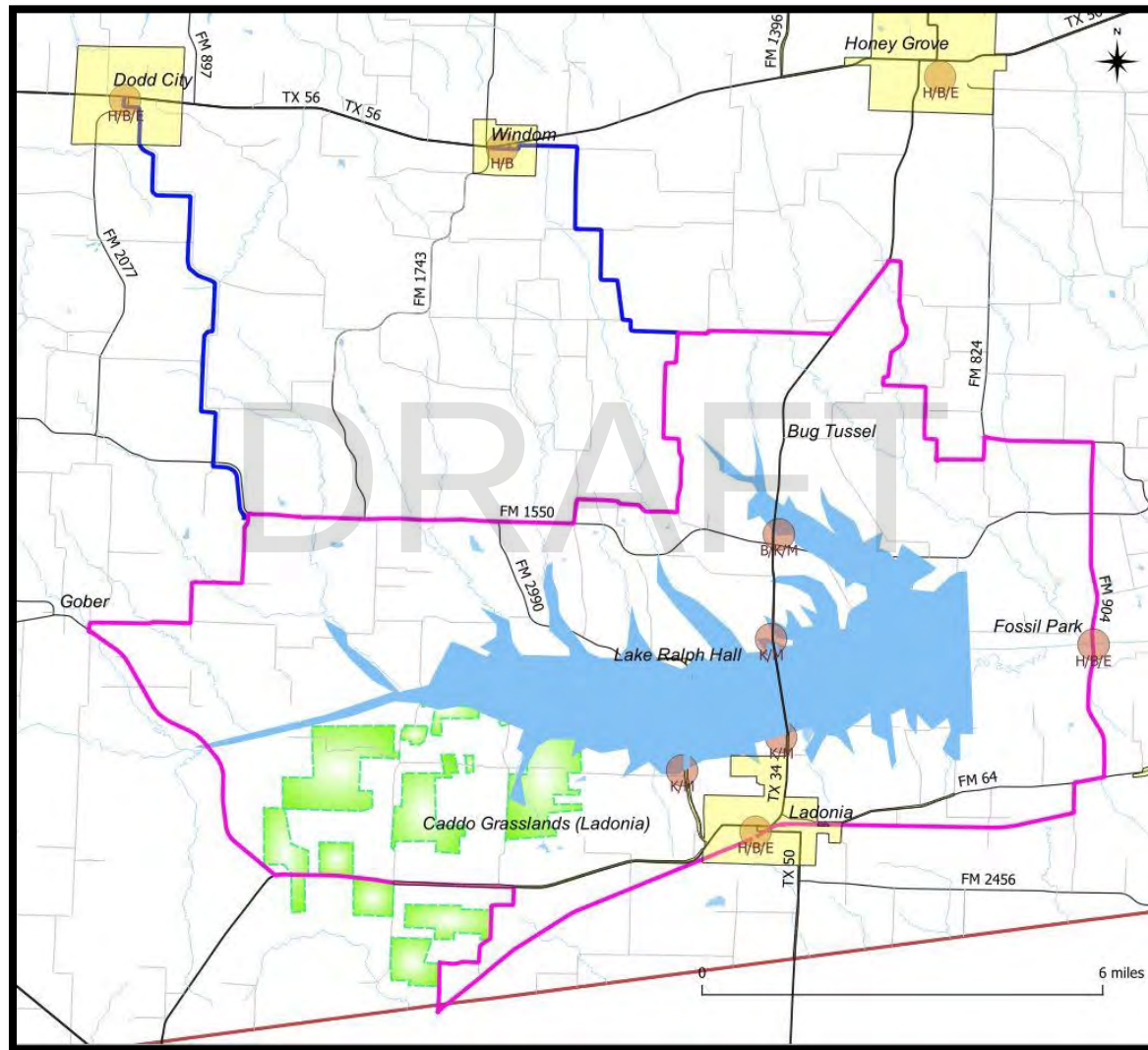


Figure 13 - Lake Ralph Hall Bike/Horse Loop

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.3.3 Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Bike/Horse Loop

This 40 mile loop explores the Grasslands area to the north east of Bois d'Arc Lake. The Caddo Grasslands trailhead on FM 409 would be the primary trailhead for this loop.

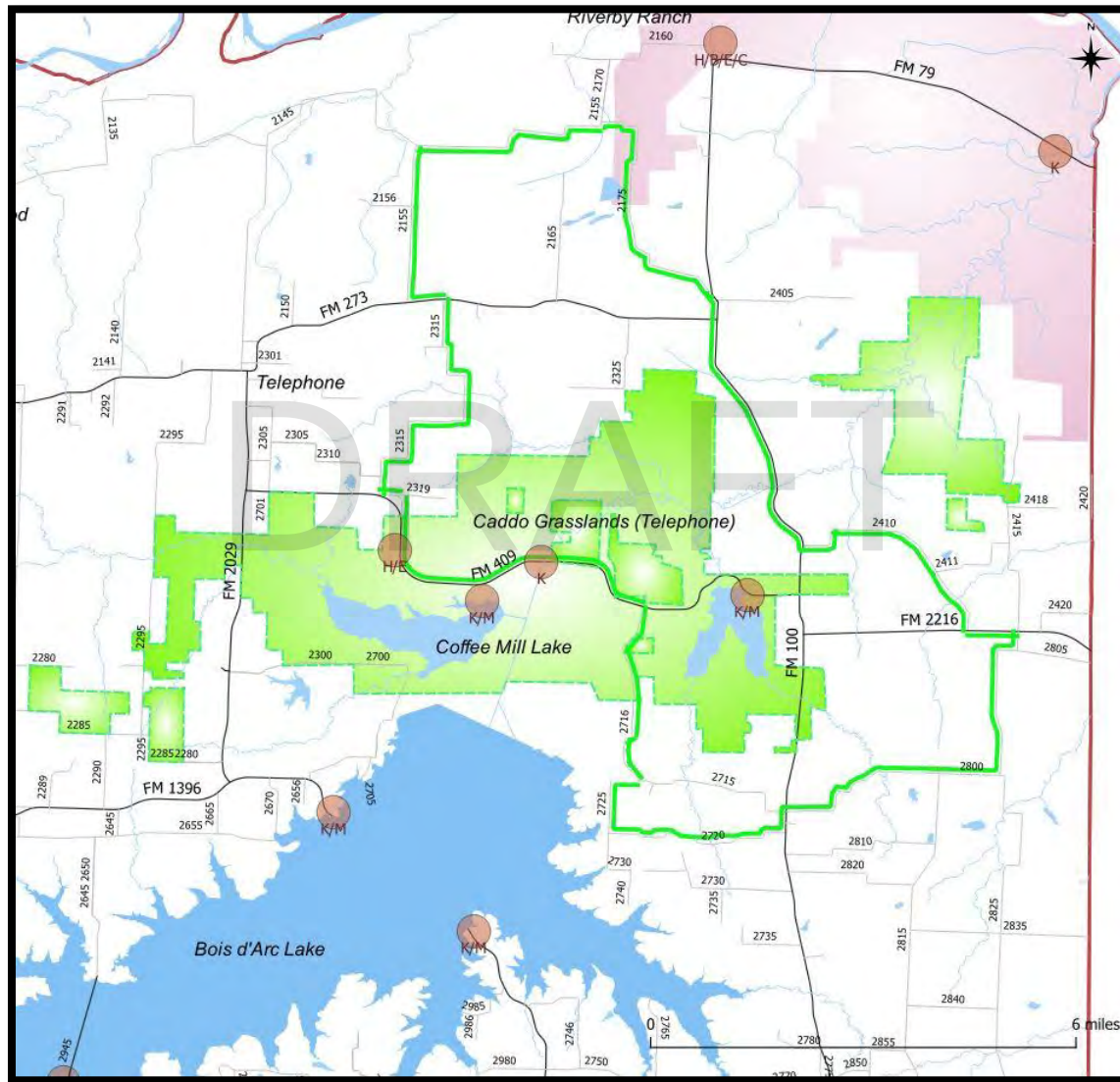


Figure 15 - Caddo Grasslands Bike/Horse Loop

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.3.4 SW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

This 53.1 mile loop explores the southwest corner of Fannin County. Trailheads in Trenton, Leonard, and Bailey could be used on this loop.

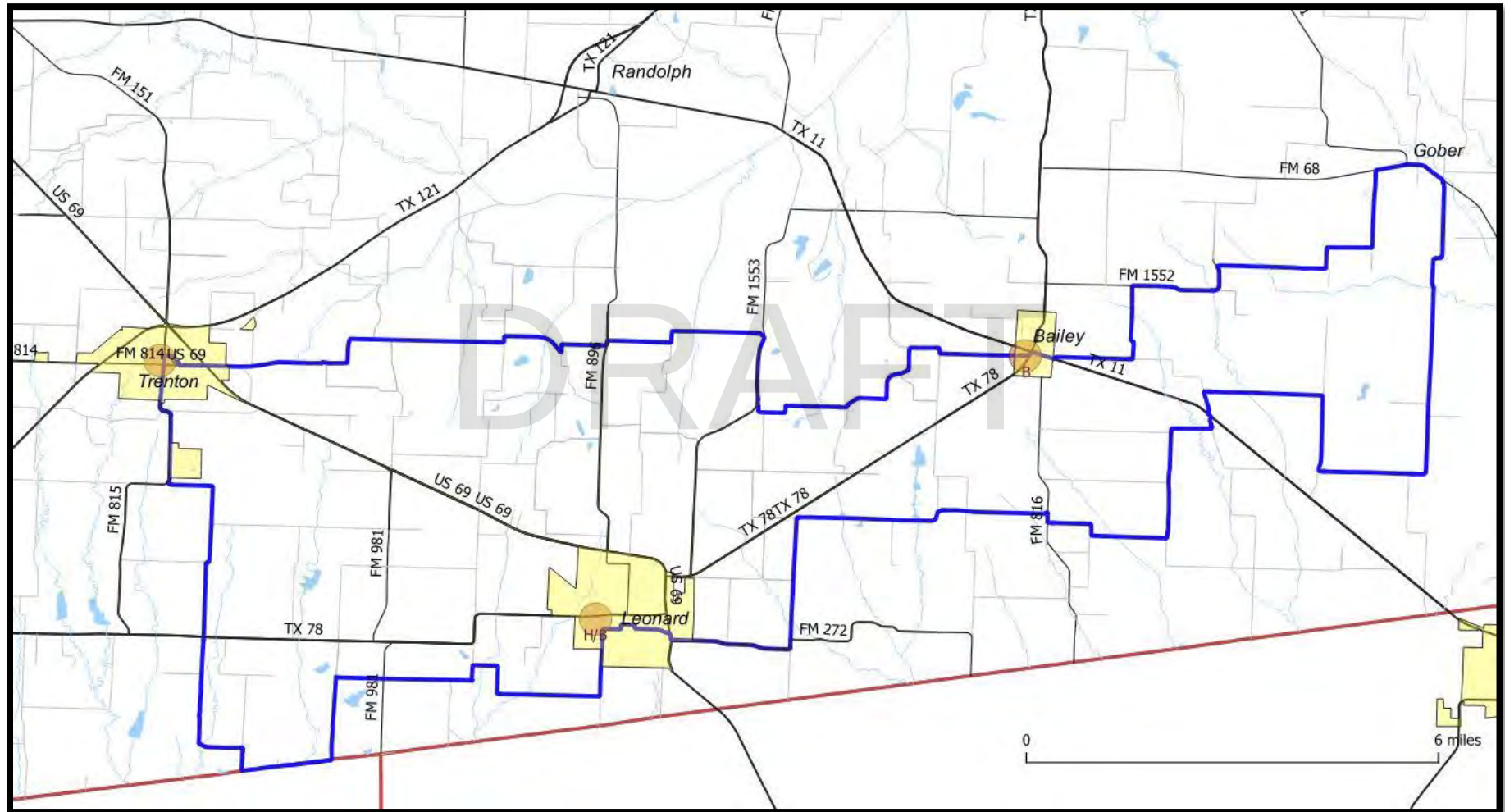


Figure 16 - SW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.3.5 NW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

This 51 mile loop explores the northwest corner of Fannin County. The cities of Bonham, Ector, Savoy, and Ravenna can all be used as trailheads for this loop.

