

Presentation to Chatham County Planning Board

Gigi Davidson

1043 Hatley Road, Pittsboro, NC 27312

June 4, 2024

Timed reading: 2 min 52 seconds

My name is Gigi Davidson. My husband Michael and I live on the 68 acres immediately east of Ridgewood Hills.

Maintaining the integrity of Parker's Creek, which runs through Ridgewood Hills and our property, is my primary concern. Plat maps of properties along the creek, show that this is the last developable stretch of Parker's Creek between its headwaters and its mouth. My plea is that Parker's Creek and all its tributaries (such as the Brassington Springs Branch) each be protected with a 100-foot riparian buffer between that feature and any Ridgewood Hills development.

Parker's Creek is a critical tributary to the Jordan Lake Reservoir. 10 counties, 27 municipalities, and 700,000 people depend on Jordan Lake for drinking water. Not only is Parker's Creek critical to Jordan Lake, it is also an environmentally sensitive and increasingly rare ecosystem.

Our property was recently surveyed by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. In that survey it was noted that our property and the 1 mile surrounding area have current evidence and historical records of rare species (such as the significantly rare Carolina Ladle Crayfish), important natural communities (such as Dry Oak and hardpan communities), state designated natural areas (such as the Big Woods Forests and Parkers Creek Ridges), and conservation and managed areas (such as all of the educational, recreational, and preserve areas associated with Jordan Lake). I have submitted the preliminary findings of this survey and the recommendations of the NC Natural Heritage Program to Members of the Planning Board.

We have been on this property for 31 years, during which we have watched Parker's Creek change dramatically. Once a steady flow of water whose levels rose and fell gently, Parkers Creek now suffers from major erosion and upstream runoff, causing severe flooding that washes out our driveway, which is the only way out of our property. Trees of 1-2 feet in diameter have been washed out of the banks into the

creek and jam up our culvert, causing Parker's Creek to rise to depths of 5-6 feet upstream of the jam, flooding the rest of our property. We have spent tens of thousands of dollars managing the damage to Parker's Creek caused by upstream development.

We have also watched the disappearance of many animal and plant species along our section of Parker's Creek. There was once a thriving colony of beavers in the middle of the proposed development. There were once river otters, a bobcat, grey fox, and salamanders. The crayfish were plentiful. There were flame azaleas, and lady slippers and trout lilies along our north facing bank. All these species have now been mostly extirpated and replaced by Japanese Stilt grass that has washed down from upstream.

I do not speak tonight to try to stop the development. I only ask that the Planning Board ensure the protection of Parker's Creek. I urge you to work closely with the NC Natural Heritage Program and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to develop and maintain a 100 foot protective riparian buffer along the entirety of Parker's Creek and its tributaries. I and future generations thank you for this consideration.



Roy Cooper, Governor

D. Reid Wilson, Secretary

Misty Buchanan
Deputy Director, Natural Heritage Program

NCNHDE-26206

May 30, 2024

Stephanie Horton
NC Natural Heritage Program
121 W. Jones St, MSC 1651
Raleigh, NC 27699-1651
RE: Davidson Tract - Big Woods

Dear Stephanie Horton:

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) appreciates the opportunity to provide information about natural heritage resources for the project referenced above.

A query of the NCNHP database indicates that there are records for rare species, important natural communities, natural areas, and/or conservation/managed areas within the proposed project boundary. These results are presented in the attached 'Documented Occurrences' tables and map.

The attached 'Potential Occurrences' table summarizes rare species and natural communities that have been documented within a one-mile radius of the property boundary. The proximity of these records suggests that these natural heritage elements may potentially be present in the project area if suitable habitat exists. Tables of natural areas and conservation/managed areas within a one-mile radius of the project area, if any, are also included in this report.

If a Federally-listed species is documented within the project area or indicated within a one-mile radius of the project area, the NCNHP recommends contacting the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for guidance. Contact information for USFWS offices in North Carolina is found here: <https://www.fws.gov/offices/Directory/ListOffices.cfm?statecode=37>.

Please note that natural heritage element data are maintained for the purposes of conservation planning, project review, and scientific research, and are not intended for use as the primary criteria for regulatory decisions. Information provided by the NCNHP database may not be published without prior written notification to the NCNHP, and the NCNHP must be credited as an information source in these publications. Maps of NCNHP data may not be redistributed without permission.

