

The CMC commends the FMST for recommending a solution that honors the hard work that has gone into building the trail to Heintooga Road but also acknowledges that some hikers are not up to the challenge of the high peaks of the Smokies. As they note in their letter to the Southwestern Commission the dual route will allow hikers the opportunity to "experience some of the most remote, beautiful parts of the GSMNP" or "a rural mountain valley with farms and small towns". The Club agrees that this is an worthy proposal given present circumstances.

The CMC continues to believe that a central, more direct route, one that is closer to the original plan for the MST, is most desirable in the long run. Club members have suggested routes along existing gravel roads and trails that could be used for such a route and hope that permission to use these roads and trails can be attained in the not-too-distant future.

The Southwestern Commission will use the proposals, recommendations and ideas received during this trail review to develop their own recommendation for trails in Western North Carolina. The NC State Parks Trails division and Trails Commission are charged with making final decisions about all State Trails.