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## Land Trust Launches Regional Trail to Connect Communities

A long-term vision for the future is what land trust work is all about.

With that in mind, the Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land have partnered to begin work on a 14-county regional trail system that will connect people to nature and build upon the excellent greenway initiatives already being done in local communities.

“There are a lot of existing trails and plans for additional greenways in various towns in the Piedmont, but no one is looking at it from a regional perspective to provide connectivity,” said Executive Director Dave Cable. “This is an efficient way to connect people to cultural, historic and natural places of interest while protecting land and water quality.”

The regional trail represents a new approach to conservation in the Carolinas. Its 14-county regional scale—involving both North and South Carolina—is significantly broader than previous individual community efforts. The project will involve many public and private partner organizations and cover dozens of jurisdictions and communities.

But its benefits also will be broad. In addition to its extensive recreational value, a trail system of this size will provide substantial public health and quality of life benefits, as well as helping to keep the region attractive and economically viable into the future. Conserving streamside buffers and maintaining a “green ribbon” of land also will improve water quality and elevate the amount of land conserved in our rapidly urbanizing area.



*Trails like the Conservancy's South Fork River Rail Trail provide numerous public benefits, including strengthening a conservation ethic for the long-term stewardship of our natural lands. Photo by Jean Woods.*

The regional trail will be a project that evolves through several phases, the first of which is a four-year planning effort to produce a master plan. This will establish a regional planning framework to facilitate long-term development and management of the trail. This will be done in partnership with local municipalities to complement their existing and future trail plans. The Foundation For The Carolinas already has approved \$134,000 for the project, and the Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land have applied for other grants to assist in this planning phase.

We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress in this exciting endeavor!



**Reserve your  
spot for  
Parties for the Land,  
Nov. 5!**

**Mission**

Catawba Lands Conservancy permanently protects land, water and wildlife habitat to enhance your quality of life.

**5,896 acres protected!**

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Cheryl Roof, *Development Director*  
Shannon Sharp, *Membership & Outreach Director*  
Andrew Waters, *Land Protection Director*  
Sharon Wilson, *Land Stewardship Director*



Dear Friends,

In addition to our targeted and proactive land protection efforts, one of the Conservancy's main focuses is offering our community opportunities to connect with land and experience nature at its best. At the forefront of these initiatives is the launch of the regional trail project in partnership with the Trust for Public Land (see cover story.) The initial stage of the exciting program includes creating and promoting the vision for a trail network that will connect communities in the 14 counties of our region. The Foundation For The Carolinas has joined the effort, and additional funding from other sources is anticipated by year-end. The regional trail is envisioned as the initial stage of a comprehensive land conservation plan for the region.

Other outdoor opportunities include our annual fall nature series. Membership and Outreach Director Shannon Sharp has created an inspirational suite of new fall hikes and lectures on protected properties that are guaranteed to energize. We have expanded Shannon's staff position to emphasize developing programs that connect members to the outdoors where they can experience our conservation successes firsthand.

Shannon partners closely with Sharon Wilson, land stewardship director, on a number of volunteer projects that improve Conservancy properties and involve new people in our work. This summer a crew of energetic Duke Energy volunteers picked up litter and debris at the Stanley Creek Forest, one of the Conservancy's crown jewels. Please contact Shannon if you are interested in getting your office team or church group involved on the land.

The Conservancy's fall gala, Parties for the Land, will provide a wide variety of chances to visit natural areas in our region. Please plan to join the fun Nov. 5 at the South End Design Center; the party will include a great live band, multiple auctions and delicious food and drink. A variety of themed parties will be on sale that night, many of which include opportunities to enjoy special outdoor activities in 2006.

Staying connected to you, our members and supporters, is key to achieving our mission of protecting more land and enhancing your quality of life. Our newly renovated office on West Morehead Street in Charlotte is always open to you. Please stop by anytime, and let us know how we might have a greater impact. We now are fully staffed and firing on all cylinders to help us meet our aggressive land protection goals. We always are interested in your suggestions on how we can better serve our community.

Thank you for continuing to support your land trust—we are nothing without you.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Davis J. Cable  
Executive Director

## Help your land trust save resources! E-mail us today.

We would like to begin sending e-alerts to notify members of conservation successes, events and newsletter postings on our web site. If you would like to receive future e-alerts, please e-mail [info@catawbalands.org](mailto:info@catawbalands.org), and include your name, mailing address and phone number so we can update your information in our database.

