



LandMark 2014



Eastern mud turtle

A publication of The LandTrust for Central NC

Events

Join us for these Fun Upcoming Events!



The LandTrust has a whole slate of fun and adventurous upcoming events for this year! Please see below for the listing and get these on your calendar so you won't miss out! You can find out more about these events on pages 10-13.

Uwharrie Trail Workdays - April 12, May 17 and June 14
Earth Day Jam - Saturday May 3rd
Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend - May 10th and 11th
Uwharrie Trail Backpacking Thru-Hike, May 30th - June 1st
Annual Meeting at Historic Cooleemee Plantation - June 8th
RiverDance 2014 - August 9th
Hitchcock Creek Canoe Trip - October 19th

Land Protection

Celebrating Significant Conservation Victories in 2013!

Thanks to your support, and the generosity and conservation ethic of some amazing landowners and donors, The Land Trust for Central NC protected a grand total of 1,375 acres in 2013. This was through 11 different projects, spread broadly over six of our ten counties.

Approximately 100 acres of this total were fee title acquisition and the remaining 1,275 acres were conservation easement donations.

This brings the total amount of land protected by The LandTrust to 24,070 acres! As we are just about to approach our 20th year, we are excited to have conserved so many special places, and to have worked with so many wonderful people throughout our region.

From beautiful rolling farmland, to Uwharrie Mountain hills; from mature hardwood forests, to granitic flatrock communities; from irreplaceable

(Continued on page 8...)



Beautiful agricultural fields found on the Hearne Property, 238 acres conserved in Stanly County.

Letter from Director

A few weeks ago, a Rowan County landowner I will call “Larry” called and asked to meet with Jason. An appointment was set, although staff was not sure what the meeting was going to be about. Larry indicated that he wanted to talk about some family land that he had.

Fast forwarding through the details, Larry reached out to us to let us know that he had included The Land Trust for Central North Carolina in his recently executed estate plan. Specifically, he wanted to let us know that he would be leaving us his family farm to steward once he is gone. He explained that his farm was very special to him, and he wanted to make sure that it stayed a farm forevermore – producing food, views, wildlife habitat, and all the other benefits that farms bring to this region.

I share this story solely for the purpose of reflecting on the fact that you (we) have built something special together over these past nineteen years. Something so successful that people are willing to entrust the most special thing in the world to them into our care. And Larry is not alone. We are aware of 8 planned gifts of land that we will be entrusted with caring for in the generations to come. Truly, to you – our supporters – and to the Board and staff of The LandTrust, NOTHING should be more humbling than this ultimate vote of confidence in our work.

These landowners have invested so much of their own lives and legacies into improving and caring for their fields and forests that entrusting us to steward their lands is very much akin to entrusting us to help care for their own children. We should all be touched that we have built something worthy of being considered for such an honor.

We should reflect on the fact that what was just a fledgling new nonprofit organization in 1995 is now a force in the region, and one with respect and clout. We are now one of the largest private landowners in our ten county region, and have grown the family of conservation easement donors to more than 150 in 2013.

Our humble beginning was April 25th, 1995, some nineteen years ago. That is when our Articles of Incorporation were filed with the Secretary of State. However, that was superseded by months of meetings among local leaders from across our region who wanted to begin a movement to save special places in the lower section of the Yadkin and Pee Dee River watershed. They dreamed of a community-based organization that was supported by people like you – everyday folks who love this place that we get to call home.

We will officially begin our twentieth year in April, and will be planning a series of events in the year ahead to mark our twenty year anniversary. We all have much to be proud of with the successes of this organization, and we should (and will) take time to celebrate.

We are blessed to have supporters like you, partner organizations and public servants who advocate for conservation projects on our behalf, and landowners like Larry who love their land and trust us to take care of it. We should all be proud of what we have accomplished so far, and of all the successes we have ahead of us. Thanks for believing in this movement, and this organization.



Jason A. Valse



“Burnt Pines” Property Protected in Richmond County

With a name like “Burnt Pines,” you know there has to be an interesting story behind this project! In December of 2013, Terry Sharpe placed 114 acres of his property under conservation easement with The LandTrust for Central NC. Located on the NC Scenic Byway of Highway 73 (just west of the town of Ellerbe in Richmond County), Terry’s property has certainly earned its moniker, to the benefit of a host of wildlife and plant species.

When Terry first purchased the property, it was from a timber company, and the uplands were thick production loblolly pine forest. With his background as a retired NC Wildlife Resources Commission biologist, Terry managed the site impeccably to increase and improve the habitat found here. Prescribed fire is a frequently used management tool on this site, and the biodiversity and wildlife found here



A graceful sphinx moth visiting a blooming liatris, also known as “blazing star,” on the Terry Sharpe Property.

are exceedingly abundant as a result. Prescribed burns reduce the litter layer and open up the forest floor to sunlight, a much-needed commodity for a variety of unique wildflowers and herbs found in the understory.

The property also possesses frontage on Mountain Creek, which is a significant natural heritage area on this property, housing a variety of rare aquatic species. A plethora of diverse wildflowers grace the north-facing slope adjacent to the creek. Wildflowers with names like bloodroot, Catsby’s trillium, bellwort, wild comfrey, liatris (blazing star), bottleneck gentian, white wild indigo, mayapple, bluestar, turtlehead, mistflower, jewelweed (touch-me-not), and more are found in the understory of the forest. Terry even has a few plots on the property for growing these unique plants for restoration projects on other properties. Game species, including wild turkey and deer, also abound on the site.