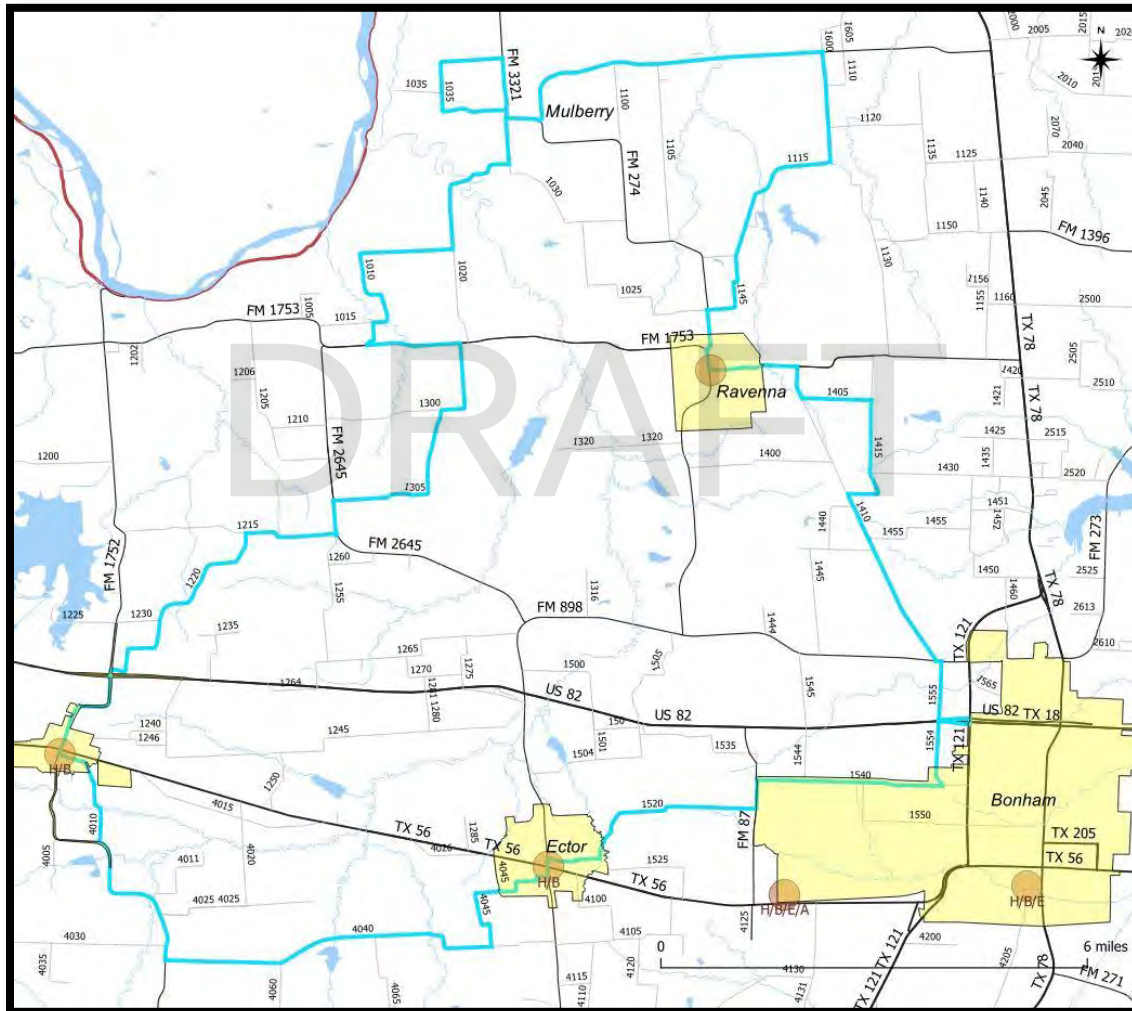


Figure 17 - NW Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.3.6 Lake Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

This 37 mile loop would use the trailhead at Lake Fannin as its primary trailhead.

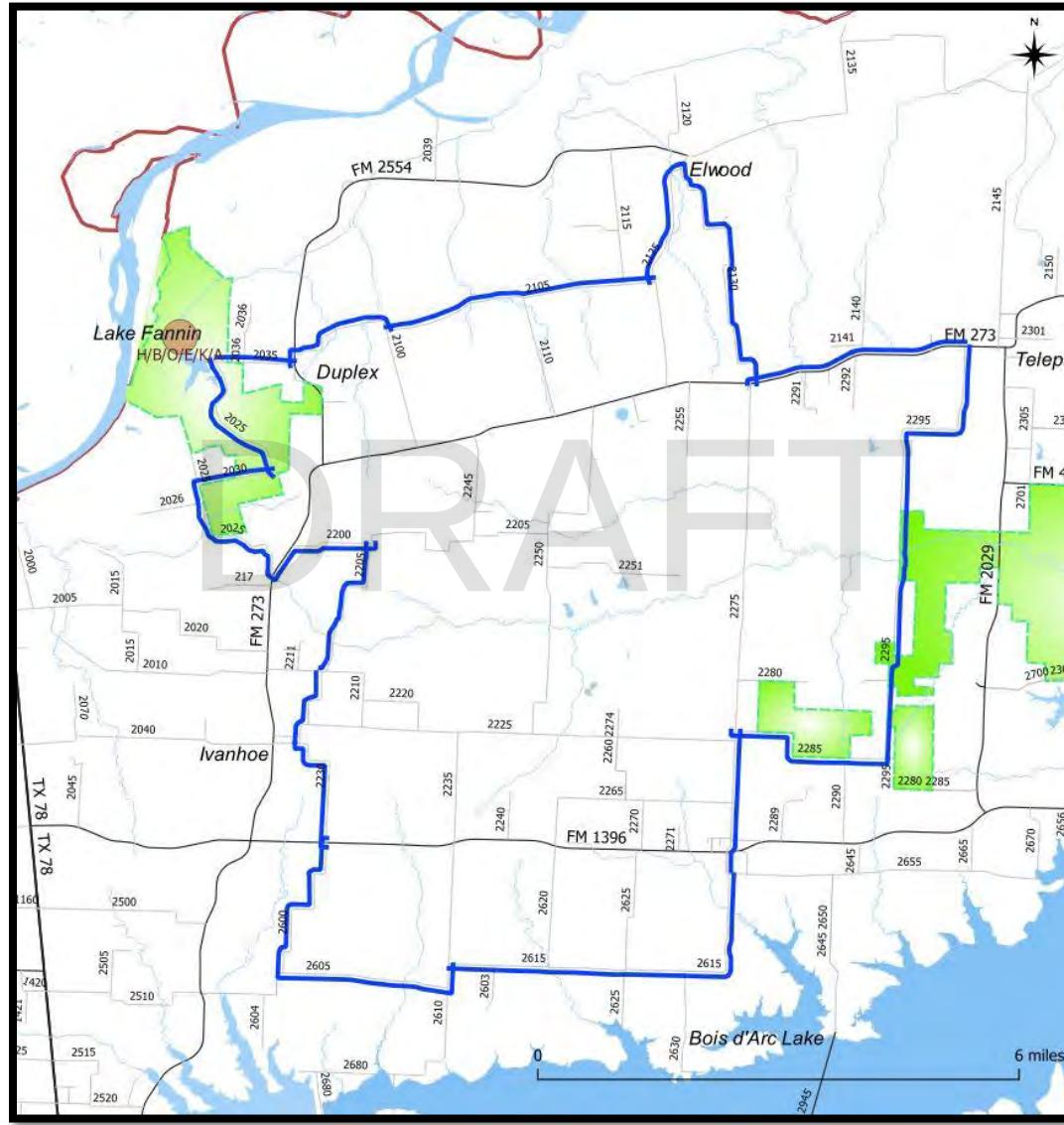


Figure 18 - Lake Fannin Bike/Horse Loop

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.4 Water Trails

There are 9 water features in the County that support more than 107 miles of kayak/canoe trails. Those features are:

- Red River
- Lower Bois d'Arc Creek
- Bois d'Arc Lake
- Lake Ralph Hall
- Lake Bonham
- Lake Fannin
- Coffee Mill Lake
- Lake Crockett
- Bonham State Park Lake

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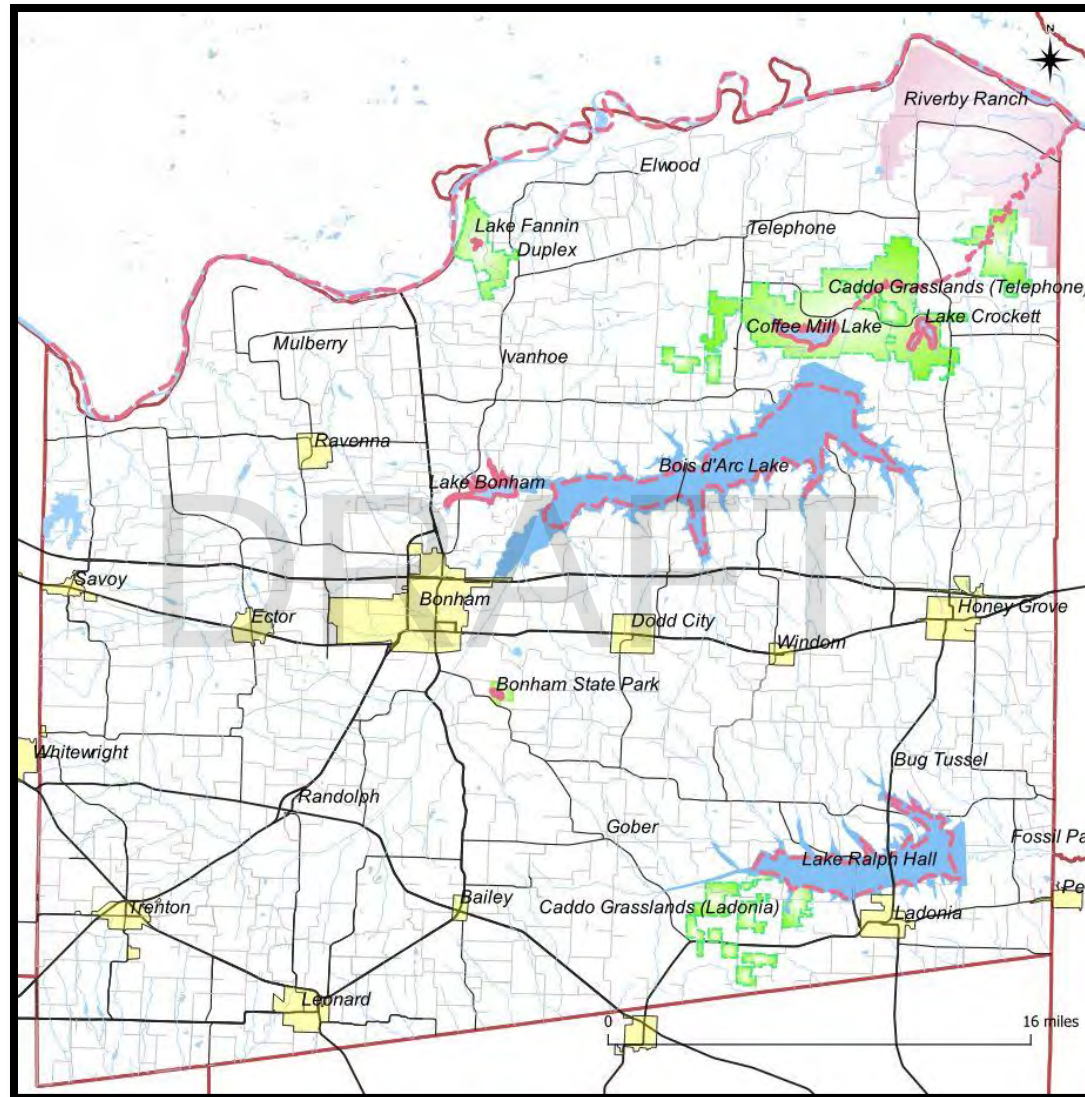


Figure 19 - Water Trails

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.4.1 Red River – Lower Bois d’Arc Creek Water Trail

This 62 mile trail follows the Red River from the western edge of the County, to the eastern edge of the County, where the Bois d’Arc Creek empties into the Red River. The trail then follows the lower Bois d’Arc Creek to the bridge at FM 409. All the trailheads shown on this trail are possible sites, yet to be acquired and built.

