



Name that Creek 2020

RiverLink's Name that Creek program is a local, grassroots program in which communities submit name suggestions for unnamed creeks and vote for the most fitting name. After a name is chosen, it is submitted first to Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commissioners for approval, and then to the USGS Board of Geographical Names for consideration. Once approved, the creek name will appear on official USGS maps. Since the program's inception, RiverLink has sponsored eight successful creek naming campaigns with the help of community volunteers.

This year, RiverLink has worked with residents to select names for two nameless creeks within the City of Asheville. The first naming campaign focused on a small tributary of Haw Creek. The second campaign focused on a tributary of the French Broad River that flows through a wooded area behind the A-B Tech campus. In both instances, RiverLink created an online poll (Google Doc) to collect potential names from neighbors who live along the creek. RiverLink staff distributed flyers to Creekside neighbors, inviting them to suggest names. Residents were also given the option to mail in suggested names. After a month, RiverLink gathered the name suggestions and created a city-wide poll to select the official name. City residents were made aware of the poll through RiverLink's website, newsletter, and social media pages. Details are below.

1) Haw Creek Tributary (Masters Branch)

Location: The stream begins on a slope just west of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the Haw Creek community of E. Asheville and flows southwest until it reaches Haw Creek at New Haw Creek Rd (Fig 1).

Proposed Names: Masters Branch, Black Haw Branch, Masters Stream

Winner: Masters Branch won with 57.9% of the vote (Fig 2).

Name Significance: Rory and Hazel Masters were known for their commitment to the Haw Creek community. Rory donated property to the Haw Creek Volunteer Fire Department and served as their chief. He also helped neighbors with repairs when needed, without charging for his services. He and his wife helped raise money for the materials needed to build the fire department building.



2) A-B Tech Creek (Haith Branch)

Location: The unnamed stream flows southwest through a wooded area between the A-B Tech Campus and Walton Street Park (Fig 3). The stream runs into the French Broad River under Lyman Street near Amboy Rd.

Proposed Names: Haith Branch, Victoria Branch, Tahkeeosteh Creek

Winner: Haith Branch with 79% of the votes (Fig 4)

Name Significance: Lacy T. Haith (7/20/1909 to 8/1/1994) was a well-loved community member, educator, and civil rights leader who worked in Asheville City Schools from 1937-1972. He taught at Stephens Lee High School until its closing in 1965. He is remembered by community members as “stern but loving” and “an icon in this community”. He was also involved in the development of the YMI Cultural Center and the YWCA. Naming the creek in his honor would help to preserve the heritage of the surrounding historically black neighborhood.

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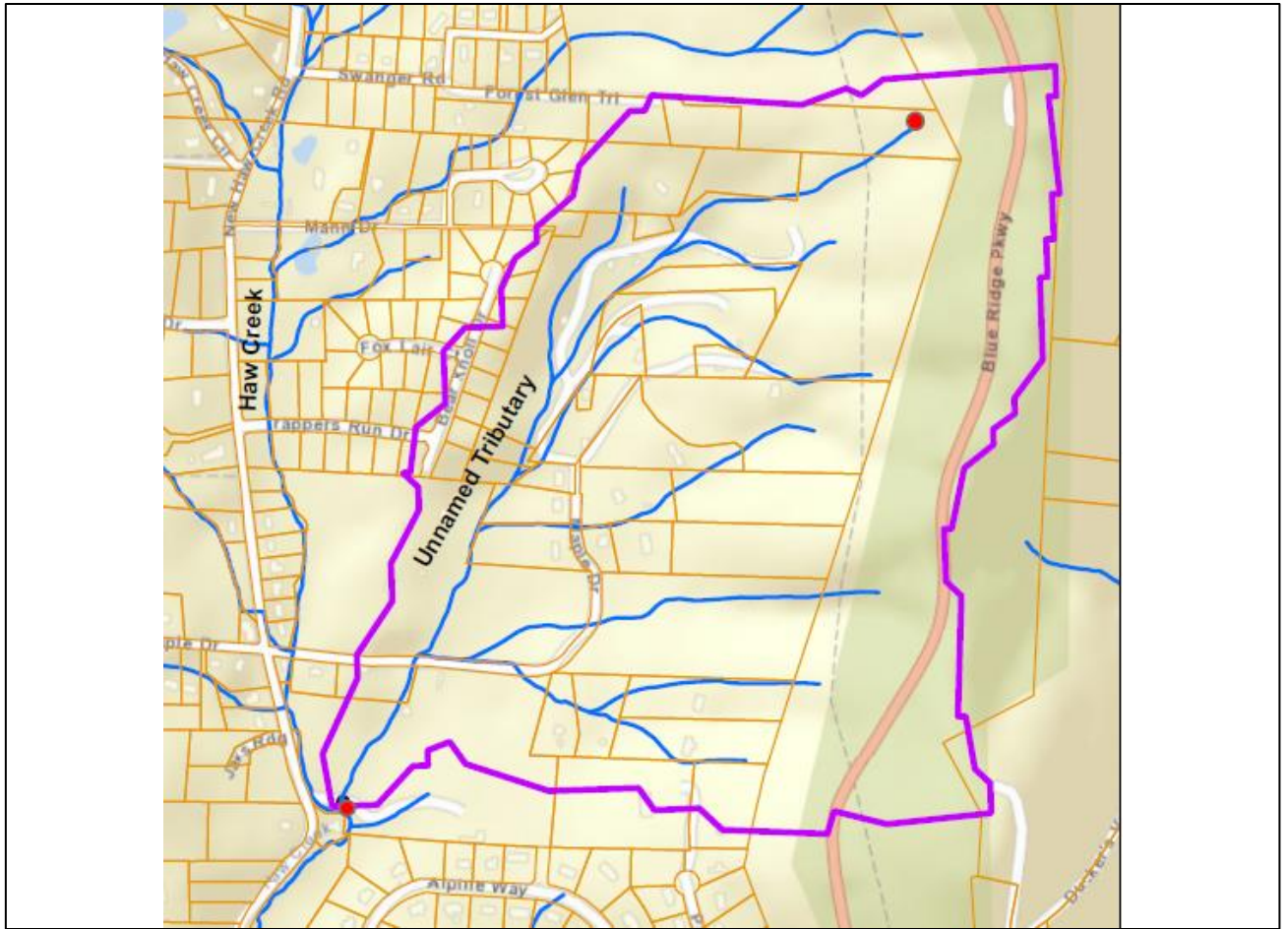