# Corporate Partners

## Leadership: \$20,000+

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*Riverbend plays at Great Outdoor Provision Co. for Land Trust Day.*

## Great Outdoor Provision Invests in Natural Lands

Whether for bluegrass or bargains, hundreds of Conservancy members and store patrons visited Great Outdoor Provision Co. June 4 for Land Trust Day.

Great Outdoor Provision Co. generously donated 25 percent of store sales statewide that day to the land trusts in their communities—a total of \$18,500 in 2005. In the event's 13 years, the company has donated more than \$225,000 to NC land trusts, demonstrating its true commitment to protecting our state's natural areas. The Conservancy received \$4,000 from the day and gained 17 new members.

The Conservancy raffled a variety of items donated by Ben & Jerry's, BikeSource, Great Harvest Bread Co., Ride-A-Bike Bicycle Shoppe and the Wild Bird Center. The North Face donated hydration packs for new Conservancy members who joined that day. Riverbend, a talented bluegrass band from Mount Holly, entertained shoppers from 10 a.m. to noon.



*More than 15 Duke Energy employees volunteered during Global Service Event June 11 to pick up litter and remove debris at the 506-acre Stanley Creek Forest in Mount Holly. Their enthusiasm made quick work of the 15 bags of trash and two trailers of debris.*

# Associate Director Leaves a Land Legacy of Her Own

Associate Director Sonia Perillo has many strengths—relationship building, organizational skills, and leadership are just a few. Keeping a secret, however, is more of a challenge.

“I’m pregnant,” she announced at a summer staff meeting, to gasps of glee from her colleagues. “...and I’m leaving the Conservancy.”

Once the shock subsided, we tried to tally the countless contributions she’s made to the Conservancy and the land trust community through-out her seven years here. As the second staff member hired, her story with the Conservancy begins in 1998. An optimistic twenty-something, Sonia was hoping to put her wildlife science degree and interest in conservation to good use. She’s succeeded at both, and, fortunately for us, her optimism and good humor remain.

As the organization’s first land protection coordinator, she has been involved in just about every land acquisition project the Conservancy has undertaken. The land trust had conserved about 600 acres when she started; now it protects nearly 6,000 acres. And it hasn’t been easy. She’s had encounters with livestock, bees, birds,

anoles and even a fawn along the way—the perils of land trust work.

In addition to the more than \$5 million in Clean Water Management Trust Fund dollars she’s secured for land protection, Sonia has played a significant role in the more than \$500,000 in foundation and government grants the Conservancy has received since 1999. Sonia



took a leadership role with the Catawba River basinwide study, assisted with several natural heritage inventories and implemented the Conservancy’s salamander trapping program. She is a member of the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Stewardship Advisory Council and has served in many capacities on the Land Trust Council.

Beyond these contributions, Sonia absolutely epitomizes the Conservancy. Anyone in the office who needs to know an organiza-

*...continued on page 5*



*Sonia and landowner Mary Lou Buck in*



*Rock chestnut oak, Quercus prinus*

## Fall Nature Spotlight

# Rock Chestnut Oak

The rock chestnut oak’s name stems from its ability to grow in very rocky places and the striking similarity of its leaves to that of a chestnut. Although relatively rare in the Piedmont, it is not wonder this specimen is found atop the 850-foot pinnacle of rocky outcroppings on the Conservancy’s Buck-Smith-Long Preserve, which provides this oak’s most favored growing conditions.

Almost as unique as the dark green, leathery leaves is the rock chestnut’s bark. As a member of the white oak group, the rock chestnut bark is grayish in color but is unlike any other oak, with extremely deep ridges and furrows. This tree’s acorns, though sporadically produced, are large and make for wonderful wildlife forage. Join the Conservancy this fall as we hike at the conserved Buck-Smith-Long Preserve to see the rock chestnut oak in all its glory!

## Salamander Season Begins

Join the Conservancy’s team of volunteer salamander trappers to get involved this fall in a unique way.

The Conservancy begins its new season of salamander “trapping” in September to monitor marbled and spotted salamanders’ population and movement. Located



on Whitehall and Ridge Road preserves in Mecklenburg County, the salamander traps are open

from September through May. That’s when the salamanders travel to the properties’ temporary wetlands to breed and then migrate back to the uplands as juveniles.

If you’d like to volunteer as a 2005 salamander trapper, please contact Land Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson. No experience is necessary.

# New Projects Enhance Existing Preserves



The Conservancy purchased the 39-acre **Cole Property** in July with \$169,000 from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Located in northwest Lincoln County, the property is across from the 75-acre Pott Creek Wetland and is part of a Conservancy project area that protects another 600 acres. The site is rich with mature hardwoods, wetlands and a natural spring and has more than 4,000 feet of frontage on Pott Creek.