Bloodroot in bloom here on a northfacing slope of Mountain Creek.

This conservation easement builds off a corridor of conservation work along the creek and in this immediate area. Terry’s property shares a boundary with the 605-acre Baldwin Forestland and Highfill Property, protected by The LandTrust in 2011 through restrictive conservation easements.

Although The LandTrust has now been in existence for nearly 20 years, we did our first conservation easement project in Richmond County just five years ago. We are excited that our footprint here has increased so quickly, and are grateful for landowners like Terry Sharpe who are willing to not only work to make their land better for wildlife, but also ensure that it stays that way forevermore. Thanks also to The Conservation Trust for NC for providing transactional funding for this project.



Terry Sharpe leads a group of botanists around the newly protected “Burnt Pines” property in Richmond County.

Ryan Newman Property Preserved in Iredell County

When Ryan Newman isn't driving 195 miles per hour around a racetrack, he enjoys fishing in his pond or walking around his farmland. And thanks to an unselfish gift of a conservation easement by he and his lovely wife Krissie, their 325 acres of scenic farmland in northern Iredell County will stay gorgeous forever.

Ryan grew up in Indiana and always felt at home in farm country. When he decided to move to this region as a premier driver for a NASCAR team, he wanted to live in a place that reminded him of home - complete with lots of open space and nature. In Northern Iredell, he found his refuge from the grueling, loud, and frantic life that a leading NASCAR driver must lead. He and Krissie bought multiple parcels in the area around the South Yadkin River and Highway 21 (near the new Girl Scout Camp and



Beautiful pastoral settings found on the newly protected Ryan Newman Property in Iredell County.



Thanks to Ryan and Krissie Newman, 325 acres of beautiful farmland will remain for future generations.

Allison Woods). They farm the land, but also uniquely use their land as a refuge for rescued animals. Krissie and Ryan both have established themselves as leaders in North Carolina on animal rights issues. Which is also why the lands that they own serve as refuges for wildlife as well.

LandTrust staff first met Ryan several years ago while working with The Conservation Fund on their "Racing for Wildlife" initiative in which Ryan was involved. Ryan has used his position of influence as a celebrity to promote land conservation and outdoor recreation, and we are glad to welcome him and Krissie into The LandTrust family. And speaking of The LandTrust family, Ryan recently changed teams and now races for Richard Childress Racing



Another view on the newly preserved Newman farm.

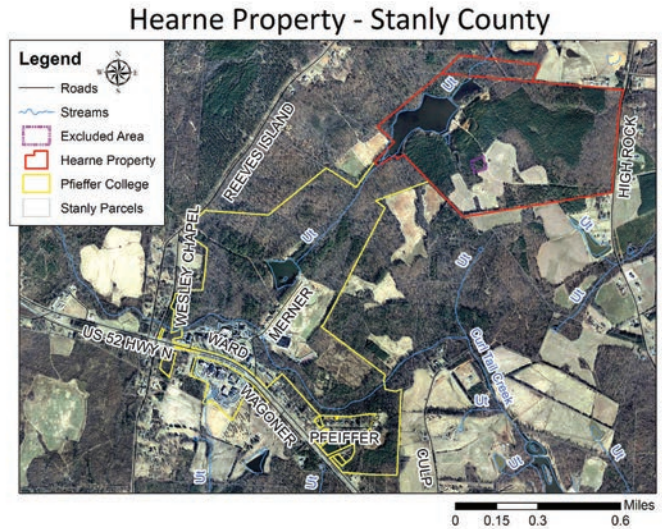
Land Protection

“Ritchie’s Lake” Conserved in Stanly County

Stanly County is known for its farming heritage and beautiful pastoral landscapes, and The LandTrust has been fortunate to work with a number of landowners to conserve some of Stanly County’s most beautiful farms and forests. In December 2013, we were able to help conserve another Stanly County landmark. Thanks to the dedication of two very special landowners, we preserved a beautiful 238-acre property adjacent to Pfeiffer College that not only possesses gorgeous farmland, but also boasts a spectacular 30-acre lake - known widely in the area as “Ritchie’s Lake.”

Those who know Tom and Hannah Hearne are well aware of their commitment to environmental issues, including everything from renewable energy to land conservation. When LandTrust staff first met them on this beautiful property, Hannah spoke eloquently of Tom’s love for this land: “Since I first met Tom 19 years ago, he has spoken of this property with great love. It means so much to him.” They were able to obtain ownership of the property, which had been held by extended family for many years, and for them preserving this special place was always their ultimate goal. The property adjoins Pfeiffer College on the western boundary and provides gorgeous views of cotton grown in the fields from High Rock Road. The tributaries here drain into Riles Creek, a beautiful stream that feeds a secluded and undeveloped cove of Tuckertown Reservoir where waterfowl are abundant.

Hannah shared her gratitude to The LandTrust for helping her and Tom realize a dream many years in the making. “The staff of The LandTrust have been so pleasant to work with. We appreciate deeply the work you all do on behalf of preserving the vanishing open spaces of Piedmont North Carolina.” In fact, LandTrust staff believes that we are the lucky ones to get to work with such sincere and dedicated people as the Hearne’s. Transactional funding for this project was provided by the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund and The Conservation Trust for North Carolina.



