



February 27, 2019

Dear Wake County Commissioners:

I'm writing about a threat to the most visited North Carolina state park, our most popular Wake County park, and to the quality of life in the Triangle region of North Carolina.

Triangle Off-Road Cyclists (TORC) is a volunteer organization dedicated to ensuring the future of mountain biking in the Triangle. TORC is the Triangle area chapter of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). We've continued to grow steadily and now help maintain 16 area trail systems, partnering closely with land managers including Wake County Parks and North Carolina State Parks. We organized over 1,100 hours of volunteer work in 2018. With over 4,500 members on our [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com/TORC-Mountain-Biking/) group, we hosted 305 events in 2018 catering to a wide range of ages and skill levels: rides, skills clinics, trail workdays, kids rides, womens rides, races, and our annual TORCFest mountain biking festival.

We and our members **strongly oppose** the Wake Stone Corporation quarry proposal. Wake Stone is pushing to mine a new quarry pit on the border of Umstead State Park. Realizing most oppose their plans, they are positioning it as helping the mountain bike community, and offering to help Wake County temporarily lease some nearby park lands. Instead, we support preserving the Odd Fellows tract forever. The Conservation Fund has offered to purchase this land for permanent preservation, as an addition to Umstead State Park, and part of a multi-use trail system. Being so centrally located to the fast growing Triangle region, this forested land is truly special and worth preserving.

Our vision is a world class trail center ([RDU Forest](https://www.rduforest.org/)). Our coalition (TORC, Umstead Coalition, Bike Walk NC, and Sierra Club) is united in working towards the trail center, and have received various levels of support and encouragement from NC State Parks, Wake County, REI, Great Outdoor Provision Company, Trek Bikes, and many other local businesses. We have also received over 17,000 petition signatures opposing the quarry and supporting the RDU Forest Trail Center. The next step in achieving the trail center is to preserve the Odd Fellows tract instead of quarrying it. This vision is in line with not only the branding of the Triangle and our future economic development, but also the findings of the recent Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau Destination Strategic Plan.

A new quarry pit is simply incompatible with the surrounding recreational assets of Umstead State Park, Lake Crabtree County Park, and the East Coast Greenway. It would create a long term liability for the region. Instead, we ask for your support in helping us make this a permanent asset to our great community.

The Triangle is renowned for our high quality of life. Many of our residents are avid outdoor recreationists. Our members often tell us how important “close by” trails are to their daily lives. As an employee, having opportunities to get outside is the perfect compliment to the “knowledge worker” desk jobs that drive our local economy. And for employers, the nearby trails are a great recruiting tool. It’s important that we seize this opportunity to preserve such a centrally located, convenient section of beautiful forest.

Thank you for supporting our public lands.

Sincerely,

David Anderson - Board Member - 919-345-8011 - advocacy@torc-nc.org

Sarwat Khattak - President

Triangle Off-Road Cyclists

www.torc-nc.org