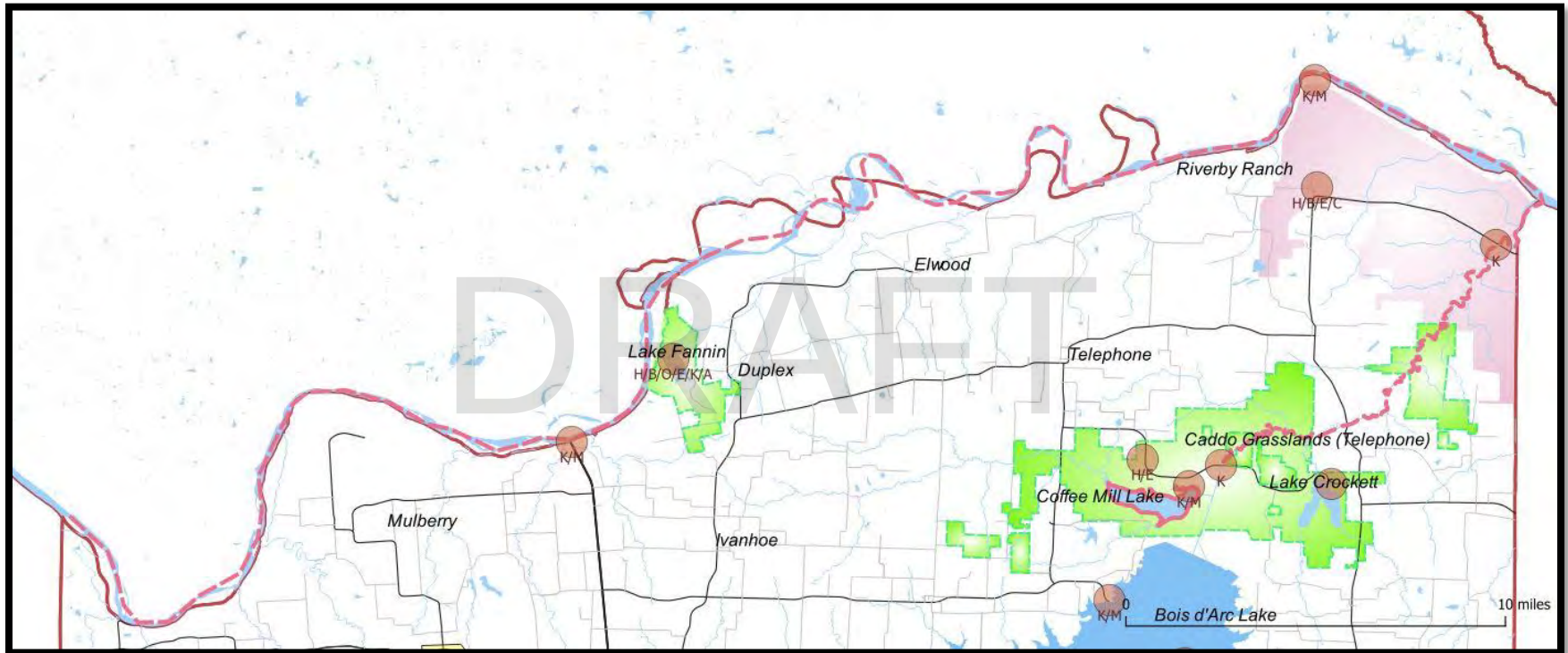


Figure 20 - Red River - Lower Bois d'Arc Creek Water Trail

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.4.2 Bois d'Arc Lake Water Trail

The image of Bois d'Arc Lake is the projected water line of the lake when full. The 37 mile water trail assumes that the lake shore line is navigable for kayaks. The boat ramps shown are proposed and the final sites being built.

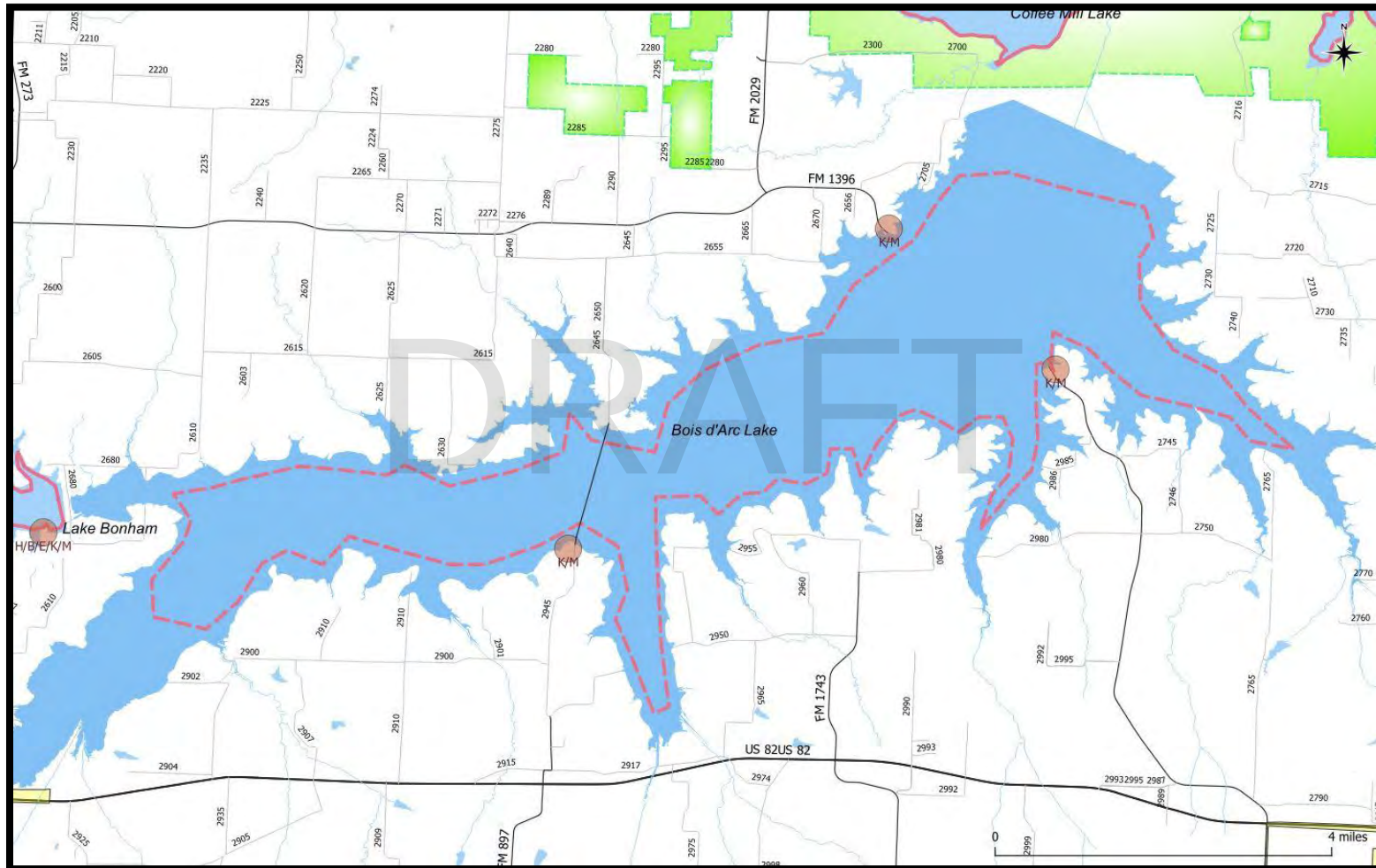


Figure 21 - Bois d'Arc Lake Water Trail

3.4.4.3 Lake Ralph Hall Water Trail

The map displays the proposed boundary for the Lake Ralph Hall Wildlife Management Area in Caddo Parish, Louisiana. The area is highlighted in blue, with a red dashed line indicating the specific boundary. The map includes the town of Ladonia, major roads like FM 1550 and FM 64, and surrounding land parcels. A scale bar shows 0 to 4 miles, and a north arrow is present.

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3.4.4.4 Lake Bonham

Lake Bonham is an existing lake with boat ramps already built. The 10 miles of water trail shown assume the lake shore line is navigable.

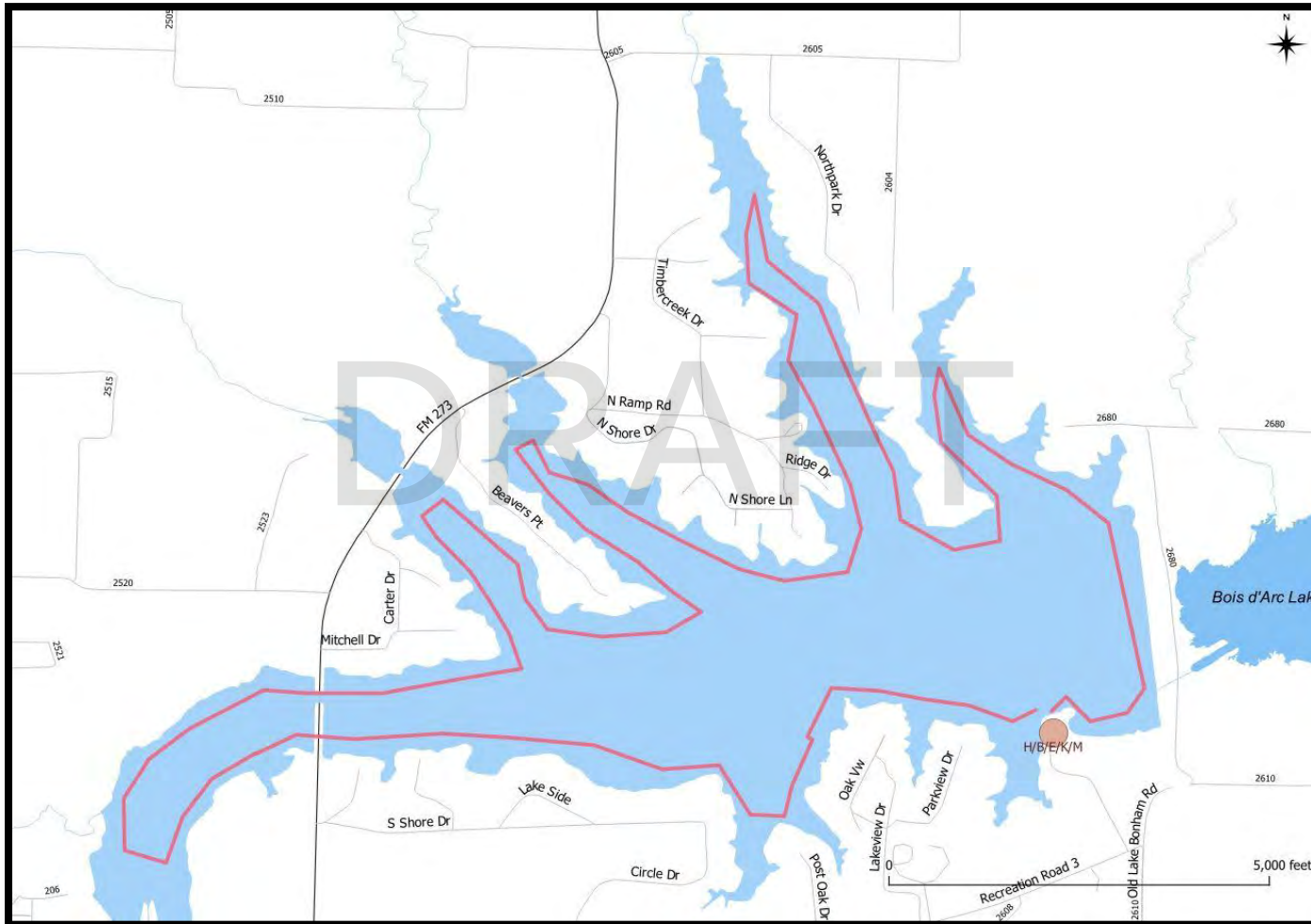


Figure 23 - Lake Bonham Water Trail

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3.4.4.5 Lake Fannin Water Trail

The 1+ mile water trail is a short trail, but demonstrates one of the many recreational uses for the Lake Fannin complex.