Saving the Thompson Farm in Rowan County



The 128 acre Thompson farm in Millbridge is a story of a family coming together to “do the right thing.” Originally settled by Thomas Gillespie in 1787, the farm became part of the Owen-Harrison plantation in 1811. In 1920 Annie Harrison Sloan sold her 86 acre portion of the family inheritance to James Grady Thompson. The Thompson Farm was formed, and later expanded to 132 acres with land inherited by Grady and Tom Thompson from their parents. Betty Thompson’s efforts to hold the family land together during the Great Depression paid off by instilling in the family the importance of protecting the land. In the fall of 2013, more than nine members of the family banded together to preserve three individually held tracts for future generations to benefit from thanks to a conservation easement donation.

In addition to the conservation easement the family is placing on the land, they have also placed a historic structures easement on the farmhouse. The Historic Architecture of Rowan County lists the farmhouse as the “Suther-Thompson” house, and dates the house as being from the third quarter of the 1800s. Family lore indicates the house was moved from a knoll about a mile north of the house’s current location in the 1920s. As the family came together to protect the house and land, they engaged professionals from the Historic Salisbury Foundation, Preservation North Carolina, and the State Historic Preservation Office. They agree that the house is most likely from the first half of the 1800s based on what appears to be original architectural fabric. The area where the Thompson farm is located holds numerous other protected lands. Near the Kerr Mill at Sloan Park, the Thompson Farm becomes part of approximately 3000 contiguous acres of protected land, and more than 4000 acres within two miles of the site. Truly the Thompson family has made a significant contribution towards keeping the West Rowan agricultural community viable for generations to come.

Adams Farm 2013 Preserved in Rowan County



Gorgeous rolling farm fields found on the newly protected Adams Farm 2013 property.

Dr. Richard Adams and Rene Collins have been working with The LandTrust on the permanent conservation of their Rowan and Iredell County farm for more than a decade now. Long time readers of The LandMark may recount that they have donated conservation easements to The LandTrust on four prior occasions. In 2013, they did it again, this time on approximately 142 acres of farmland located along South River Church Road. This brings the total amount of land permanently protected by these two conservationists to just under 1000 acres. And with more than 1400 additional acres left, they have informed LandTrust staff that they are not done yet! They do not plan to stop until the entire farm is conserved.

Dr. Adams grew up on a farm in Forsyth County, where he hunted, camped, fished, and generally just “ran all around.” Today, the land that he roamed is a very dense housing subdivision, and he laments that there is nowhere for the kids to go play outside in the creeks and woods, much less grow their own food or hunt. From his earliest days of independence, he set out trying to buy his own farm that he could protect and care for. When he closed on his first purchase of small farm in Wilkes County as a 17-year old, he was hooked. And he has continued buying and protecting land ever since. In fact, the day of closing on the 2013 conservation easement, Rene informed staff that they had to hurry because they had another closing to get to where they were buying another tract of land to add to the main farm!

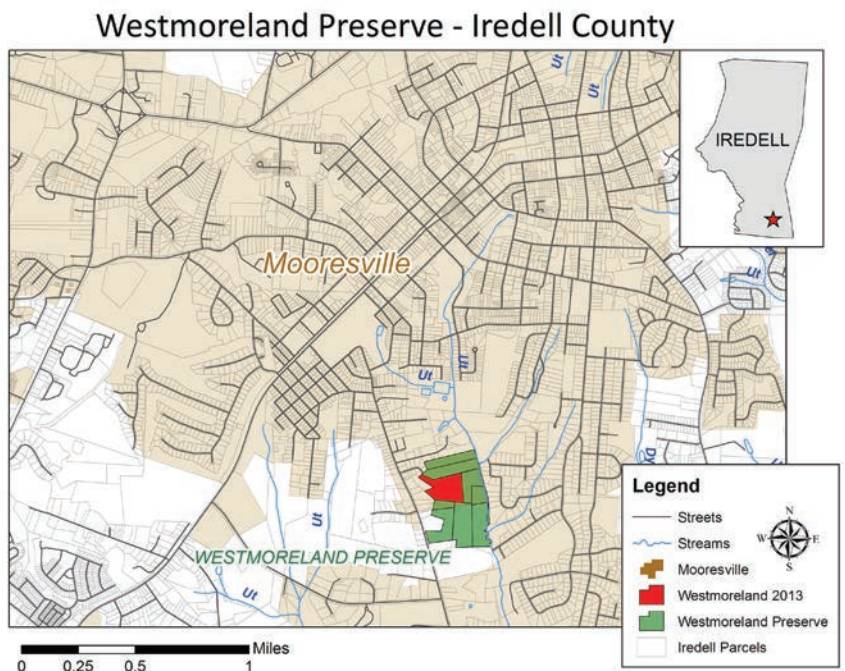
Already, their farm sprawls for over 7 miles along the South Yadkin River, making Dr. Adams the largest private landowner along the river. As Dr. Adams has relayed on many occasions, he never wanted to travel or buy fancy cars or play golf. He thrives off of buying and protecting land, making sure that it will be there for the “kids and critters” of the future. Thanks to the remarkable efforts of Richard and Rene, their farm will remain the special place that it is today forevermore, likely making it one of the largest permanently conserved conservation areas in all of Piedmont North Carolina.

Westmoreland Preserve Protection Complete!