Another project under way is the 56-acre **Northbrook Property** in Gaston County. Adjacent to Redlair Farm and Forest and Spencer Mountain Wetland, this site has 3.2 miles of stream buffer on the South Fork and its tributaries. It contains a portion of a natural heritage site and has an existing canoe access. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund awarded \$273,000 for the project, which we expect to complete this fall.

## Land Trust Welcomes New Staff Members

**Conservation Program Director Jennifer LeBlanc.** Jenni comes to the Conservancy from the Foundation For The Carolinas, where she served as assistant vice president of client services for two years administering family foundations. Prior to that, Jenni was the Great Lakes field representative for The Conservation Fund in Ann Arbor, M.I., and was a real estate associate for The Conservation Fund in Arlington, V.A. where she directed numerous land acquisition projects. She received a bachelor's degree in political science from Hobart and William Smith College and a master's degree in environmental policy and management from the University of Denver. Jenni completed the Kinship Conservation Institute Fellowship in 2002 and enjoys traveling, cross country horseback riding and other outdoor activities.



**Development Director Cheryl Roof.** Cheryl has joined the Conservancy as development director to support her passion for the outdoors and her desire to assist in the thoughtful conservation of land. Cheryl enters the nonprofit sector after a progressive management career in healthcare administration. Her leadership skills, positive energy and business experiences complement the Conservancy team and are well aligned to the land trust's mission. Cheryl received a bachelor's of science degree in physical therapy from the University of Connecticut in 1992 and a master's degree in healthcare business administration from Northeastern University in 2001. Cheryl loves hiking, backpacking, biking, rock climbing and kayaking, but most of all, loves to spend time with her husband and two dogs.

*Associate Director,  
continued from page 4*

tional fact or figure goes to Sonia. Landowners call her with questions, concerns or just to chat. Her memory is impeccable, as is her filing system. We'll miss her laugh,

her chocolate, her ability to answer random questions and her very presence.

*Sonia will work at the Conservancy through mid-October, and she and her husband Adam are expecting their first child in*

*late November.*

*She will continue to participate in Conservancy activities through committee involvement and promises to be just a phone call away when we need her. Congratulations, Sonia, on*

*a job well done, and thank you for your many contributions!*

# New and Renewing Memberships

*Thank you to our new and renewing members and contributors, received April 1 to June 30.*

## **Landscape Steward, \$2,500+**

Bob and Peggy Culbertson  
Thomas and Nancy Duncan  
Bill and Carrington Price

## **Heritage Benefactor, \$1,000+**

Anonymous  
Dave and Elizabeth Cable  
Gregory and Mary Lou Cagle  
John and Maria Huson  
Jud and Deborah Little  
Chuck and Lindsay Meakin  
Robert Perkowitz and Lisa  
Renstrom  
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## **Piedmont Patron, \$500+**

Dianne K. Blanke  
Brad and Amanda Cherry  
Michael and Lora Connor  
Walt and Trudy Donham  
Bo and Mollie Elliot  
Tom and Sherard Anne Gates  
Walter Gray  
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Dr. Joseph B. McCoy Jr.  
Johan Newcombe  
Charles and Helene Pearson  
Haywood and Sabine Rankin  
Richard and Sarah Park  
Rankin

## **Watershed Sponsor, \$250+**

Harry and Ruby Bryant  
Michael and Cynthia Jones  
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Tom Mathews  
Dan Murrey and Katie Oates  
Adam and Sonia Perillo  
Tom and Cindy Rochester  
Steven and Camilla Tracy

## **Forest Preserver, \$100+**

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Howard and Janice Cohen  
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Karen Hales  
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John and Irina Hamrick  
Tod Hawley  
Carl and Caroline Hewett  
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James and Barbara Jones  
Susan and Michael Kost  
Henry A. LaBrun  
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John and Kate Vassallo  
John and Sylvia Wallace  
Don and Madge White  
Chip Wright  
Fletcher and Anne Wright  
George and Elaine Yohrling

## **River Protector, \$50+**

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David Bowling  
Larry Burnham  
Mac and Mary Christenbury  
Don Clapp  
Carla and Ken Cook  
William and Susan Coxe  
Kurt and Erin Culbert  
Chris and Elizabeth Daly  
Samuel and Patrice Ebert  
Elaine Faires  
Jennifer Frye  
James G. Galloway  
Carol S. Golden  
Gary and Pushpa Gross  
Susan Harmon  
Cameron and Chris Herrera  
Damon Houghton  
Robert and Fern Howard  
Paul Huden  
Karen and John Jacob  
Abigail Jennings and Randolph