Figure 1. Map of Masters Branch. Red dots indicate beginning and end of stream. Fuchsia line represents watershed boundary.

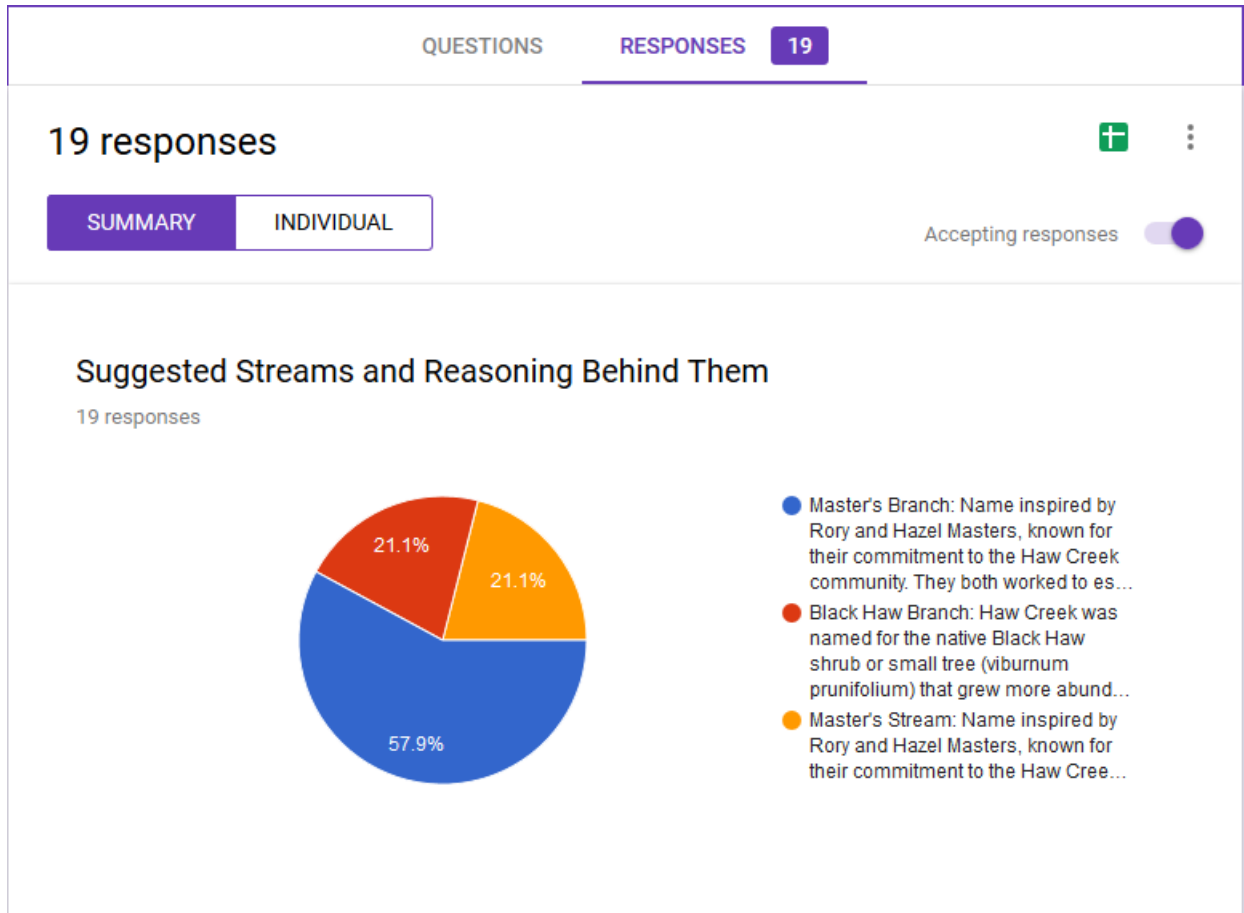


Figure 2. Poll results for Masters Branch*

*Apostrophe was removed to comply with USGS Naming Guidelines.

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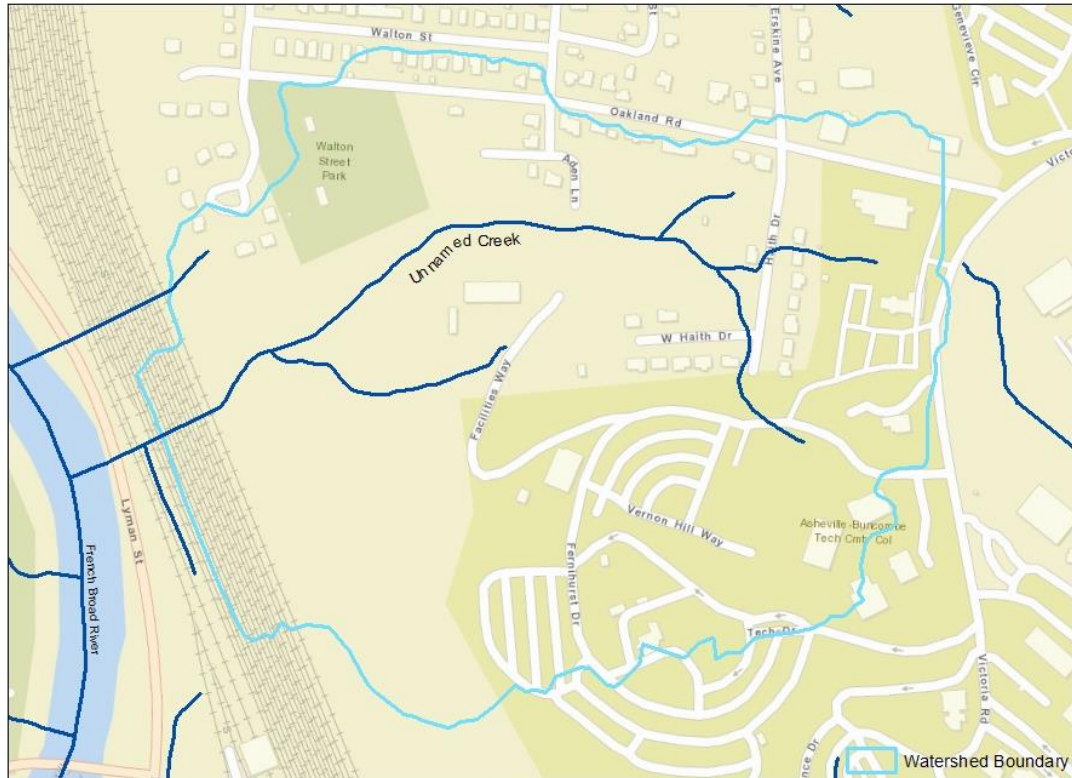
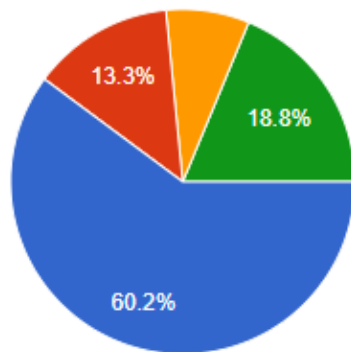


Figure 3. Map of Haith Branch. Light blue line represents the watershed boundary.

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Suggested names and reasoning behind them:

128 responses



- Haith Branch - Honoring Lacy T. Haith, a well loved community member, educator, and civil rights leader who w...
- Tahkeesteh Creek - One of the names the Native Americans in the area called the French Broad River
- Victoria Branch - The area was previously known as the Town of Victoria
- Haith Branch - Honoring Lacy T. Haith, a well loved community member and ed...

Figure 4. Poll results for Haith Branch*

*After revising the description for Haith Branch, Google Forms split it into two categories.