Dr. Pam Westmoreland Sholar made her first fee title land donation in Iredell County to The LandTrust back in 1996. Now after seven more donations over the course of the past 18 years, the entirety of the Westmoreland Preserve is owned by The LandTrust with this final donation of 12 acres in 2014. Now all 65 acres of this beautiful wooded nature preserve will remain as a sanctuary for wildlife in perpetuity.

The map at right shows this most recent donation in red, and the already protected lands surrounding it in green. This property is truly an urban refuge, with its close proximity just on the edge of the town of Mooresville.

We would like to express our sincerest thanks to Dr. Sholar for entrusting The LandTrust with her special property. We will continue her conservation vision for this special site.



“Shady Grove Slopes” Conserved in Davidson County



Beautiful rocky stream on newly preserved property.

The first visit to the Mickey property just happened to be in the springtime, and deep in the beautiful mature hardwood forest, the cheery songs of the ovenbird rang out clearly. Their call is a bright and loud “teacher-teacher-teacher!” and so distinctive that it is easily one of the first calls new birders learn to recognize.

Ovenbirds and nearly 70 other species of neotropical migratory birds fly thousands of miles to our region from Central and South America every spring to mate and have their young here. These birds often come back to the very same spot year after year, and they require mature deciduous hardwood forest habitat in which to nest and forage. As a result of clear-cutting and loss of this habitat type, many of these species of bird are now in decline.

But, thanks to a conservation easement placed on his 65-acre property, David Mickey has ensured that this forest will remain a home and sanctuary for them in perpetuity. The forest found here is of high enough quality that it is part of a significant natural heritage area known as “Shady Grove Slopes,” as identified by the NC Natural Heritage Program.

This forest will certainly be a unique refuge in this area for these birds and other wildlife, as it is nearly surrounded by development. Located just a short ten-minute drive from Winston-Salem and High Point, adjacent properties to the Mickey Property are subdivisions full of houses and pavement. This land easily could have been sold for top dollar to become another high-end residential development. But David Mickey asks, “how do you put a value on this habitat for the ovenbird or any of the other hundreds of species that use this forest and creek?” Thanks to David, this property will continue to serve as a needed home for a variety of wildlife perpetually. Transactional funding for this easement was provided by The Conservation Trust for North Carolina.



Woodland anemone in bloom on the newly protected David Mickey Property.

Fesperman Property Protected on Scenic Valley Drive

Margo Fesperman is a true land steward, and her efforts to ensure protection of her 24-acre farm in Stanly County clearly demonstrate her values. After reaching out to LandTrust board member (and founding executive director) Jeff Michael, and then meeting with LandTrust staff members, Margo knew she wanted to protect her land with The Land Trust for Central NC. Her goals were realized in December 2013 with a donated conservation easement.

Margo’s newly conserved property is located on the beautiful NC Scenic Byway of Valley Drive, near Morrow Mountain State Park. The LandTrust has worked with more than half a dozen other landowners in this area to conserve important lands adjoining the park, fronting the significant Mountain Creek, and along the scenic Valley Drive corridor.

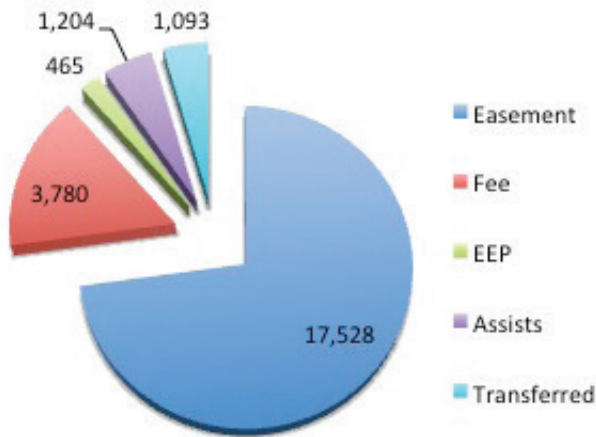
After inheriting the property from her parents, Margo said that she was entrusted to take care of the land and was determined to do so. Placing the easement on the property ensures that the land will not ever be developed, and this fact gives her great comfort in fulfilling the stewardship responsibilities that she assumed. On Christmas day, shortly after the easement was placed on the property, Margo went to her property to post the “Conservation Property” sign she was given at closing. She wrote a beautiful tribute about the experience of seeking out and conserving her special place, which she entitled “Tikkun Olam,” (“repair the world” in Hebrew). For Margo, finding a way to preserve this property was never even a question. Conserving the land entrusted to her was one way to help leave this earth better than she found it. Transactional funding for this easement was provided by The Conservation Trust for North Carolina.



Margo with conservation boundary sign in front of newly protected land.

Land Protection Report

Total Lands Protected by The LandTrust by Type



(Continued from page 1...)

historic landmarks, to upland ephemeral pools; from old-growth longleaf pine forests, to miles of Uwharrie River frontage we have worked strategically, efficiently, and effectively to save special places in the Piedmont.

Thanks to your generous contributions we have leveraged millions of dollars in federal, state, and private support for conservation for this area “in-between.” While the mountains and coast of our state are unquestionably spectacular, we recognize that North Carolina’s Piedmont is also a special place to call home.