Figure 24 - Lake Fannin Water Trail

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.4.6 Caddo Grassland (Telephone) Water Trails

Coffee Mill Lake and Lake Crockett exist and have installed boat ramps. The 11+ miles of water trails shown assume that the lake shore line is navigable for kayaks. The dotted line below is the Lower Bois d'Arc Creek trail and its proposed boat ramp on FM 409.

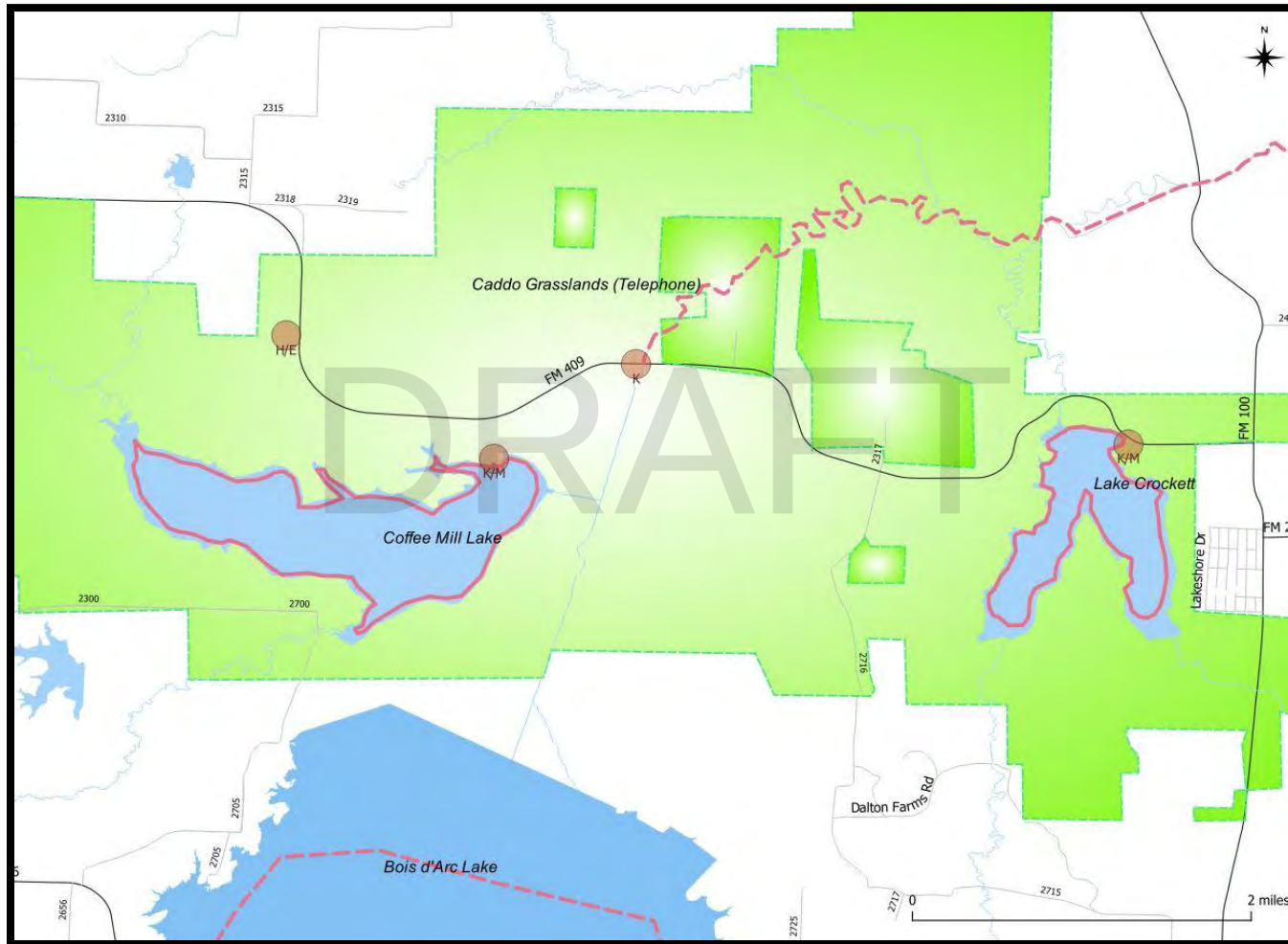


Figure 25 - Caddo Grasslands Water Trails

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3.4.4.7 Bonham State Park Lake

This 1+ mile water trail is perhaps the best place to introduce beginners to the joys of kayaking. The Park does have an entrance fee, but has plenty of picnic and recreation activities available.



Figure 26 - Bonham State Park Lake Water Trail

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3.4.5 Hiking/Horse Trails

There are 78 miles of off-road trails for hiking and equestrian use. All these trails make use of the US Forest Service lands within the County or the NETT trail.

- Existing trails –
 - Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) - With trail markers, equine-suitable entry gates, day-use trailhead, and equine campground trailhead.
 - NETT – Ladonia Old Depot can be used as the trailhead to go west to Wolfe City or east to Pecan Gap.
- Proposed trails –
 - Lake Fannin complex with no marked trails (although local history says that there were trail(s) down to the Red River). There is one equine-suitable entry gate at the north end of the property for access to the northern Lake Fannin lots.
 - Caddo Grasslands (Ladonia) without any equine access today. Some of the USFS lots have hiker-suitable entry gates, in addition to their vehicle entrance gates.

The FCRTMP goal would be to open up the Lake Fannin and Caddo Grasslands (Ladonia) lots with equine-suitable entry gates, allowing hikers and equestrians to enter and explore the lots. Where suitable, a lot would have more than one equine-suitable gate so that the exit from the lot can be used to create a loop within the trail network.

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.5.1 Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Hiking/Horse Trails

The 29+ miles of existing trails are within the USFS Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) lots. The trails are maintained by the USFS and the Caddo Trail Riders Association. There is an equine campground, bathrooms, and day use parking area.

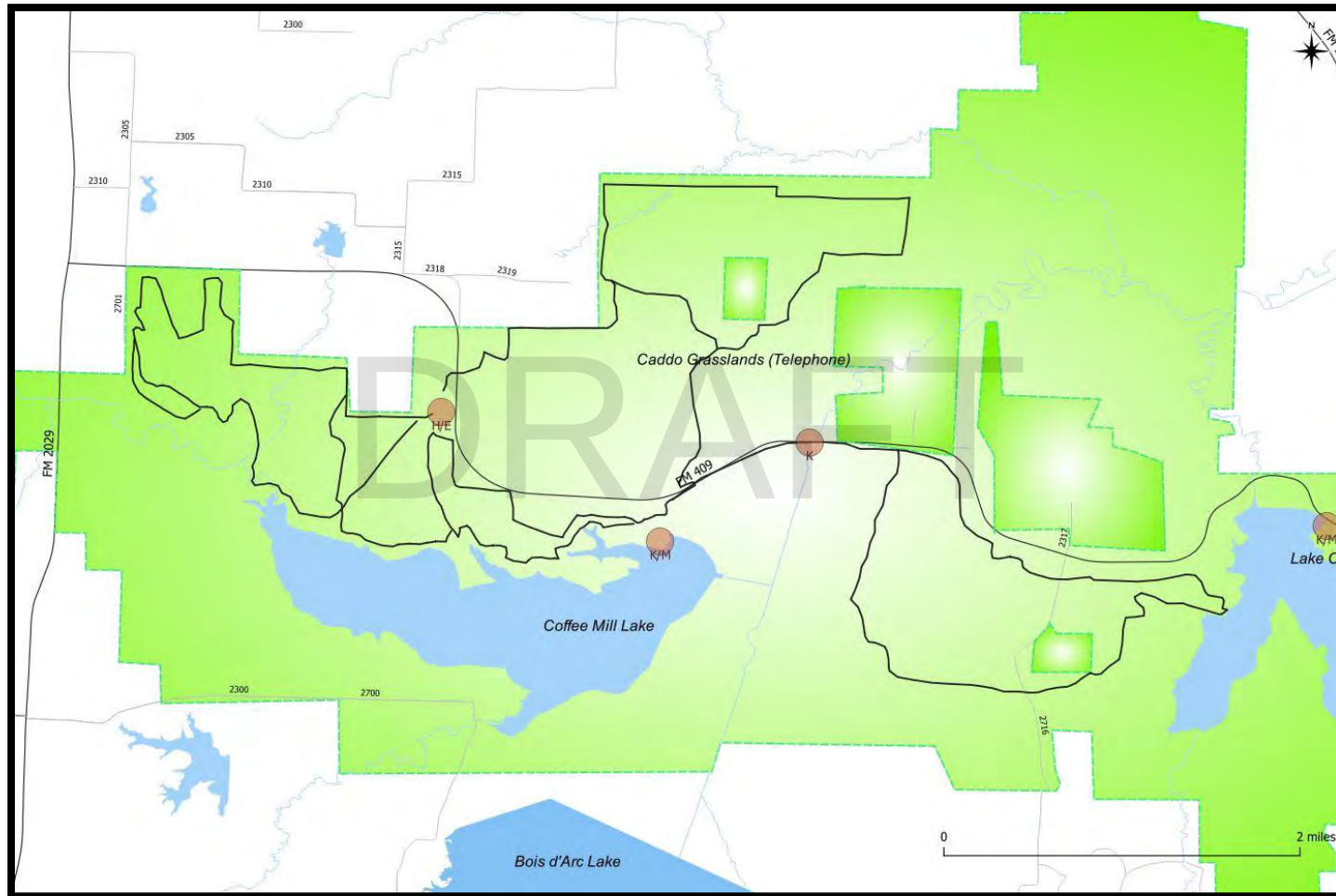


Figure 27 - Caddo Grasslands (Telephone) Hiking/Horse Trails

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.5.2 Caddo Grasslands (Ladonia) Hiking/Horse Trails

The 36+ miles of existing and proposed trails use the NETT trail segment to the east and west of Ladonia, and the USFS Grasslands lots in the Ladonia area. The existing USFS lots are shown below, but new USFS lots may be created as part of the Lake Ralph Hall land acquisitions.