Also please note that the NC Natural Heritage Program may follow this letter with additional correspondence if a Dedicated Nature Preserve, Registered Heritage Area, Land and Water Fund easement, or an occurrence of a Federally-listed species is documented near the project area.

If you have questions regarding the information provided in this letter or need additional assistance, please contact the NCNHP at natural.heritage@dncr.nc.gov.

Sincerely,
NC Natural Heritage Program

Natural Heritage Element Occurrences, Natural Areas, and Managed Areas Intersecting the Project Area
Davidson Tract - Big Woods
May 30, 2024
NCNHDE-26206

Element Occurrences Documented Within Project Area

| Taxonomic Group | EO ID | Scientific Name | Common Name | Last Observation Date | Element Occurrence Rank | Accuracy | Federal Status | State Status | Global Rank | State Rank |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| Crustacean | 25541 | Cambarus davidi | Carolina Ladle Crayfish | 2007-03-14 | E | 3-Medium | --- | Significantly Rare | G3 | S3 |

Natural Areas Documented Within Project Area

| Site Name | Representational Rating | Collective Rating |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Big Woods Road Upland Forests | R5 (General) | C5 (General) |

No Managed Areas Documented within the Project Area

Definitions and an explanation of status designations and codes can be found at <https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/help>. Data query generated on May 30, 2024; source: NCNHP, Spring (April) 2024. Please resubmit your information request if more than one year elapses before project initiation as new information is continually added to the NCNHP database.

Natural Heritage Element Occurrences, Natural Areas, and Managed Areas Within a One-mile Radius of the Project Area
Davidson Tract - Big Woods
May 30, 2024
NCNHDE-26206

Element Occurrences Documented Within a One-mile Radius of the Project Area

| Taxonomic Group | EO ID | Scientific Name | Common Name | Last Observation Date | Element Occurrence Rank | Accuracy | Federal Status | State Status | Global Rank | State Rank |
|-------------------|-------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| Crustacean | 25541 | Cambarus davidi | Carolina Ladle Crayfish | 2007-03-14 | E | 3-Medium | --- | Significantly Rare | G3 | S3 |
| Natural Community | 25720 | Dry-Mesic Basic Oak--Hickory Forest (Piedmont Subtype) | --- | 2010 | CD | 2-High | --- | --- | G3G4 | S3 |
| Natural Community | 3972 | Dry Oak--Hickory Forest (Piedmont Subtype) | --- | 2010 | A | 2-High | --- | --- | G4G5 | S4 |