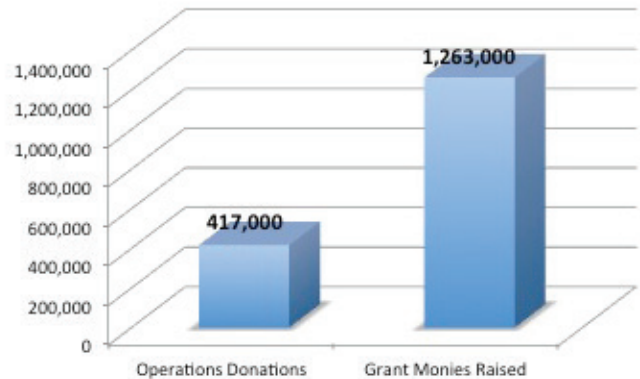
Our region is within a two hours’ drive of the vast majority of North Carolinians, yet we are proud that much of our region is still rural and natural. The Greater Uwharrie Region is one of the most diverse areas left in the Piedmont, and home to some of the oldest mountains in the world.

This area still possesses unique biodiversity, pristine waterways, important agricultural lands, and exceptional scenic vistas. We have come a long way in conserving it, but our work is far from done.

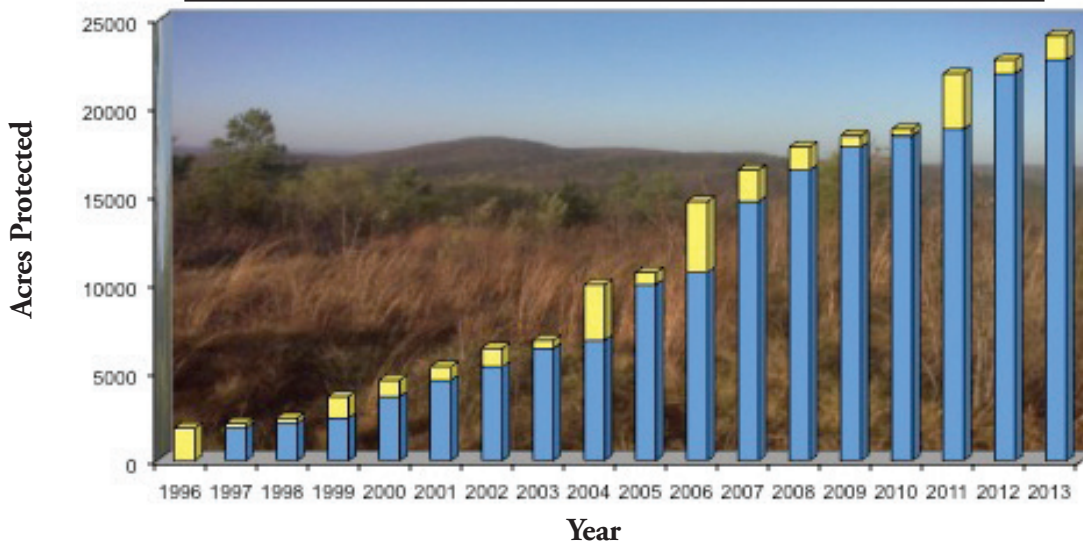
There is still time to preserve the natural and rural character of our region, and we will use your gifts and support to work diligently with willing landowners to do just that. We are your land trust for central North Carolina, and with your support we will continue to work hard to save the places you love in the Piedmont.

This chart shows that last year, for every \$1 you gave in operations funds, we were able to raise \$3 in cash match in grant funds awarded. If our work is important to you, please join us in this effort and consider making your tax-deductible charitable contribution to The LandTrust today. Thank you for your support!

\$3 Raised for every \$1 Contributed in 2013!



Cumulative Land Protection Totals over the Years



LandTrust Awarded Grant Funds for Land Protection!

The LandTrust is incredibly excited to announce that we were able to use your private donations to leverage the awarding of approximately \$1,263,000 in grants in 2013 for land protection and recreational development!

This included \$375,000 from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) to preserve three different properties, including a significant wetland site in Anson County, as well as a partnership project for a passive park for the Town of Star.

Also last year, more than \$350,000 was awarded through the State Wildlife Grants program for the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) to purchase most of the Capel Property on the Uwharrie River from us. You may recall from previous newsletters that we were able to take out loans to secure the remaining 64 acres of this site last March, and now - thanks to a NC CWMTF grant awarded last year and this State Wildlife Grant money - we will be able to pay off that loan and transfer the property to the NC WRC.

We are excited to also announce that NC WRC has finalized design work on the river access to the Uwharrie River from the U.S. Highway 109 bridge, with an anticipated completion date of later this year. And they are already beginning design work for boating access on the Capel Property as well! Thanks to our strategic partnership with WRC, the Uwharrie River will soon be a much more user-friendly destination for canoeists, kayakers, and anglers. Having three public access areas for boaters on the Uwharrie River will make day trips easier, and substantially cut down on travel time for those who want to paddle the entire river. (Previously, those boating to the mouth of the Uwharrie River had to park cars at Morrow Mountain State Park and make a long drive between put-in and take-out points.)



Kacy Cook of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and Bern Schumak of the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund on a site visit on our Birkhead Property in the fall.



Some plants and animals found on these grant awarded properties.

We have also been informed that the NC Natural Heritage Trust Fund, CWMTF, and National Wildlife Turkey Federation have committed funds to purchase our Birkhead Property (which is adjacent to the Birkhead Wilderness Area in the Uwharrie National Forest) on behalf of the NC WRC. This unique mature hardwood site with plentiful streams was slated to be developed into a subdivision when we bought it during the first phase of development. Now it will provide the only eastern access to the Birkhead Wilderness for hunting and hiking and nature exploration.

