

im Cogdell could have kept his 1,600 acres to himself. Or even developed it for significant financial gain.

He bought this property in Norwood, N.C. at the confluence of the Pee Dee and Rocky rivers in 1999. For a time, it was his private hunting preserve. It's historically significant

(George Washington may have slept here!), unspoiled and teeming with wildlife.

But Jim, a committed conservationist and former chair of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, decided to permanently protect this special place. He also made it available for others to enjoy. He and his wife, Bernadette — an accomplished equestrian — are gracious that way.

The Fork is the site of a clay shoot that is part of Catawba Lands Conservancy's 25th anniversary celebrations; it's also preserved by CLC. A permanent conservation easement on 1,353 acres of the property allows continued

agricultural use but restricts future commercial and industrial development that could impact

the land and wildlife — like the American bald eagle, Eastern king snake and Eastern box turtle — that make their home here.

The site is also steeped in history.

The first people to recognize the value of this location were the Sioux Indians, followed by the Pee Dee Indians.

Jim and his team

conservation values

are clear to all who

come to shoot,

fish or walk the 30

miles of trails, bike

or just relax.

This land eventually became a stop along The King's Highway, the main route from Charleston, S.C. to

Salisbury, N.C. In 1771, the Colson family established an "Ordinary" for travelers, considered by many historians to be the first licensed tavern in North Carolina. When the Cogdells became caretakers of this land, they turned it into their family farm. Then, they turned it into a hunting and

equestrian facility, retreat center and bed and breakfast. The Fork's sporting clay operation is so impressive that *Garden & Gun* named it one of the South's best.

If you're a sporting clay shooter — there's no better place in the state to enjoy

your hobby. Austin Kiker, a shooter himself who also helps manage the property, says guest rooms sell out every weekend during duck hunting season.

The land is pristine — and a full-time staff of nearly 20 works hard to keep it that way. Jim and his team want to ensure the conservation values are clear to all who come to shoot, fish or walk the 30 miles of trails, bike or just relax. And the staff also works hard to ensure the land is hospitable to wildlife.

The Fork shows that sporting and conservation indeed go hand-in-hand. The design of the farm includes the strategic juxtaposition of



Experience The Fork for yourself on Sept. 22.

That's when CLC celebrates its
25th anniversary with its "Clays for
Conservation" event. Learn how you
can be part of it by contacting
Allison Schwartz at
Allison@catawbalands.org or
704-342-2220 ext. 220.

game crops, native prairie grasses and the preservation of natural ecotypes in harmony with grazing land, hay fields and riding areas.

Letter from the Board Chair

As we celebrate spring and the freshness and renewal it brings, I look back on these few months to reflect and also to set the tone for an important year for the Conservancy, our 25th anniversary.

First, a major reason to celebrate occurred in the final weeks of December; there was a rare instance of bipartisan support in Washington for a bill that makes enhanced tax incentives for donations of conservation easements permanent.

This is the greatest legislative action to support conservation in decades and a huge victory for the land trust community. First enacted as a temporary provision in 2006, the incentive is directly responsible for preserving more than 2 million acres of our country's natural outdoor heritage.

The journey to victory began nearly two decades ago when land trusts began realizing that the existing tax benefits just didn't work for farmers and landowners of modest means. Now, with a broader universe of landowners who can consider conservation, CLC is

well positioned to protect more land in the years to come. And this is more important than ever, as the Charlotte region continues to be among the fastest growing areas in the country and the window to protect what remains of our natural lands closes

It brings me great pride that our work, which enriches us all in so many ways, resonates with people across the political spectrum. Conservationists aren't a cookiecutter, one-size-fits-all group — as portrayed in this issue's two feature stories: One a profile on long-time supporter and photographer

Nancy Pierce and the other a spotlight on The Fork, an equestrian and outdoor recreation facility conserved by businessman and outdoorsman Jim Codgell. All kinds of people are drawn to our mission.

> As we embark on our 25th anniversary year, I'm incredibly thankful for your support. We have lots of

> special events planned for the upcoming year: a clay shoot fundraiser at our largest conserved property, an anniversary series of hikes and paddles highlighting our signature lands and a big celebration at Taste for the Land in October. I

hope you'll make plans to join us!

Jenny Ward

Chair, CLC Board of Directors 2016-18

FIELD NOTES

Victory: Congress Passes Permanent Tax Incentive for Conservation

On Dec. 18, a bipartisan congressional vote made permanent federal tax incentives supporting land conservation. Farmers, ranchers and the public will directly benefit from the incentive that encourages landowners to place a conservation easement on their land to protect important natural, scenic and historic resources. CLC was among the 1,100 land trusts to support the incentive through a collaborative, multi-year campaign led by the Land Trust Alliance.