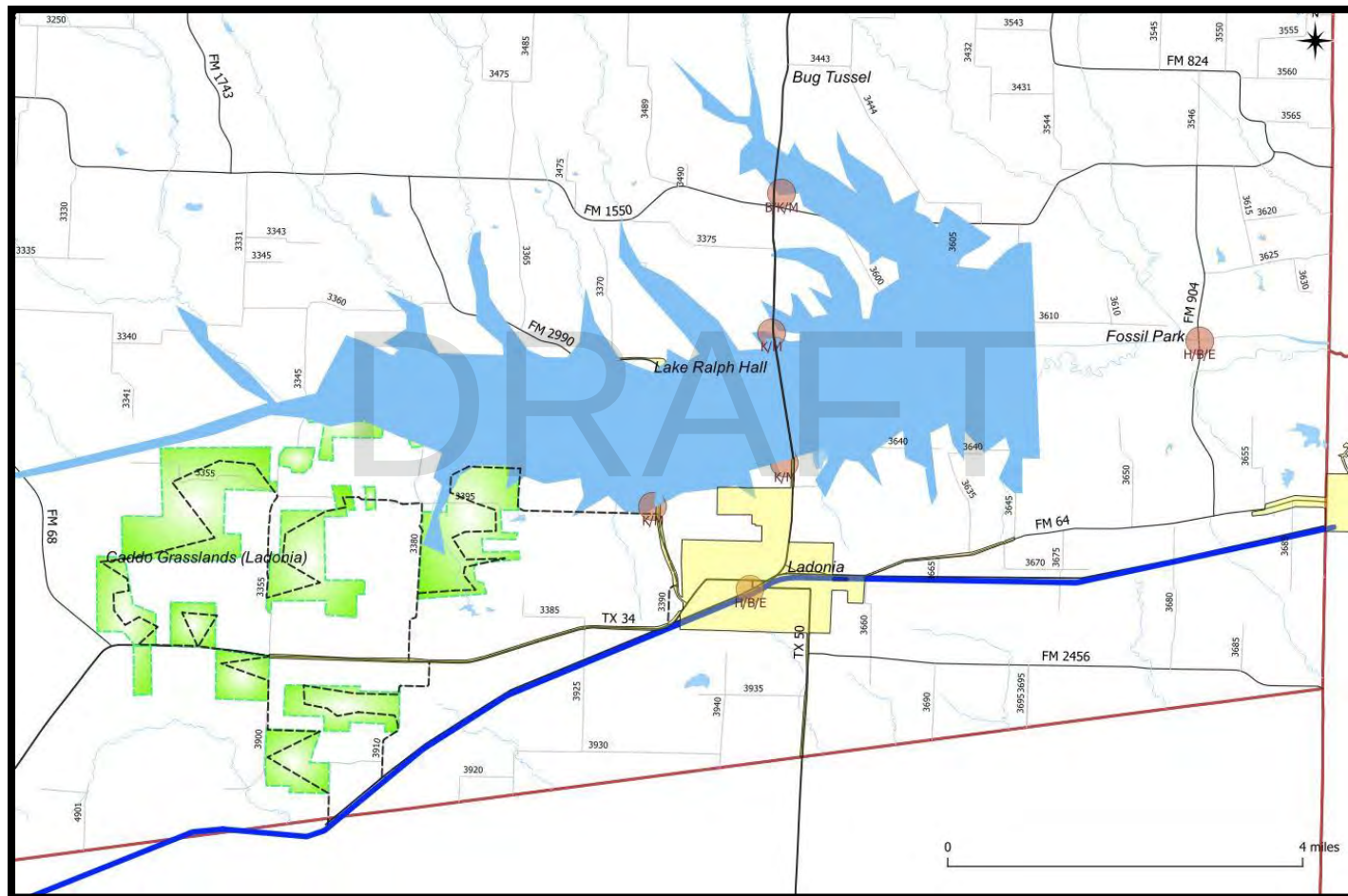


Figure 28 - Caddo Grasslands (Ladonia) Hiking/Horse Trails

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3.4.5.3 Lake Fannin Hiking/Horse Trails

The 10 miles of proposed hiking and horse trails are within the Lake Fannin USFS lots and avoid the 300 acre historic district.

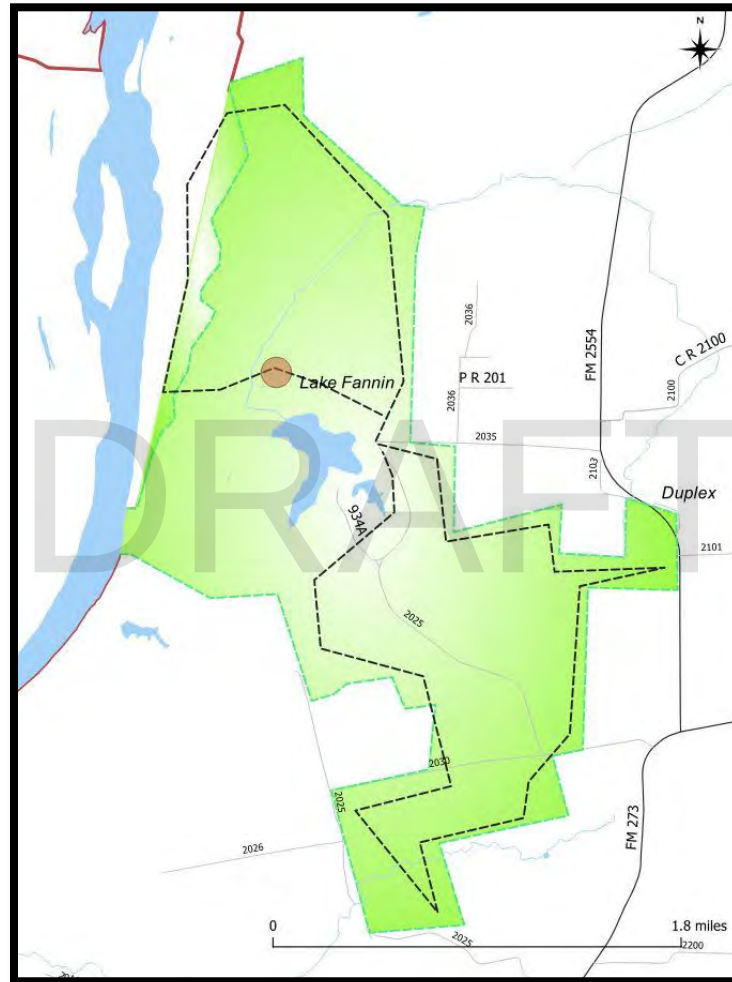


Figure 29 - Lake Fannin Hiking/Horse Trails

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.6 Off-Road Bike Trails

There are approximately 11 miles of off-road mountain bike trails in Fannin County:

- Bonham State Park – 7+ miles of trail are broken into 4 separate trails, ranging in difficulty from easy to challenging. The Park is a Texas Parks and Wildlife Park with an admission fee. Parking and restroom facilities are available.
- Lake Fannin – A 4 mile loop around the lake, within the 300 acre historic district of the Lake Fannin complex. The trail is challenging, but well-marked, with 34 bridges over water and ravines.



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3.4.7 Carriage Trails

The FCRMTP envisions putting carriage trails in the Riverby Ranch property owned by NTMWD. The Ranch already has ranch roads throughout the property that could be used as the carriage trails, and with the addition of the millions of trees planted for Bois d'Arc Lake mitigation purposes and the existing forests and fields on the Ranch, the site would be a scenic wonder. Additionally, the Ranch has the facilities already built at the Ranch headquarters to handle large numbers of horses, people, trucks, and trailers.

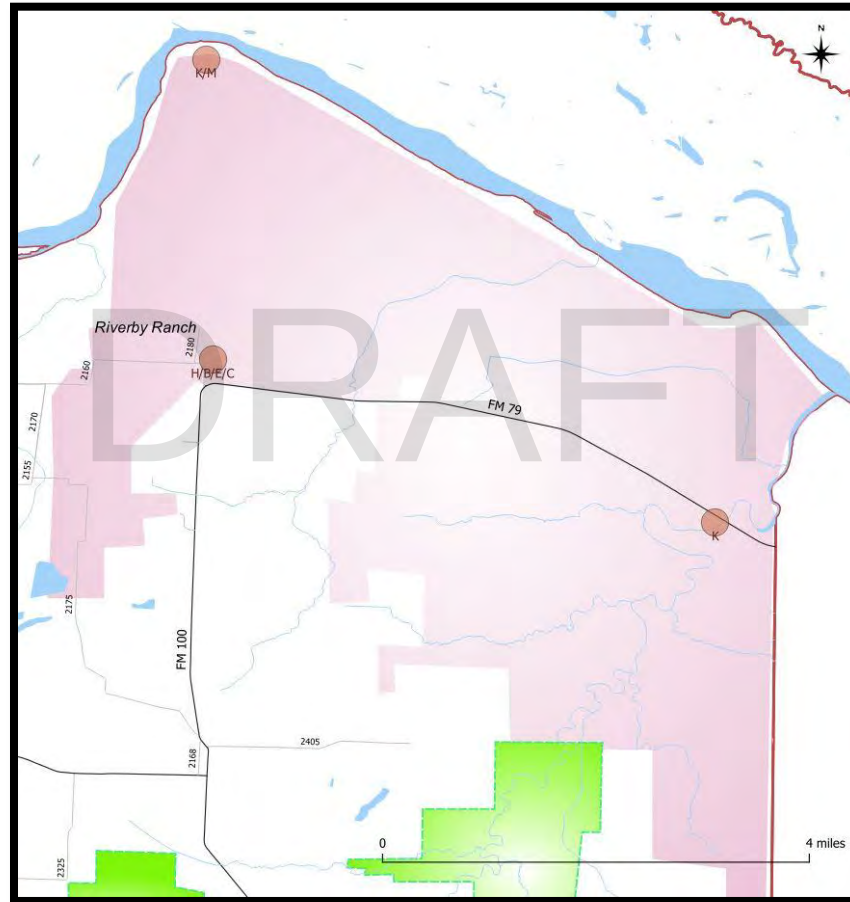


Figure 30 - Riverby Ranch Carriage Trails

Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.4.8 Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Compliant Trails

An expressed desire during the formulation of the FCRMTP was to include ABA-compliant trails within a nature setting. Three sites within the County appear to be suitable:

- Fannin County Multi-Use Complex – The ground is level enough that a suitable trail could be sited around or near the perimeter of the property, avoiding the more developed parts of the complex.
- Lake Fannin Historic District – There is an area just south of the historic lodge that would be level enough for a suitable trail. ABA-compliant access to the lakeside would be more problematic, since the elevation change between the lodge and the lake is significant.
- Riverby Ranch – The ground is level enough that suitable carriage, equestrian, and pedestrian ABA-compliant trails could be created.

