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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Rim Trail Reopens on Tusquitee Ranger District**

**MURPHY, NC**, December 4, 2017 - The Tusquitee Ranger District has reopened the Rim Trail between Big Stamp and Will King Gap atop the Valley River Mountains in the Fires Creek Watershed near Hayesville, NC.

This portion of the trail was closed in 2010 because it crossed through private property at the headwaters of Laurel Creek. On November 20, 2017, Mainspring Land Trust acquired the 50-acre private inholding from the Laurel Creek Property Owners Association and is now allowing the public to resume using the segment of the Rim Trail that crosses the property.

The Rim Trail is a 25-mile foot and horse path that traverses the rim of the Tusquitee Mountains and Valley River Mountains that form the Fires Creek watershed. Sections of the trail predate land acquisition by the U.S. Forest Service in 1937. The route was used for hundreds of years for access between Cherokee towns in the area.

The Fires Creek area is a recreation destination popular with picnickers, swimmers, hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, hunters, and anglers. The trails and closed roads get moderate-to-high recreational use overall, with most

hiking, horse and bike use occurring spring through fall.

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