In addition, The LandTrust worked with the Town of Spencer on a NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant that was awarded, providing \$200,000 to develop trails, parking and signage at the Spencer Woods / Fred and Alice Stanback Preserve and Educational Forest.

In addition, we were able to obtain \$118,000 in migrant funds from the Conservation Trust for North Carolina and the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund to assist with transactional costs of easement donations.

All of these grants go directly to conserving or improving (for recreational purposes) land. Your contributions to this organization support dedicated and professional staff that have a proven track record of leveraging your investment by finding state, federal, and foundation grants to conserve land. You should be as proud of these successes as we are!

We are grateful to our partner agencies and organizations who similarly entrust us with their limited funding or to help complete a project. The NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, the NC Natural Heritage Trust Fund, the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the National Wild Turkey Federation, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and the Towns of Spencer and Star have all proven great friends of conservation, and we value their support of our efforts.

Upcoming Events

Earth Day Jam

The arrival of spring brings with it the 3rd Annual Natty Greene's Brewing Company Earth Day Jam (EDJ). Since EDJ began as a seed in the mind of a local musician, it has continued to grow into a regional community event that brings out the best of our musical talent.

Earth Day Jam raises funds for the LandTrust for Central NC and Saving Grace Farm. The venue, Saving Grace Farm, provides services to people in our community with special needs, autism, and mental illness. They offer support for veterans struggling with PTSD, and experiential opportunities for leadership development and team building. Other collaborators on the Earth Day Jam team include The Bread Riot, Wild Turkey Farm, Dan Nicholas Park, Renn Bee Farm, Freshouse Produce, We Are All Farmers Permaculture Institute, and Rowan and Davidson County Recycling Centers.

While Earth Day Jam offers many valuable educational opportunities, mostly it is a celebration! We are very pleased to announce that The New Familiars will be



featured at this year's event. Many of the bands that played at Earth Day Jam 2013 will be returning in May, and we hope to have some new acts as well.

Earth Day Jam would not be possible without the support of sponsors who share the vision of a community that values health, joy, and conservation of natural spaces. We hope that you will join us to grow this event and to help it take root as premier music, arts, and education festival.

Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend - Join us for Hiking, Birding, Canoeing, Camping, and more!



John Gerwin discussing birding tips with attendees last year.

The LandTrust for Central North Carolina and staff from the North Carolina Museum of Sciences are hosting our 2nd annual Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend on May 10 and 11, 2014 – a weekend of nature exploration in the Uwharries. The focus of this event will be breeding birds. This naturalist

weekend is the only one of its kind in the area and will showcase the 1,300-acre Low Water Bridge Preserve on the Uwharrie River. John Gerwin, ornithologist at the N.C. Museum of Sciences in Raleigh, along with museum and LandTrust staff, will be leading the event – pointing out unique bird species by sight and sound along the way.

At the event there will be morning and afternoon hikes each day, starting at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Hikes will also feature discussions on native plants and any reptiles, amphibians or other species found along the way. There will be an option to camp on Saturday night and a late evening hike as well, listening for owls and nightjars. The event can be enjoyed for one or both days, as hikes will take place on different trails. The event also includes a canoe trip on Saturday afternoon, open to anyone who brings a canoe or kayak.

The event is free but you must sign up. To RSVP please call or email Crystal at 336-633-0143 or crystal@landtrustcnc.org.

Upcoming Events

Uwharrie Trail Thru Hike 2014!



Thru-hikers enjoying last year's Uwharrie Trail adventure!

Last summer, LandTrust staff, interns, and friends had an amazing time on our first backpacking thru hike of the entire historic Uwharrie Trail. Thanks to more than 15 years of conservation work, this trail can now be hiked in its 40-mile entirety! We got such positive response from our first thru hike, that we are doing another one this coming May open to all interested! There are some portions of trail still in development, so if you join us, you will get a first hand preview of these newly restored sections!

Join us as we journey through some of the oldest mountains in the world, explore The LandTrust's recent land acquisitions, pay tribute to the trailblazers, and uncover the secrets of the past. This time we will be traversing from south to north, starting at the Wood Run trailhead on Highway 24/27 and finishing up at the Tot Hill / Talbott's Branch trailhead on Tot Hill Road. Dates for this year's trip will be May 29th through June 1st. There is an option to join us on Friday, May 30th, with a longer first day.

This is a backpacking trip and all attendees must bring their own gear and supplies, but The LandTrust will provide transportation and the expert guidance needed to make this adventure possible. If you are interested in attending all or even a portion of the trip, please contact Crystal at crystal@landtrustcnc.org for more information. We hope you can join us for this truly unique adventure!

To watch a short video of our fun thru hike adventure from last summer, you can scan the QR code here or go to this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYSxEiOits0>



Annual Meeting at Cooleemee Plantation

The LandTrust for Central North Carolina board and staff cordially invite all LandTrust members to our Annual Meeting on June 8th, 2014. This year's annual meeting will take place at the historic Cooleemee Plantation in Davie County. Cooleemee Plantation was the first property placed under conservation easement with The LandTrust, and served as a great foundation for the land protection work to come after. The easement donation was made by the Peter Hairston family.

Our annual meeting is a yearly gathering of LandTrust members with a short business meeting including updates from the previous year and the nomination and approval of new board members. This year's meeting will begin at 2:00pm and will be followed by refreshments and a tour of the Cooleemee Plantation house and property.