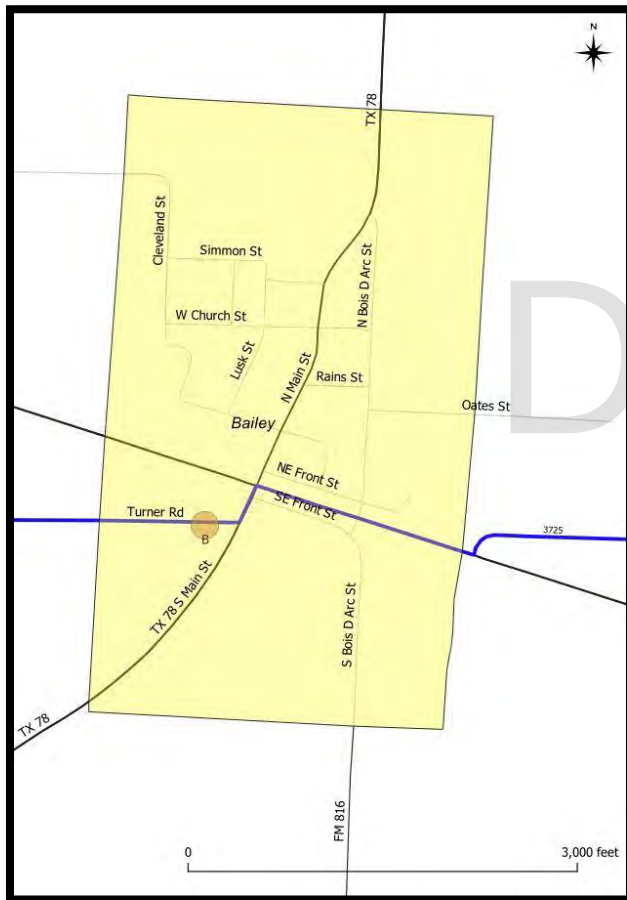
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3.5 City Trail Connections

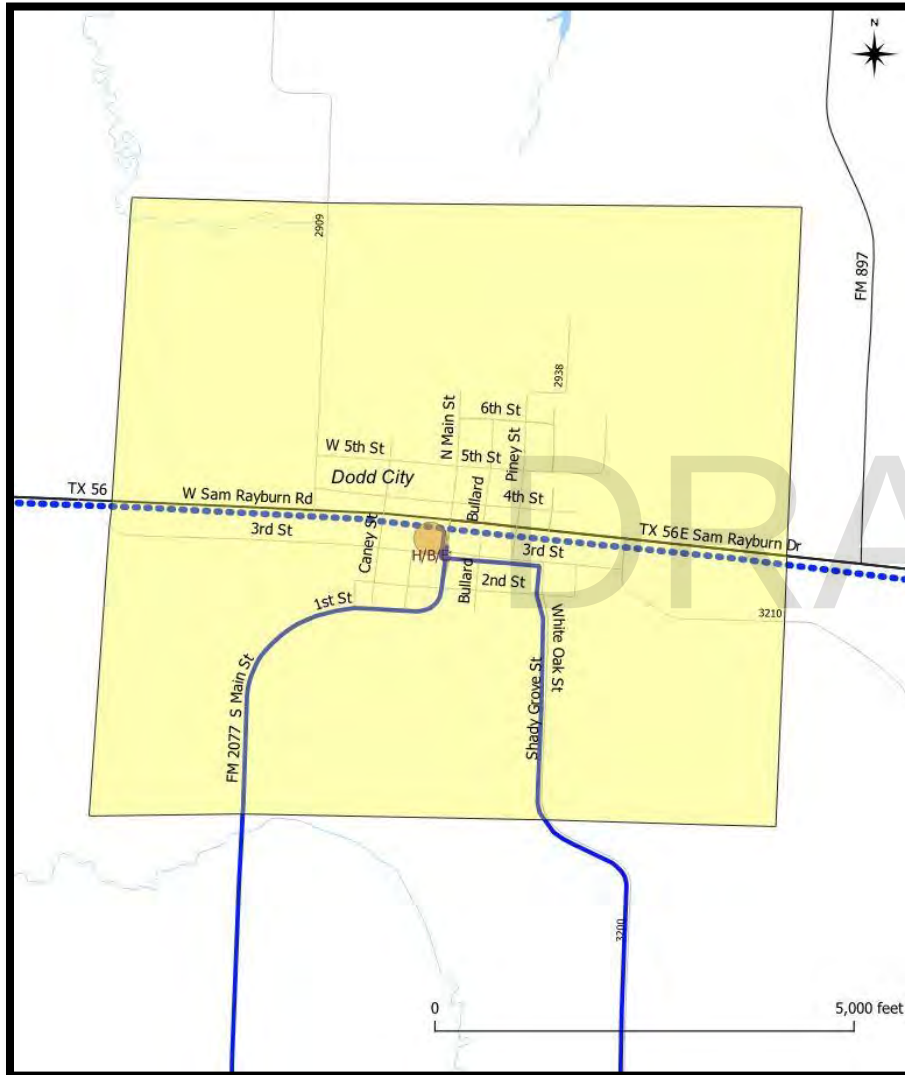
Each of the cities in the County is shown in detail, with the entry routes of the Trails network shown, along with a proposed site for the trailhead in that city. All these details are proposed – each city must determine the best site for the trailhead and the appropriate path into and out of the city for the trails.

3.5.1 Bailey



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3.5.3 Dodd City



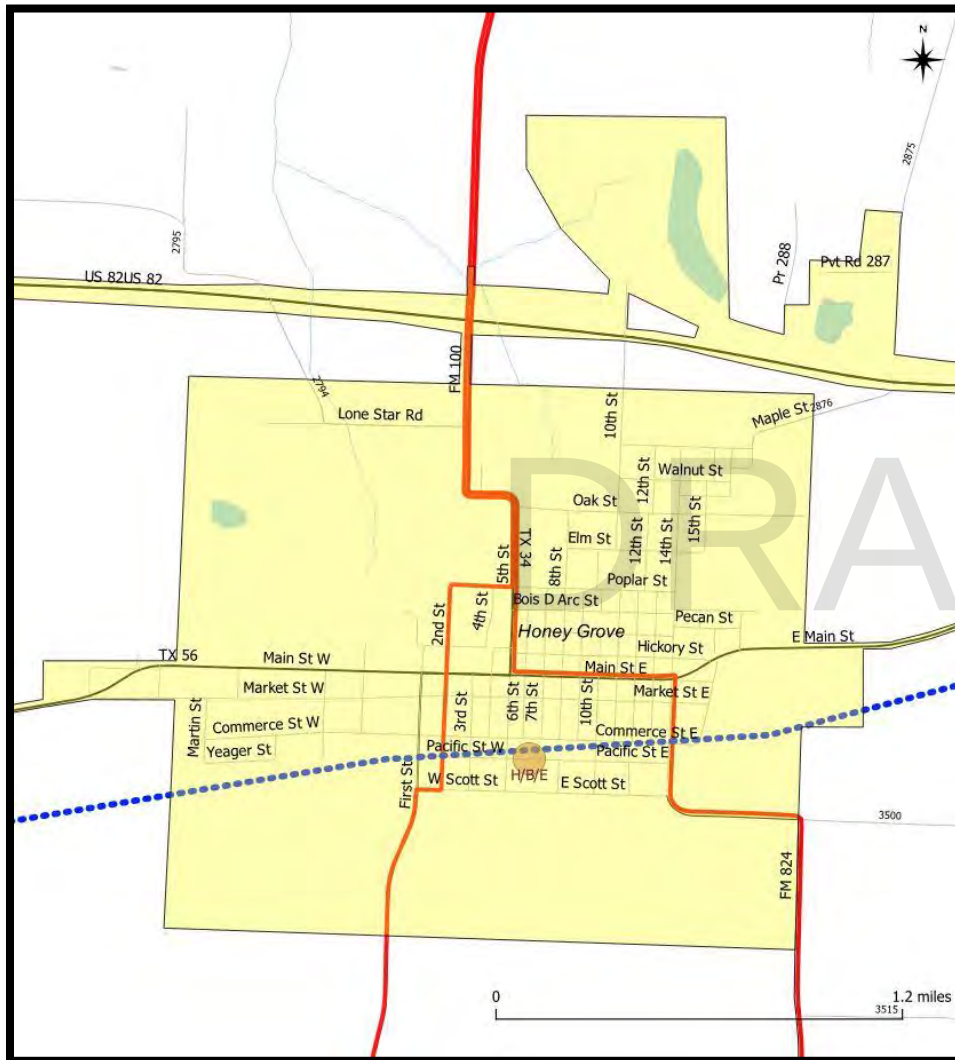
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3.5.4 Ector



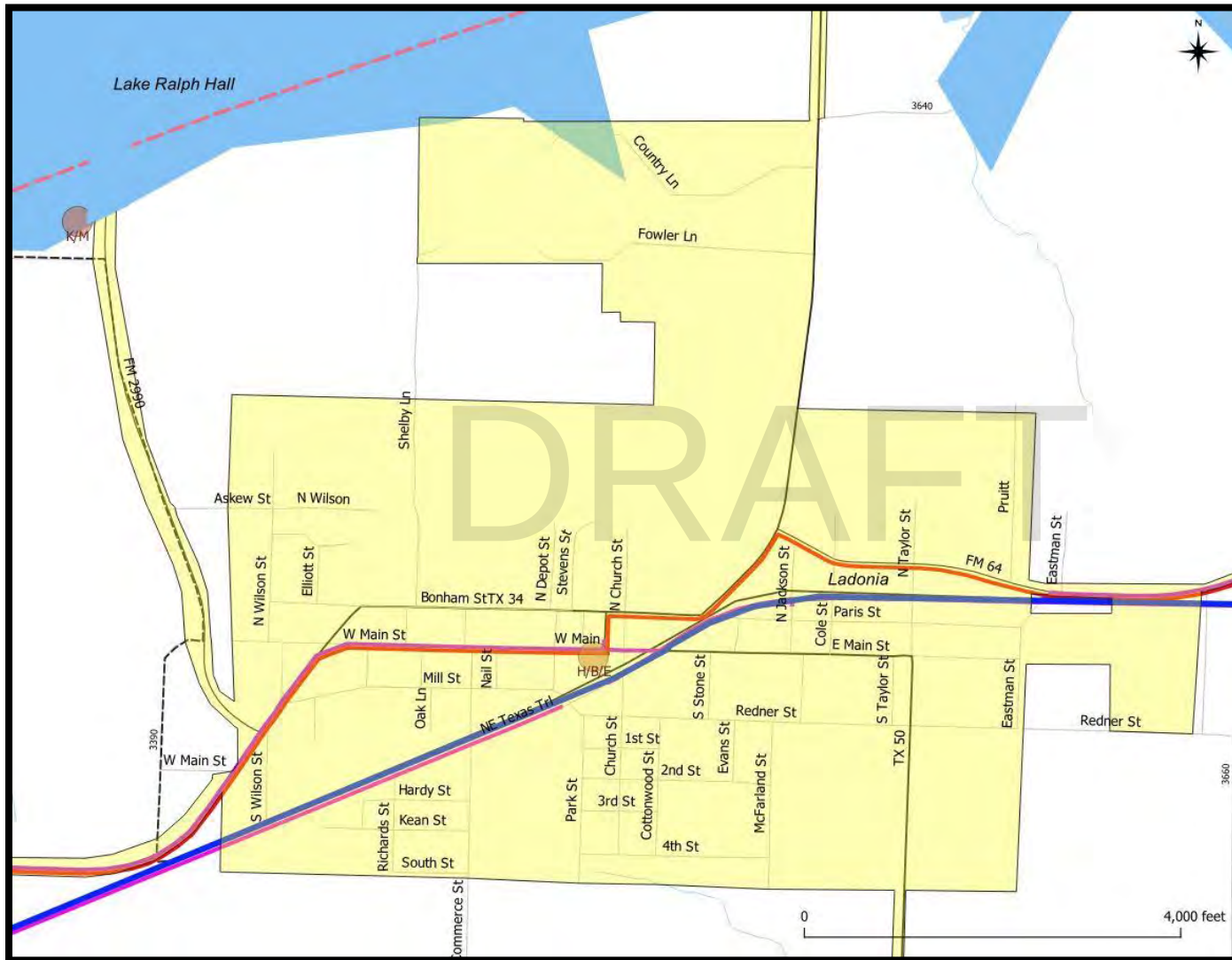
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3.5.5 Honey Grove



