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News Release

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Roanoke County Launches McAfee Knob Trailhead Shuttle Service

September 1, 2022 – Roanoke County held a ribbon cutting ceremony Thursday to launch its new McAfee Knob Trailhead Shuttle Service. Speakers included Martha B. Hooker, Roanoke County Board of Supervisors; Dr. Raymond D. Smoot, Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board; Wendy K. Janssen, Superintendent of Appalachian National Scenic Trail; and Lisa and Brian Sink, Ride Source.

The McAfee Knob overlook is one of the most photographed locations on the Appalachian Trail. Because of its popularity, this iconic rock outcropping now attracts about 50,000 hikers each year. The National Park Service has for several years tracked visitation rates, the impacts on the Appalachian Trail, as well as the constraints on parking capacity.

A Transit Feasibility Study offered shuttle scenarios to help hikers reach the Appalachian Trail and was used as the foundation for a grant request to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation earlier this year. Roanoke County was awarded funding to bring the McAfee Knob Trailhead Shuttle to life.

“This type of investment in transit helps offer a sense of excitement for visitors, attracting them to return again, and promotes tourism for our region,” said Martha Hooker, Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, Catawba Magisterial District. “The McAfee Knob Trailhead Shuttle is just the start of future investments and significant improvements to come at the top of Catawba Mountain. This is only made possible because of the many partner organizations and government agencies dedicated to not only help hikers reach McAfee Knob, but also to improve their experience from first step to last.”

The Shuttle will run September 2, 2022 through November 27, 2022. Service will resume March 3, 2023 and run through November 26, 2023. Service provides safe and convenient transportation to the McAfee Knob Trailhead on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, with occasional Mondays for holidays (Memorial Day and Labor Day).

The shuttle will depart every 30 minutes from the I-81 Exit 140 Park and Ride in Salem, following a route to the Catawba Community Center to turn around and then safely deliver passengers to the designated shuttle pull-off near the McAfee Knob Trailhead parking lot. The route is approximately a 15-minute ride to and from the trailhead.

Reservations may be made by visiting www.McAfeeShuttle.com and click BOOK NOW. Tickets are \$5 one way, plus booking fees. For more information about this exciting new service, visit www.roanokecountyva.gov/McAfeeKnobShuttle.

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