This year we will also recognize past board members and outstanding volunteers for their dedicated service to The LandTrust and our mission of



Cooleemee Plantation, site for our 2014 annual meeting, and first conservation easement donated to The LandTrust.

preserving the places we love in Piedmont North Carolina. To RSVP for our annual meeting, please contact Joe Morris by email at joe@landtrustcnc.org or by phone at 704-647-0302. We hope that you can join us for this great event.

Upcoming Events

Uwharrie Trail Work Days

February 8, March 8, April 12, May 17, June 14. Remaining dates to be determined.

Join us as we continue our work on reopening a section of Uwharrie Trail north of Little Long Mountain at the Randolph – Montgomery County line to High Pine Church Road in southern Randolph County.

In 2014 we will work as follows: The trail is open across Little Long Mountain. We need to continue grubbing and benching as growth comes back. We will begin work to open the original UT from High Pine Church Rd to King Mountain. We will assist a Eagle Scout candidate with reopening trail from Little Long Mtn (Thayer Rd.) north to King Mtn. We will scout and site trail across the Walker Creek Forest Service parcel



A great group of volunteers at our February workday take a break at Camp 7 on the historic Uwharrie Trail.

north to the newly protected McArthur Property at High Pine Church Rd.

We will work past lunch, but you are welcome to stay as long as you desire. Pack a lunch and plenty of water. Sturdy shoes and long pants are recommended. We will post worksite and specifics in advance of each workday on The LandTrust website at www.landtrustcnc.org. Thanks for your interest in the Uwharrie Trail. We appreciate your efforts in helping us return it to its original length! Please contact Crystal Cockman at 336-633-0143 or crystal@landtrustcnc.org for more information.



Join us as we restore lost sections of the historic Uwharrie Recreational Trail!

Lost Town of Lawrenceville Nature and History Walk

On March 29th, join us as we visit the Lost Town of Lawrenceville and hear about its rediscovery and other local archeological finds. Nature activities will include a short hike starting at the Uwharrie Trail NC 24/27 Trailhead. Stations along the trail will feature talks and displays about wildlife, native forest ecosystems, the turpentine industry, prescribed fire and invasive species.

Lawrenceville served as the county seat for Montgomery County in the mid-1800's, before the seat was moved to its current location in Troy.

This nature and history walk is being hosted by the Greater Uwharrie Conservation Partnership. The event will be from 1pm to 4pm, at the Lawrenceville Property.

The property is located at 4409 NC Highway 24/27, at the Wood Run Trailhead on the Uwharrie

National Forest. This nature and history walk event is part of the NC Science Festival.

The Lawrenceville property was transferred by The LandTrust for Central NC to the US Forest Service in 2009. They are working on developing a permanent interpretive history walk at the site.



The only structure remaining at the Lost Town of Lawrenceville, transferred to the US Forest Service from The LandTrust.

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates for Fall Events!

RiverDance 2014 - August 9th



RiverDance is The LandTrust's premiere fundraising gala event which takes place at the historic Salisbury Depot. Join us for great food, music, and more, and help us as we raise funds for land conservation in our region. This year promises to be the best yet! Mark August 9th on your calendar and make plans to attend. Tickets will be available soon on our website at www.landtrustcnc.org or contact Joe Morris, Development Director, for more info at joe@landtrustcnc.org or 704-647-0302. This is the end of summer event you won't want to miss!

Stargazing Campout - August 12th

We will camp out under the stars the night of August 12th, the peak of the Perseids meteor shower! Join us for a nature walk on our beautiful Capel Property in the afternoon and stay for a cookout and campout as we watch the meteor shower from one of the best places to view it around. Check our website as the date gets closer for more details and info.

Hitchcock Creek Fall Canoe Trip - October 19th

The LandTrust will be hosting our first ever canoe trip in Richmond County! Join us on the blueway on Hitchcock Creek near the City of Rockingham and check out this great resource in our region. Thanks to Boy Scout Troop 444 for providing canoes for this great fall trip. Due to the distance, we will require a nominal fee to attend of \$10 per person, \$20 per family (up to 3), or \$5 per person for LandTrust members. We expect it to fill up quickly so contact us early on to secure your spot!

Land Protection

Help us Save Plank Road Slate Knolls!

The LandTrust has secured an option on a 13-acre property for the bargain price of \$10,000 that houses one of only 17 significant natural heritage areas in all of Stanly County. Our 1-year option expires in November and we need your help raising funds to preserve this unique property!

This site is on the Rocky River, and has two rare natural communities and three rare plants. The two natural communities found here are Basic Piedmont Bluff Glade and Basic Oak Hickory Forest, and the rare plants are Missouri rockcress (*Boechera missouriensis*), piedmont aster (*Eurybia mirabilis*, historical), Walter's violet (*Viola walteri* var. *walteri*); and a watch List species: bracted skullcap (*Scutellaria ovata* ssp. *bracteata*).

In addition to saving the forest and plants, this site would provide a place on the Rocky River for canoe/kayak camping and is just south of a new canoe put-in site being developed by Anson County. Please consider contributing to this worthwhile project!



Thanks to our Donors!

Your donations allow us to continue “Saving the Places You Love” in the Piedmont. The following are new or renewing members from January 1, 2013, through January 1, 2014. Every effort has been made to ensure these names are correct. Should there be an error, or if you have questions or comments, please contact us at (704) 647-0302. Thanks for supporting The LandTrust!