Lewis  
David Johnson  
Philip and Cheryl Leone  
Diana R. Mahaffey  
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A. Ward McKeithen  
Scott and Stephanie Moss  
Larry and Patricia Mullenix  
Daniel and Teresita Nelson  
Dawn P. Patterson  
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III  
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Connie Sharp  
Shannon C. Sharp  
Ansley Starr  
R. Bruce Stevens  
Wes Sturgis and Jan Keny  
Beverly Thomas and Jesse  
McDaniel  
Danny C. Wallace  
Wayne and Nancy Weston  
Carolyn White and Tammy  
Woody  
Dr. and Mrs. James H.  
Woodward  
John and Sandy Yakob

## **Habitat Conserver, \$35+**

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Richard and Clara Alexander  
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Benedict and Carolyn Berry  
Lynda Boozer  
Donald and Frances Bryant  
Roger and Joan Cannon  
Jerry Cinq-Mars  
Mark and Maggie Coleman  
David Duncan  
Rick Elkins  
Charlotte Fletcher

## **Fall Membership Drive**

The Conservancy's fall membership drive will be in full swing from September through November. Look for our banner in Uptown Charlotte on College Street, and invite your friends to join you on a hike or to Parties for the Land this fall. It's a great way to introduce them to your land trust!

# Volunteers

## Make it Happen

Dawn Frailly  
 Doug Gray  
 Green Thumb Garden Club  
 Dan and Cindy Harbacevich  
 Darlene Hassler Godwin  
 Ashleigh Heath Poling  
 Carl and Clara Hedberg  
 Mack and Georgia Hollis  
 Kim Hunniford  
 Jane W. Hunter  
 Mr. and Mrs. Walter Joyce  
 James Keane  
 R. Alan Lewis  
 Joseph B. Maxim  
 George and Bonnie Michael  
 Betty O'Leary  
 Cynthia Oates  
 Pat O'Neill  
 Bill Pace and Nancy Olah  
 Randy and Bethany Patterson  
 J. Robert and Marion Philpott  
 Thomas and Ledayne Polaski  
 Rebecca K. Porter  
 Bruce and MaryRose Randall  
 Re/Max Steeplechase Properties  
 Chimiko Sada  
 Robert and Sandra Scherrman  
 Ed, Nancy, Eddie and Griffin  
 Shaw  
 Jeffrey T. Shelton  
 Deanna Spake  
 Heather Sugg  
 Richard and Adrienne Toenjes  
 Robert and Katharine Tompkins  
 Carolyn Townsend  
 Darrell Watts  
 David B. Watts  
 Jonathan R. Wells  
 Laura Williams

### Introductory

Anonymous  
 J. Donald and Jean-Marie Bass  
 Jerry and Peggy Busby  
 Myrtle B. Goldstein  
 Conrad and Teresa Rhyne  
 Ruth Rice  
 Peter and Diane Sherman  
 Hope Sims

### Honorariums, Memorials and Gift Memberships

Eleanor Brawley, in memory of  
 Bo Tompkins.  
 Thomas and Nancy DeVries, in  
 memory of Mary Helen  
 Ledford.  
 Elaine Faires, in memory of  
 George and Mary Huffstetler.  
 Elaine Faires, in memory of

George A. Rankin.  
 Garden Club of Weddington, in  
 memory of James O. Hunter.  
 Rich Stephens and Beth Henry,  
 in memory of Bo Tompkins.

### Grants

Carrie E. & Lena V. Glenn  
 Foundation  
 Howe Foundation, Inc.  
 North Carolina Rails-Trails, for  
 the South Fork River Rail  
 Trail.  
 Trexler Foundation

### Special Gifts

Davidson College  
 William and Marina Leonidas  
 Moonlight Design Group  
 Dale and Kim Stewart

### In-kind

Anderson's Restaurant  
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 Headwaters, Inc.  
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 Inner Peaks  
 Moonlight Design Group  
 Nancy Pierce Photography  
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 Shield Engineering

*Every effort was made to ensure  
 the accuracy of this list. Please  
 notify the Conservancy of any  
 corrections, and we apologize for  
 any errors or omissions.*

*Thanks to our summer volun-  
 teers:*

### Global Service Event

John Allred  
 Randy Brown  
 Jared Lawrence  
 David Masters  
 Shareka Mingo  
 Trudy and Chris Morris  
 Bret Rafferty  
 David Sadler  
 Lena and Michael Sides  
 Raiford Smith  
 Tex and Grace Squires  
 Caroline and Gary Steubling  
 Ray Stutzman  
 David York  
 Jean Woods