Natural Areas Documented Within a One-mile Radius of the Project Area

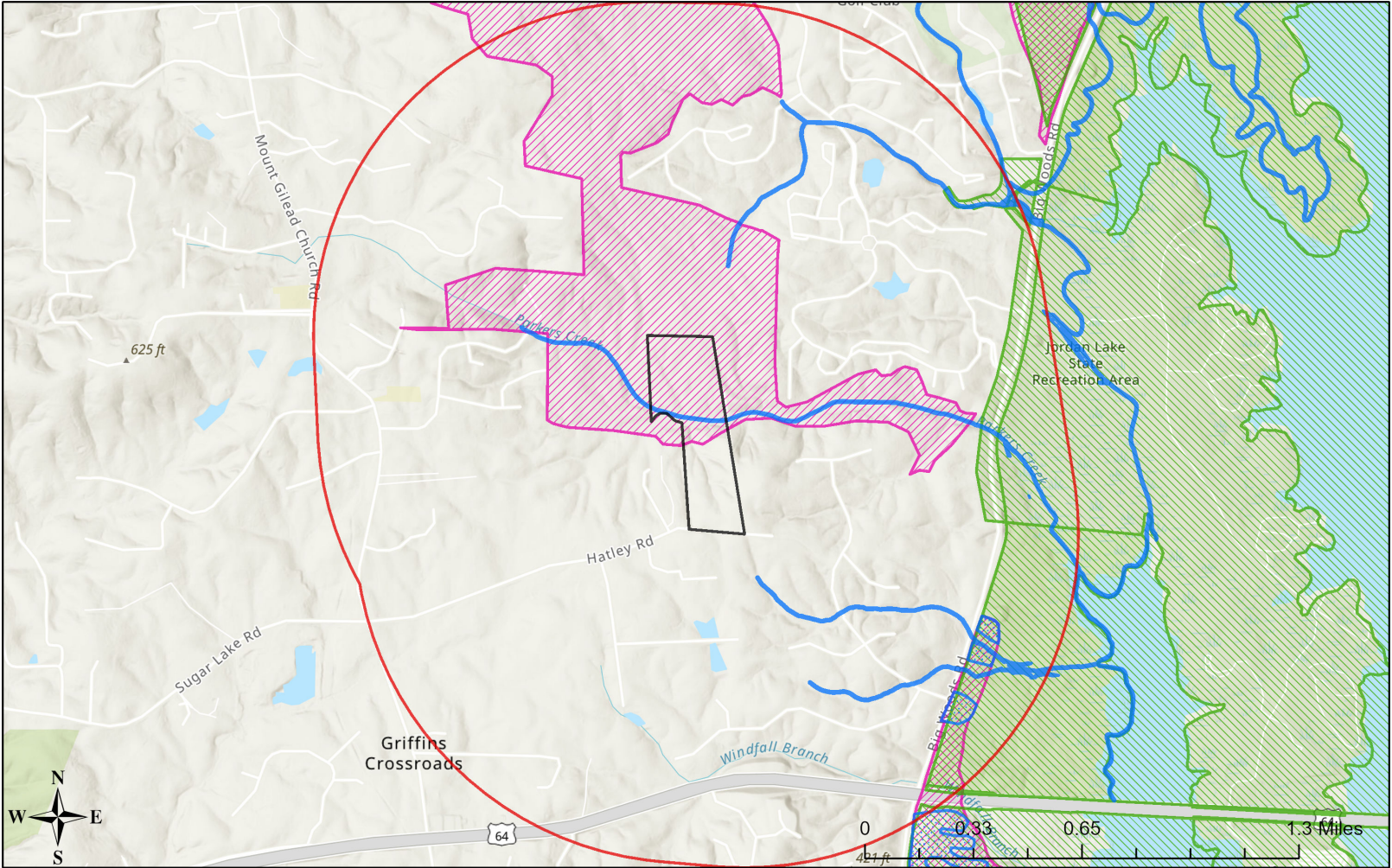
| Site Name | Representational Rating | Collective Rating |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Big Woods Road Upland Forests | R5 (General) | C5 (General) |
| Parkers Creek Ridges | R5 (General) | C5 (General) |

Managed Areas Documented Within a One-mile Radius of the Project Area

| Managed Area Name | Owner | Owner Type |
|---|--|------------|
| B. Everett Jordan Dam and Lake | US Army Corps of Engineers | Federal |
| Jordan Lake Educational State Forest | US Army Corps of Engineers | Federal |
| North Carolina Agricultural Foundation Preserve | The North Carolina Agricultural Foundation, Inc. | Private |
| Jordan Lake State Recreation Area | NC DNCR, Division of Parks and Recreation | State |

Definitions and an explanation of status designations and codes can be found at <https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/help>. Data query generated on May 30, 2024; source: NCNHP, Spring (April) 2024. Please resubmit your information request if more than one year elapses before project initiation as new information is continually added to the NCNHP database.