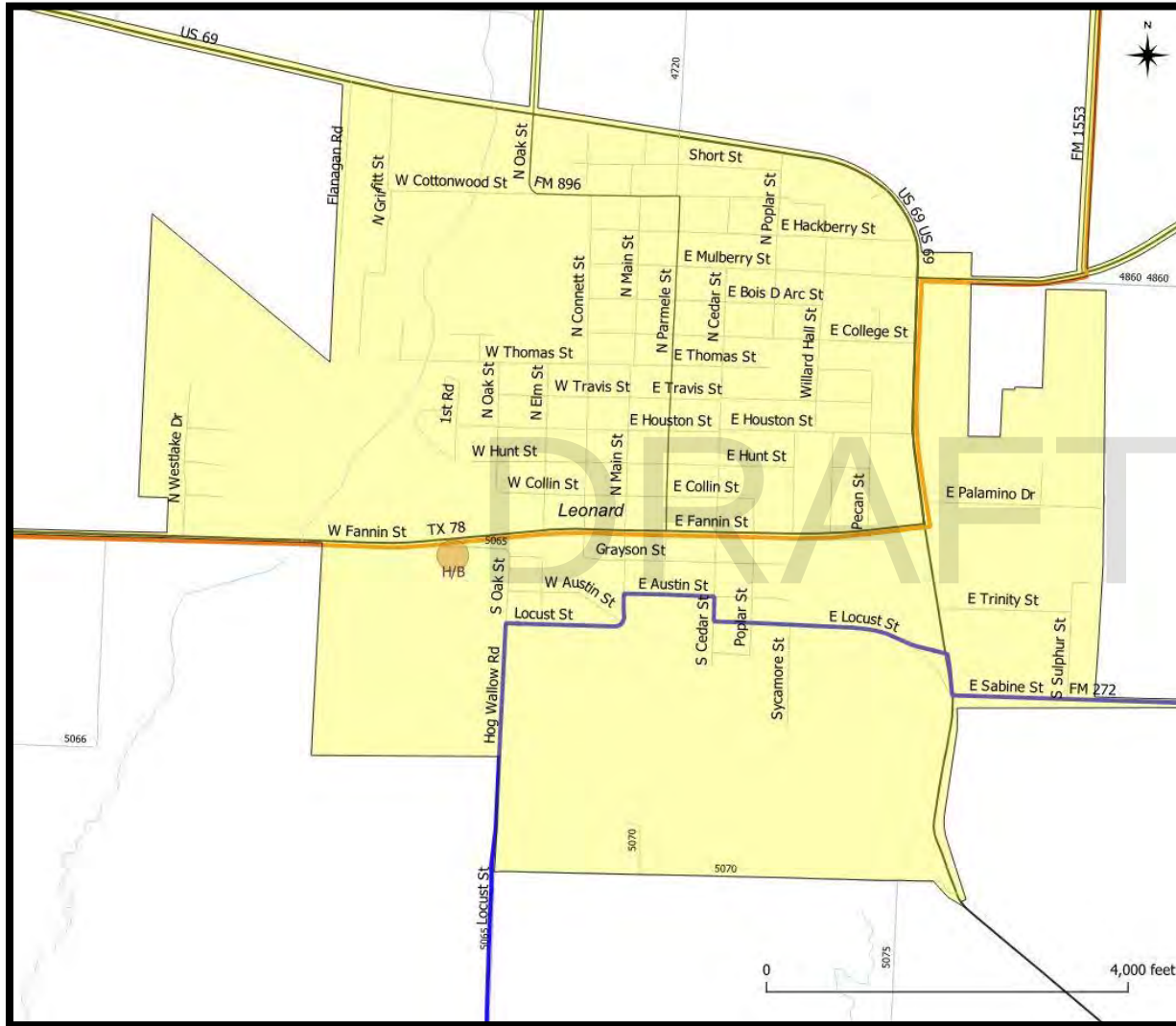
Fannin County Regional Trails Master Plan

3.5.6 Ladonia



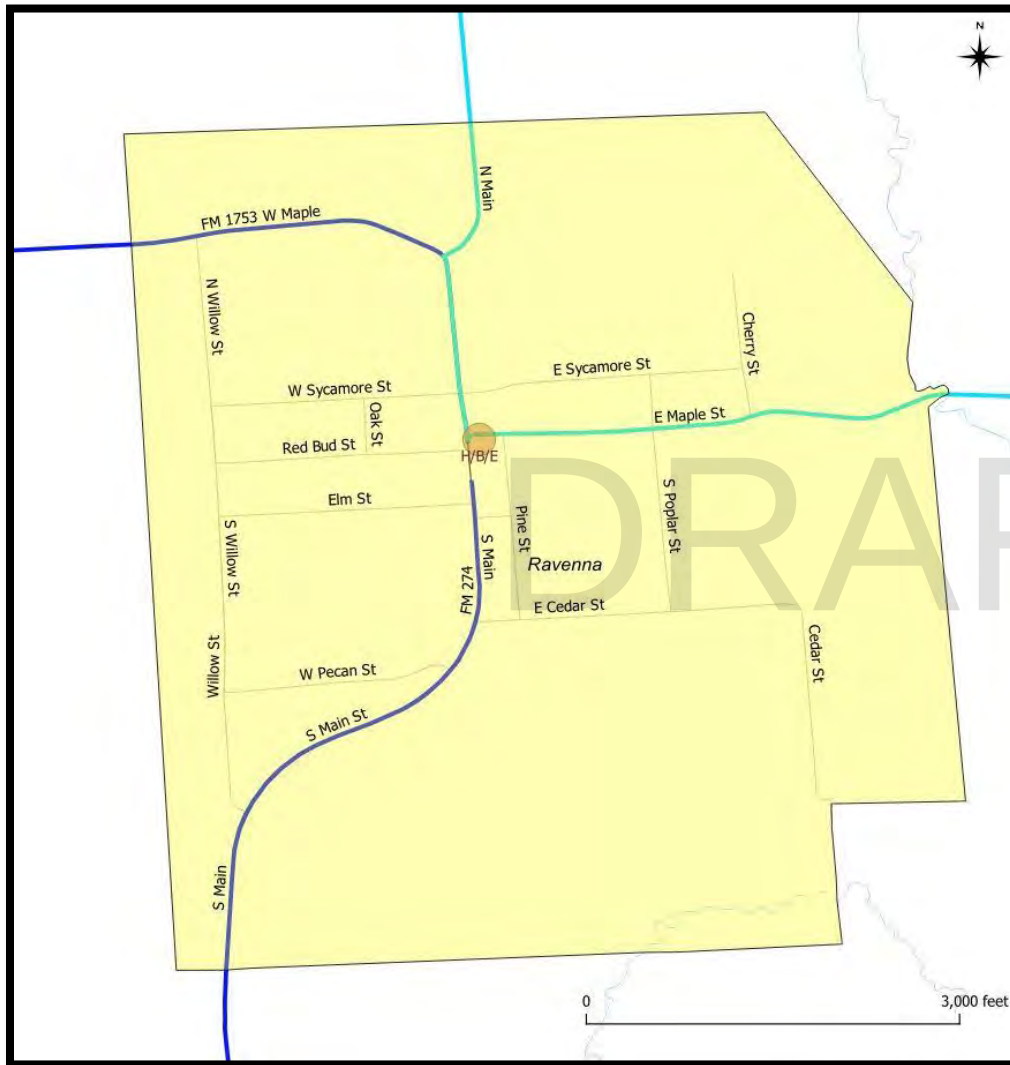
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3.5.7 Leonard



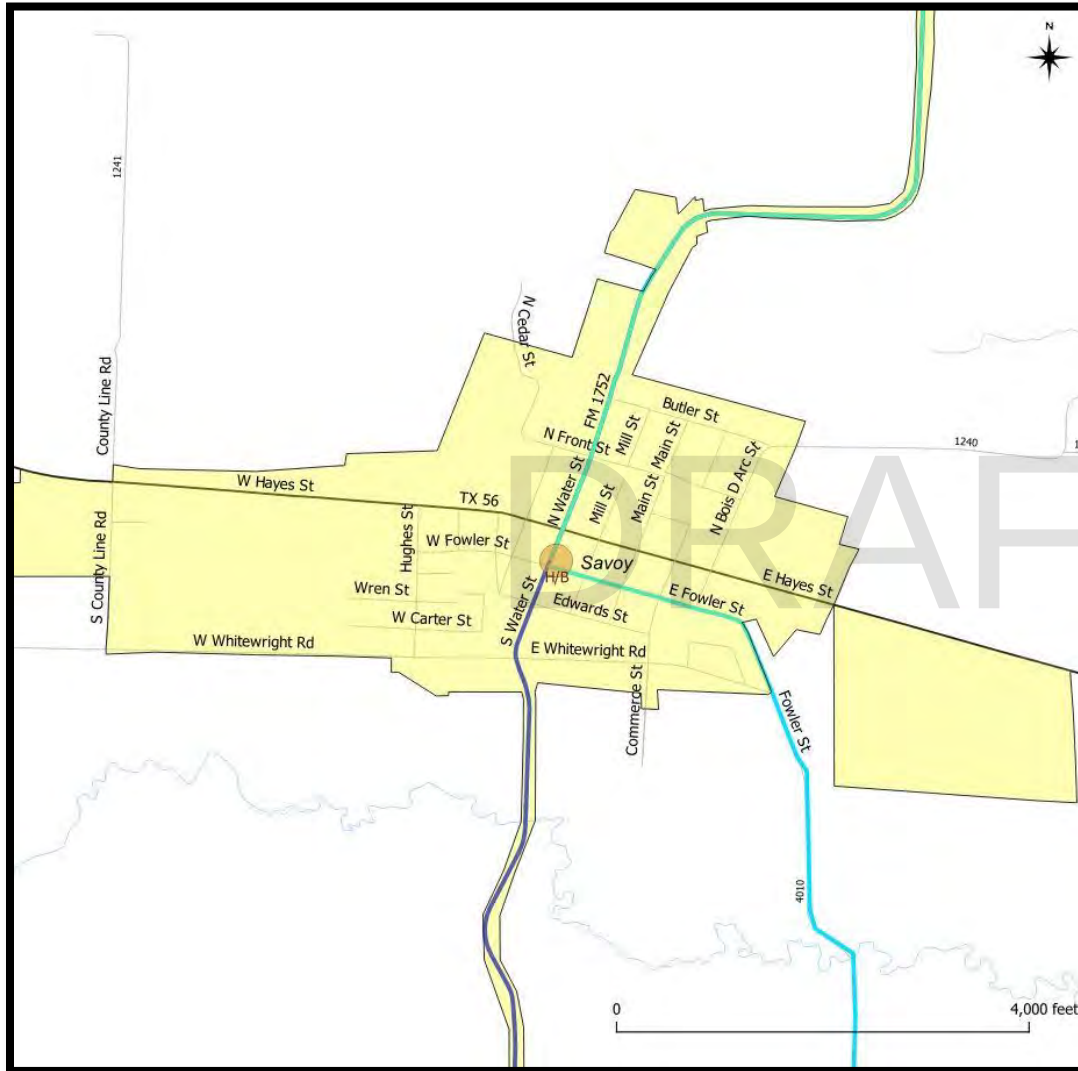
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3.5.8 Ravenna