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Golden Oak \$5,000 and up**

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Development

Building the Base for Ongoing Land Conservation and Organizational Sustainability

Your LandTrust is very fortunate to have dedicated members who give generously. A quick glance at our donors list, on pages 14-17 of this publication, *The Landmark*, is ample evidence. While it may seem obvious, the fact is there's no way over the past 19 years, that The LandTrust for Central North Carolina could have conserved more than 24,000 acres of farmland, natural areas and land along rivers and streams, without the stalwart support of our members. All the LandTrust outings, hikes, nature programs, float trips, informational talks and membership events would not have been possible without essential financial support. To the credit of our generous donors, The LandTrust has created an enduring legacy of organizational relevance and conservation value for our 10-county region. As a LandTrust donor, you should be proud of your accomplishments.



LandTrust volunteer, David Craft, helping staff uncover the historic route of the Uwbarrie Recreational Trail.



LandTrust members enjoy a guided hike of a unique flatwoods site at this year's annual meeting event at Morgan Ridge Vineyards.

One of The LandTrust's organizational goals is to align the financial aspects of providing land conservation services to the Yadkin – Pee Dee region with the ability of our donor base to support our efforts. There are almost 1 million people living in the LandTrust's service area. During 2013, just over 530 individuals, families, or organizations gave to The LandTrust. Needless to say, it would be helpful to our cause if more people were to join our organization.

With this in mind, we are appealing to our membership to help broaden our base. If you know someone who shares your appreciation and love for the cherished landscapes of central North Carolina, please let us know. We would welcome the opportunity to introduce them to our work – saving the places we love. Thanks for your support of The LandTrust!

Community Support

Community Banks Making Conservation Possible

Conservation easements restrict development rights, which typically results in a lessening of the value of properties, as they no longer have the potential to become a residential or commercial development. If a landowner wants to donate a conservation easement on a property that has a mortgage on it, it would require the bank to subordinate the loan to the conservation easement.

If the easement does not reduce the property by more than the loan, many banks are willing to do so, as long as they will not end up with a property that has less value than they have in it. However, some larger banks have become much more stringent in recent years, often also requiring fees

to even consider subordinating, and a timeline of many months before a decision would be made.

The LandTrust wanted to just express our gratitude to a number of local community banks who have assisted in subordinating mortgages and allowing refinancing to make conservation possible. Some banks who recently have gone above and beyond to help conservation in our region include Bank of Stanly, Carolina Farm Credit, and F&M Bank, and we just wanted to express our gratitude for their efforts. Without their partnership, some of these projects would likely not have been completed.

Stewardship Report - Assisting with Dam Removals



Bulldozers and jackhammers were used in the removal of the dam at Lassiter Mill on the Uwharrie River.

The LandTrust was able to play a small part in assisting with the removal of several dams in the Uwharrie Region over the past few years. American Rivers, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, wrote grants for and organized the removal of several dams on the Little River, the Uwharrie River, and Densons Creek.

LandTrust staff and interns assisted with inventorying, including searching for mussels and electroshocking for fish, that was done for baseline information before the dams were removed. After a few years of survey work, the dams were taken down just this past year. This included Dynamo Dam and Smitherman Dam on the Little River, a small dam on Densons Creek on the Town of Troy's Nature Preserve, and Lassiter Mill Dam on the Uwharrie River. The removal at Lassiter Mill will permit shad that are going to be brought up above Lake Tillery to spawn in the Uwharrie River once again. Thanks to all who made this possible!



LandTrust staff and interns helped with mussel survey inventories before dam removals began.

Interns

Thanks to Duke University Masters Project Group

The LandTrust would like to thank Duke University graduates Alison Montgomery and Di Zhu, for their work on an ecosystem services analysis for our conserved lands. This project was part of the Duke Group Masters Project Program.

The title of their project was "A Geospatial Analysis of Select Ecosystem Services provided by the Protected Lands of The Land Trust for Central North Carolina." They examined the benefits that our protected lands provide in terms of water quality, carbon storage, and recreation using GIS data and modeling. Their study showed that per acre our protected lands stored more carbon than non-protected lands in our region, suggesting our lands are more efficient at carbon storage. They also showed that in comparison with other National Forests in NC, the Uwharries have the potential to serve approximately 2 million more people based on location and census data. Their findings showed that across our region, developed land is increasing and forestland and cropland are decreasing.

All of this information is useful as we look at targeting conservation efforts in our region. Thanks also to their advisors Kathryn Saterson and John Fay, and to the Duke Group Masters Project program organizer Charlotte Clark.



Duke students Alison Montgomery and Di Zhu at the Jumpin' Off Rock in the Uwharries.



*To protect and preserve the land—
natural areas, rural landscapes,
family farms and historic places
within North Carolina's heartland.*

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THE LANDTRUST FOR CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA

The LandTrust is a private, nonprofit organization working with private and public landowners to protect the special natural areas, family farms and rural landscapes of Anson, Cabarrus, Davidson, Davie, Iredell, Montgomery, Randolph, Richmond, Rowan and Stanly Counties. With 501(c)(3) status, all donations to The LandTrust qualify for maximum tax deductions.



LandTrust intern, Shakira Ibrahim, and ornithologist John Gerwin share info at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh.



Yellow-fringed orchid in bloom and spicebush swallowtail in the Uwharries.



The LandTrust has worked to preserve miles of river frontage along the Uwharrie River.

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