NCNHDE-26206: Davidson Tract - Big Woods



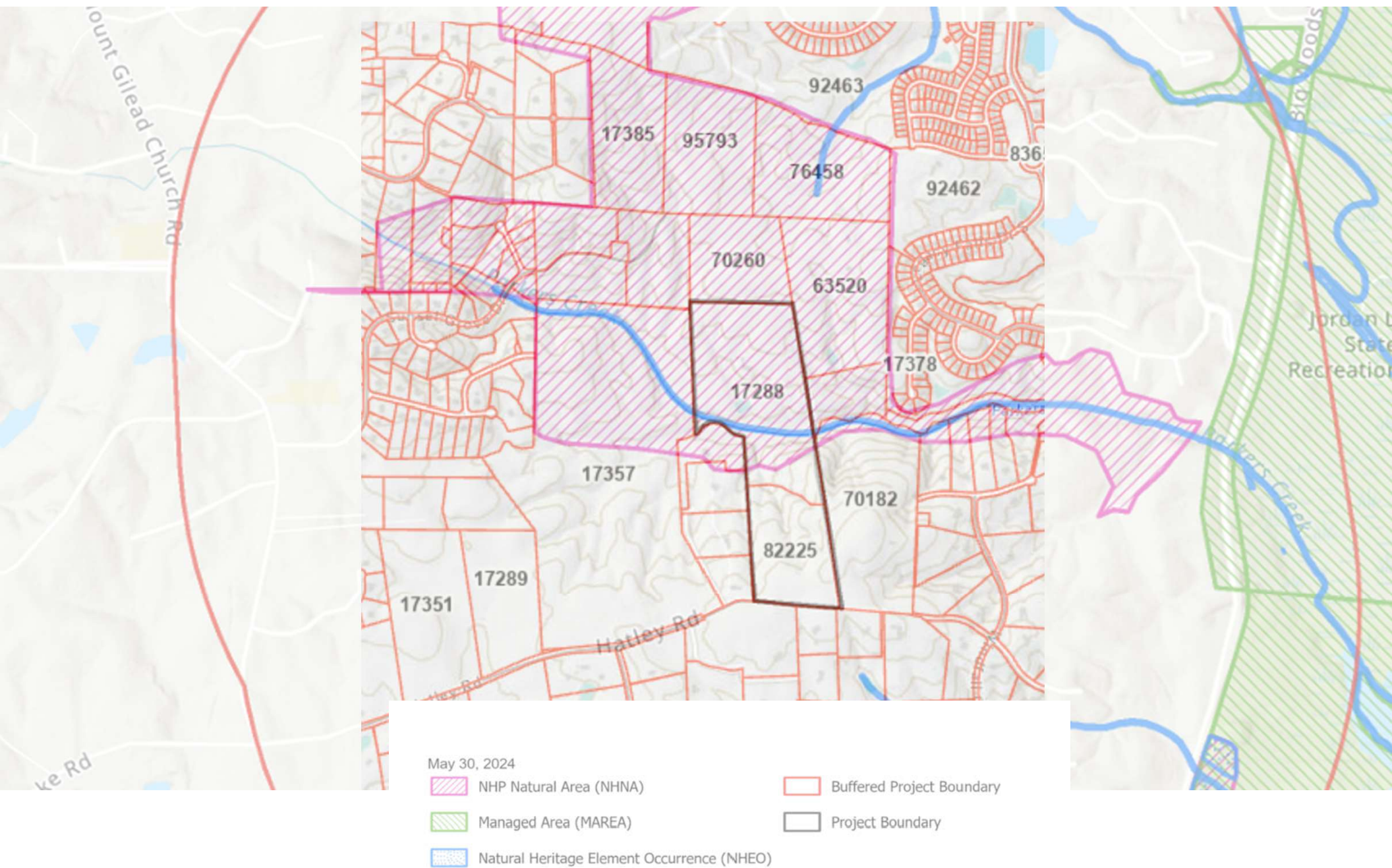
May 30, 2024

- NHP Natural Area (NHNA)
- Managed Area (MAREA)
- Natural Heritage Element Occurrence (NHEO)

- Buffered Project Boundary
- Project Boundary

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA
UNC, Chatham County, NC, State of North Carolina DOT, Esri, TomTom, Garmin,
SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census
Bureau, USDA, USFWS

Overlay of NC Natural Heritage Areas with Davidson Property (17288, 82225) and Ridgewood Hills (17357) and 1 mile surrounding area (red line)



Carolina Ladle Crayfish in Parkers Creek area

Horton, Stephanie J <stephanie.horton@dncr.nc.gov>

Tue, Jun 4, 2024 at 10:52 AM

To: Gigi Davidson <gsdavid2@ncsu.edu>

Dear Ms. Davidson,

Thank you for your message and for your concern for sensitive species. NCNHP already has records for the Carolina Ladle Crayfish from Parkers Creek and it is considered extant on your parcel and adjacent parcels. NCNHP's recommendation for riparian protection would be to conserve 100-foot riparian zones along Parkers Creek and any tributaries to it. Chatham County/Pittsboro may have more comprehensive riparian conservation regulations in their planning and development ordinances. Let me know if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Horton

Special Projects Manager

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

Division of Land and Water Stewardship

NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

**stephanie.horton@dncr.nc.gov****919-707-9430**

121 W. Jones St, MSC 1651 Raleigh, NC 27699-1651

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Email correspondence to and from this address is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties.