"This is huge victory for local land protection efforts because it allows us to work with certainty as to the tax benefits associated with prospective projects," said Tom Okel, executive

In a strong bipartisan action, the House voted 318-109 and the Senate voted 65-33 to pass the bills that included the tax incentive. CLC thanks U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis and U.S. Reps. Richard Hudson, Patrick McHenry and Robert Pittenger for their support of the bill.

The incentive grants certain tax benefits to landowners who sign a conservation easement. Such private, voluntary agreements with local land trusts permanently limit uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. Lands placed into conservation easements can continue to be farmed, hunted or used for other specified purposes. The lands also remain on county tax rolls, strengthening local economies

Southern Spring Show Preview Raises \$200,000 in its Second **Year Benefiting CLC**

The second annual preview celebration of the Southern Spring Home & Garden Show on Feb. 25 was a resounding success. More than 500 guests enjoyed 18 masterfully landscaped gardens inspired by the theme "World of Spring" with whimsical settings reminiscent of the Tuscan countryside, a Japanese Zen garden and more.

The evening was co-hosted by honorary chairs Kathryn Heath, partner of Flynn Heath Holt Leadership and former CLC board chair, and her husband Tom Webb, president of Faison and a member of both CLC and Thread Trail boards.

CLC members, corporate sponsors and several of the landscapers featured in the

Garden Showcase noshed on small bites inspired by countries from around the world while enjoying music by The Whiskey Dollars. One hundred percent of the evening's proceeds, nearly \$200,000, benefited CLC's land conservation efforts.

A special thanks to Southern Shows Co-Founder Joan Zimmerman for selecting CLC as the nonprofit beneficiary.

We extend our deepest condolences to Joan and the Zimmerman family on the passing of Robert Zimmerman, who also co-founded Southern Shows with his wife Joan.

\$87,000 Raised for #GivingTuesdayCLT

With donations and match funding from SHARE Charlotte, CLC and the Thread Trail together raised more than \$87,000 as part of #GivingTuesdayCLT, a local giving campaign which raised funds for 108 participating Charlotte-area nonprofits.

All gifts made Nov. 10 through Tuesday, Dec. I were counted as part of the local campaign. Donations support CLC's efforts to conserve land, farms and wildlife, and to create trails for recreation and transportation.

Giving Tuesday is a global movement that started in New York in 2012. Created in response to Black Friday and Cyber Monday, it kicks off the season of giving every year on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving.

In 2014, SHARE Charlotte created #GivingTuesdayCLT, a local campaign focused on giving specifically in Charlotte. In 2015, the campaign raised \$4.2 million for 108 local nonprofits.



SHARE's mission is to create a more engaged community by connecting individuals with local nonprofit organizations.

Signs and Field Guide Enhance Seven Oaks Preserve

Visitors to CLC's Seven Oaks Preserve Trail in Belmont, N.C., will be greeted by a series of five new interpretive signs that educate about various elements of the local environment such as Lake Wylie, trees, seasons, invasive plants and more.



Enjoy these tabletop displays scattered along the 2.5-mile segment of Thread Trail that starts on South New Hope Road and connects to the nearby Persimmon Trail, managed by the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden.

A new field guide brochure also introduces many of the birds, butterflies, reptiles and other wildlife that call the preserve home. The guide is available at the trail kiosk at the trailhead, or visitors can access it online at carolinathreadtrail.org. Funding for the educational materials was provided by the Community Foundation of Gaston County.





MISSION

Saving Land and Connecting Lives to Nature

Staff

Tom Okel - Executive Director Heike Biller - Administrative Director

Sean Bloom - GIS Director and Biologist

Margaret Brantley - Development Director

Robin Buckler - Finance Director Saxby Chaplin - Legal Counsel

Matt Covington - Land Acquisition Director

Alesia DiCosola - Marketing Director

Emma Fulop - Carolina Thread Trail Research

Vanessa Gorr - Carolina Thread Trail Outreach

Lynda Hunley - Land Protection Legal Assistant Andy Kane - Carolina Thread Trail Senior Director

Allison Schwartz - Development Associate Sharon Wilson - Land Stewardship Director

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Associate Professor of Environmental Science, Queens University of Charlotte

Jarred Cochran - Chair, Membership and Development Committee

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John Culbertson

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Lud Hodges

Senior Vice President, Crescent Communities Jim Hovis

Owner, Cardinal Real Estate Partners, LLC

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Kelly Katterhagan

Managing Director, BlackArch Partners

Vice President, Director of Connections, Wray Ward

Jonathan Mangels

Partner, Greer Walker Julianne McCollum - Chair, Marketing and

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Principal, Yellow Duck Marketina Thomas H. McCoy, MD

Physician, OrthoCarolina

Robert McLean

Vice President & General Counsel,

EnPro Industries Bill Mumford

Vice President, Development, Newland Communities

Nancy Paschall

Attorney, Mullen Holland & Cooper P.A.

