When completed, the American Tobacco Trail will be the longest trail in the Triangle, stretching 22 miles from western Wake County north to downtown Durham. At present, about 20 miles of trail are open: 6.7 miles in Wake County, 4.7 miles in Chatham County and 9 in Durham County.

The main hurdle to completion: two bridges using old railroad trestles in Chatham County and a pedestrian bridge over Interstate 40 in Durham near the Streets at Southpoint mall. Because of those breaks, the trail is divided into four sections.

The ATT is the backbone of a Triangle-wide effort to link as many cities and neighborhoods by greenway and bike path as possible. In one such scenario — a scenario that is about three-quarters complete — using ATT and other greenways, it will be possible to ride a bike, run or walk from Raleigh through Umstead State Park, Cary and Apex, then catch the ATT to downtown Durham.

We made the Wake County end of the trail our starting point at the bottom of the ramp at left so the mileage marks are from south to north.

**AMERICAN TOBACCO TRAIL**

**Don’t ford the creek:**
People have been known to cross Beaver Creek in Southpoint Crossing shopping center, but we don’t know how they do it and we wouldn’t recommend it.

**Ford the creek:**
Though this bridge currently consists only of supports for a future bridge, it is possible to cross Beaver Creek at this point. Watch your footing, though; it’s a steep drop down to the creek.

**Future trail:**
A 20-mile multiuse trail is in early discussions. It would extend to downtown Lake County Park and on to Beaver Creek, where a natural forest is preserved. A portion of the trail would be near the Jordan Lake Game Lands where you might spot a fox, deer or turkey. The Chatham County section is one widening part of the trail.

**Mile marker:**
A five-foot concrete obelisk (bearing a “5”) is a reminder of the six markers once found along the old railroad.