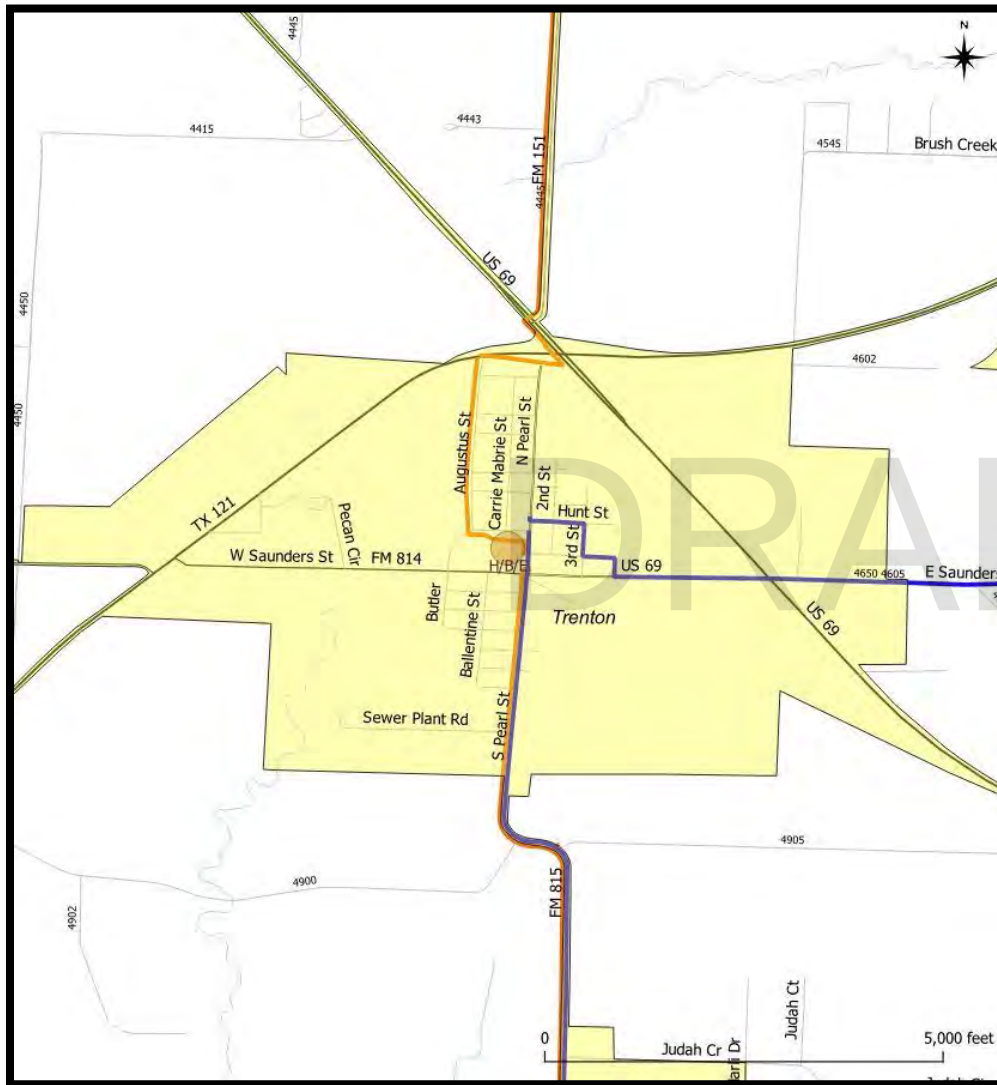
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3.5.9 Savoy



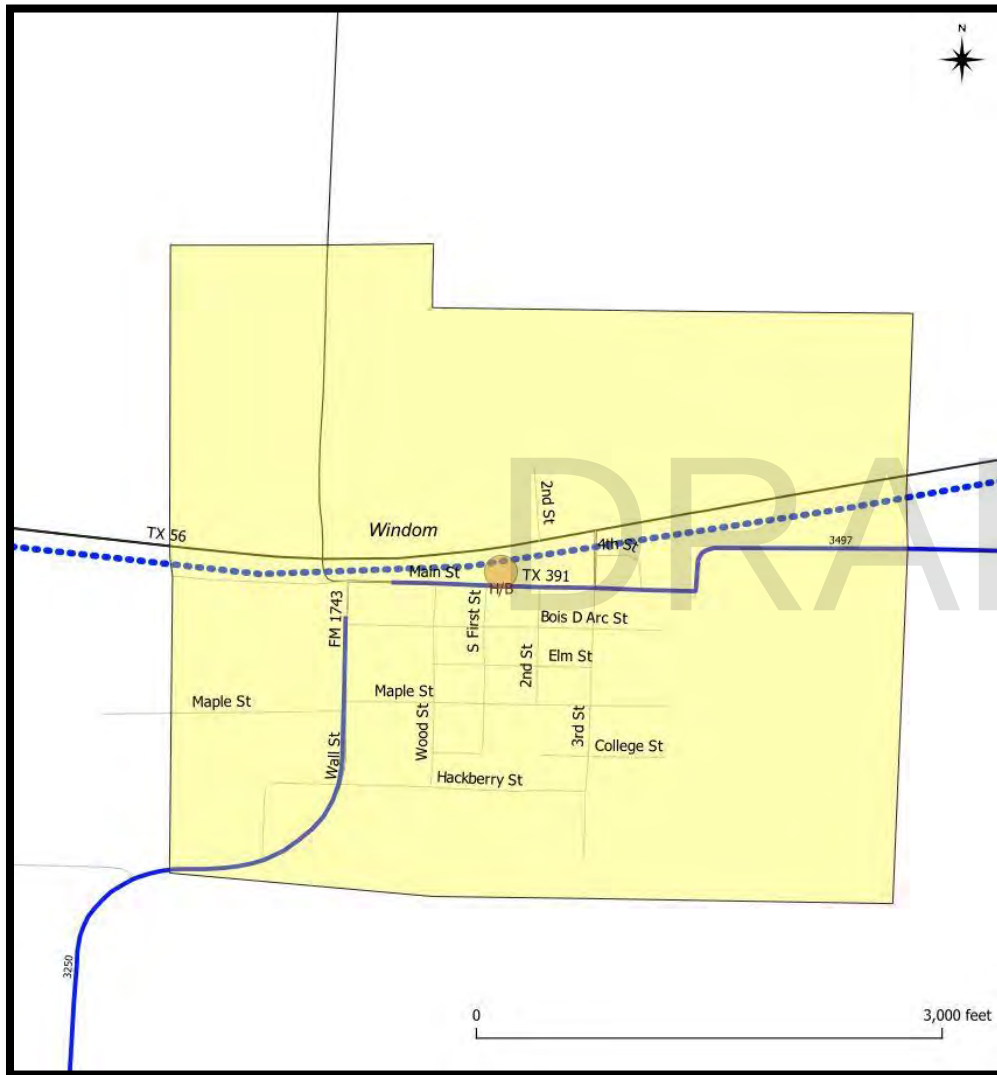
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3.5.10 Trenton



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3.5.11 Windom



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4 Recommendations & Implementation

4.1 Policy Recommendations

Cities and trail organizations should use the FCRTMP for guidance in creating or extending trails within their jurisdiction. At all times, the guidance should encourage the creation of trails that are accessible to all Fannin County residents, that support multiple users and uses, and add to the pleasure of being a Fannin County resident.

Ultimately, a Regional Trail Network will help establish Fannin County as a destination county for outdoor pleasure, leading to an increase in business revenues, property values and tourism.

The following steps will be necessary to support and implement the FCRTMP:

- Create a Trail Advisory Committee to work closely with the County Commissioners to implement and maintain the vision of the FCRTMP.
- Cities should create their own Trail Master Plan, in coordination with the FCRTMP and the Trail Advisory Committee. Each city and town should consider nominating a representative to the Trail Advisory Committee.
- The County should integrate the FCRTMP into its own Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan
- The FCRTMP should be submitted to the NCTCOG to support federal and state funding of trail projects
- City and County Zoning Plans should be enhanced if necessary to support the FCRTMP
- Developer incentives should be designed to encourage the extension of the FCRTMP into their development areas
- Floodplain ordinances should be enhanced to support the FCRTMP

4.2 Guidance for Planning Trails

Coordination at all levels within the County and the Cities must happen in order to end up with a sensible trail system that fulfills the FCRTMP vision.

- Within a city, the parks and recreation staff must work with the transportation, land planning, public works, and engineering staff.
- Cities should be encouraged to incorporate trails into their Transportation Plans.
- Plats should be reviewed with the FCRTMP goals in mind, so that effective trail systems can be created within a development.

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- Public works/engineering is required to ensure that the addition of trails alongside, across, over or under roadways is done in a safe and well-designed manner.
- Police, Sheriff, and Fire Departments needs must be considered when designing and marking trails
- TxDOT must be aware of FCRTMP trails that would impact roadways maintained by TxDOT. An official liaison between the Trail Advisory Committee and TxDOT should be established.
- Private Sector Railroads may provide opportunities for additional trails
- Utility corridors may provide opportunities for trails
- Trail creation and maintenance should be done with the inclusion of private sector businesses, volunteer citizens, and trail advocacy groups

4.3 Guidance for Designing Trails

The FCRTMP should identify the types of multi-use trails that will be used within the system. An example of the trail categories that can be established are:

- Urbanized – Exclusive ROW in higher density areas
- Greenway – Natural areas in an urban/suburban area
- Two-way Side path – along a roadway
- Pioneer Trail – in a rural area

Fannin County's types of trails will depend upon the nature of the road system within the county and the perceived development patterns that will happen over time.

Design criteria that must be defined for each trail type should include:

- Use – multi-use or dedicated, pedestrian, bike, equestrian
- Surface material – hard or soft, porous or non-porous
- Corridor width
- Trailbed width – high numbers of users calls for a wider trailbed
- Trail/roadway crossings – at grade or grade separated
- Seamless trail/roadway integration
- Shared use – where possible, shared trail infrastructure (such as trailheads and bridges) will lower the trail network costs (versus separate facilities for each trail type and user)

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4.4 Maintenance Recommendations

Once built, the trails will need to be maintained. The following will aid in keeping the trails in a state that maximizes the users' well-being:

- Develop a maintenance schedule
- Establish a quality control program for trail maintenance
- Erosion should be addressed with soil and trail stabilization techniques and policies
- Vegetation along the trail should be maintained to provide a safe environment for trail users
- Culverts should be inspected for blockages and erosion
- Trail surfaces should be inspected for cracks and damage to the trailbed
- Anti-Litter Programs should be created to monitor for illegal dumping – Note that trail traffic on low traffic County roads will discourage 'opportunistic dumping' and provide timely notice of the dumping to county officials.
- Signage standards should be developed for directions, information, and safety signs

4.5 Funding & Grant Information

There are many non-grant avenues to provide funding and facilities for trail projects:

- Revise Land Development Code to require the inclusion of trails prior to plan approval
- Revise or establish a Parkland Dedication Ordinance that includes trail requirements
- Establish Developer incentives for trail provision
- Utilize 4A and/or 4B sales taxes
- Coordinate trail construction with roadway projects
- Include trails in bond propositions
- Include trail facility improvements in city and county annual budgets

There are many governmental and non-governmental grant sources to provide funding and assistance for trail projects:

- Texoma COG Mobility Plans
- Texas Parks & Wildlife Grants
 - Outdoor Recreation Grants
 - Small Community Grants
 - Local Parks Grants
 - Regional Grants

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- Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants
 - Recreational Trail Grants
 - Boating Access Grants
 - Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants
- TxDOT Grants
 - Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program
 - Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program
 - Mitigation Funds (with direction by Texoma COGZ)
- Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails Act
- Federal Funding Sources
 - Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program
 - Highway Safety Improvement Program
 - National Highway System (NHS)
 - Surface Transportation Program (STP)
 - Transportation, Community and System Preservation (TCSP)
 - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG)
 - Community Development Block Grant (CBDG)
 - US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - US Department of Interior (USDOI) – NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- Grants for Greenways – Eastman Kodak Company, Conservation Fund and National Geographic Society
- Communities Foundation of Texas
- Meadows Foundation
- Land Trusts
- North Texas Day of Giving
- REI
- Caruth Foundation
- Tractor Supply Company Equestrian Trail Grants
- Private donations or easements on private property

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4.6 Plan Updates

Future updates of the FCRTMP should be managed by the Trail Advisory Committee, with input from a coalition of the different trail interest groups.

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