### Office/Miscellaneous

Diane Blanke  
 Rosie and Dan Bodien  
 George Buck  
 Anne Davidson  
 Sue and Hannah Davis  
 Trude Gretz  
 Rollie Lawson  
 Maureen Sullivan  
 Charlie Williams  
 Allyson and Courtney Wilson

### Outreach Events

Budd Berro  
 Mike Clement  
 Sue Hanson  
 Starr Hill-Bennett  
 Jody Hoffman

Kay Killian  
 Lisa Kirkland  
 Charlie McRee  
 Jack Meckler  
 Haywood Rankin  
 Chafin Rhyne  
 Jonathan Rhyne  
 Teresa Rhyne  
 Connie Sharp  
 Ed Shaw  
 Jane Shoemaker  
 Danielle Simon  
 Mary Tribble  
 Joy Upchurch  
 Craig Wyant

### Parties for the Land

Ben and Maggie Baldwin  
 Rob Bierregaard  
 Mary Lou Buck  
 Jamie Dickinson  
 Callie Glass  
 Kathryn Heath and Tom Webb  
 Haywood and Sabine Rankin  
 Sara Roche  
 Charlie Williams  
 Jean Woods

### Stewardship

Roy Alexander  
 Heather Crutchfield  
 Jack Meckler  
 Matt Muris  
 Wendy Rayfield  
 Scott Skinner  
 Ray Stutzman  
 Heather Sugg  
 Mike Tipton



*More than 80 Conservancy members and supporters attended the May 14 ribbon cutting of the South Fork River Rail Trail. Located just south of Lincolnton, the one-mile trail offers stunning views of the South Fork River. Directions are available at [www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org). Photo by Jean Woods.*

# Parties for the Land

Saturday, Nov. 5  
7:30 p.m. to midnight  
The Atrium at Byron's South End  
101 W. Worthington Ave.

Heavy hors d'oeuvres  
Live music by the BadDaddies  
Silent and live auction

*Exclusive access to themed Integrating Nature and Community (INC) parties for 2006, including:  
Swamp Romp • Fly-Casting for Beginners • Owl Prowl • Lush & Low Maintenance • Yoga in the Garden • Carolinas Wine Tasting • South Fork Canoe Trip and more!*

Tickets are \$55 for members and \$75 for non-members. Reserve your spot at [www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org), or call the Conservancy today.

*Catawba Lands Conservancy is part of a network of 23 land trusts that collectively have protected more than 184,000 acres of the places you love in North Carolina.*



*Your land trust. Your quality of life.*

105 W. Morehead Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
704.342.3330  
[info@catawbalands.org](mailto:info@catawbalands.org)  
[www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org)

*The Official  
Charity of*



## Fall 2005 Nature Series

### Walking Tour of Historic Oakwood Farm

Sunday, Sept. 4, 2 to 4 p.m., Catawba County

Enjoy a Sunday afternoon at the historic Oakwood Farm. Oakwood was put on the map in the late 1920s for its production of "Oakwood cream" and for its state-of-the-art milking barn. (easy)

### Pinhook Preserve Trail Hike

Saturday, Oct. 1, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Gaston County

Naturalist Charlie Williams will lead this hike along the South Fork River to view a lush natural heritage site with rock outcroppings. (moderately strenuous)

### Buck-Smith-Long Hike and B.Y.O.P. (bring your own picnic!)

Saturday, Oct. 29, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Gaston County

Hike along the volunteer-constructed Blue Ribbon Trail with landowners George and Mary Lou Buck. Bring your own picnic to refuel at the pinnacle of the monadnock, and we will provide you with homemade ginger tea. (moderately strenuous)

### Archaeologic Wonders at the Powell-Bannister Preserve

Sunday, Nov. 13, 2 to 4 p.m., Mecklenburg County

UNCC Associate Professor of Anthropology Janet Levy and the McCoy Family will discuss this property's historical and archaeological importance, while introducing the basics of archaeological techniques. This natural heritage site in the Mountain Island Lake watershed buffers one of few remaining slave cemeteries in the county. (easy)

### Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Lecture

Thursday, Nov. 17, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Mecklenburg County

Michael Dorcas, Davidson College associate professor of biology, presents an eye-opening presentation on our scaled and slithering friends and their importance to our ecosystems. Live exhibits will fascinate and educate savvy and beginner herp lovers alike. Free for new or existing members; \$5 for non-members.

Please e-mail the Conservancy at [info@catawbalands.org](mailto:info@catawbalands.org), or call us at (704) 342-3330 to register and receive directions.

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