Scott Phillips

Senior Vice President, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Lat W. Purser, III - Chair, Nominating Committee

Chairman of the Board, CEO, Lat Purser & Assoc. Laurie Smith - Chair, Governance Committee Community Leader

 $\hbox{H.\,Thomas\,Webb,\,III}-\hbox{Chair,\,Investment}\\$ Committee

President and CEO, Faison

Contact

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catawbalands.org

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SAVINGLAND

LAND PROTECTION HIGHLIGHTS 2015

CLC added six new properties to its land protection program in 2015. Totaling nearly 165 acres, these new conservation areas are vital to our region's wildlife habitat, water quality and agricultural economy, and three will be open to the public via future segments of the growing Carolina Thread Trail. Highlights include two significant additions to CLC's Spencer Mountain Conservation Area and a 70-acre working farm in Iron Station, N.C.

To date, CLC manages and monitors 190 properties comprising 15,114 acres across the Southern Piedmont of North Carolina.

Photo by Nancy Pierce

VANDERBURG PRESERVE

Acquisition

28 Acres **Cabarrus County** Conservation values: Water quality, connection to nature

In June, CLC purchased 28 acres on Mount Pleasant Road along the Rocky River in Cabarrus County from Vanderburg Enterprises, LLP for a future segment of Thread Trail. A natural surface trail, parking lot and blueway launch are planned for the property, which provides watershed protection. The Vanderburg Preserve was acquired with funding from the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund and a grant from the Thread Trail.

RUDISILL FARM

Conservation Easement

72 Acres **Lincoln County** Conservation Values: Local farmland

From the front porch of Don and Jackie Rudisill's "farmhouse on a hill," the pair can see their 72 acres of rolling farmland, peppered by creeks with waterfalls. The couple, who live in Iron Station, N.C., is quick to admit they're happy their farm, Sleepy Hollow, will stay as it is forever. In April 2015, the couple donated a conservation easement on the working beef cattle farm to CLC. Don's grandfather originally bought most of the farmland 110 years ago

PUMPKIN CREEK PRESERVE

Acquisition

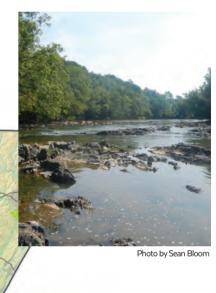
34 Acres **Stanly County**

Vanderburg

Preserve

Conservation values: Water quality, connection to nature

Thirty four acres of forest along the Rocky River in southwest Stanly County will remain in its natural state forever thanks to funding from the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Pumpkin Creek Preserve provides approximately 2,600 feet of protection along the Rocky River, while providing significant wildlife habitat. It also features an incredible slate bluff rising 30 feet. The CLC-owned Preserve will be home to a public kayak and canoe launch that will be part of the Thread Trail's Rocky River Blueway, a planned 60-mile river trail stretching from Midland, N.C. to Norwood, N.C.



Pumpkin Creek

Preserve

BIGLEAF PRESERVE

Acquisition 10 Acres

Gaston County Conservation Values: Water quality, wildlife habitat

This small, but significant, land acquisition on the western edge of Mount Holly, N.C., ensures development cannot occur in the middle of

the Spencer Mountain Conservation Area, 1,500 acres of protected land that is home to the largest concentration in North Carolina of bigleaf magnolia. The nearly 10-acre plot of land was named for the abundance of these threatened trees, which boast the largest simple leaf and single flower of any native plant in North America. Due to the prevalence of rare plants and high-quality natural communities, Bigleaf Preserve has also been identified as a significant natural area by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program.

Photo by Sean Bloom

Rudisill Farm

Goble-Huffstetler

Bigleaf

Preserve

Goat Island

Addition

GOAT ISLAND PRESERVE ADDITION

Conservation Easement

3 Acres **Gaston County Conservation Values: Connection to nature**

This 3-acre conservation area may not seem like much, but without it, a greenway project near a popular park in Cramerton, N.C., would have floundered. The conservation of this natural area adjoining CLC's Goat Island Preserve enabled the

town to leverage state and federal grants to complete the greenway that is part of the Thread Trail and will eventually connect Cramerton to the neighboring town of McAdenville, N.C.

GOBLE-HUFFSTETLER CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Conservation Easement 22 Acres **Gaston County** Conservation Values: Water quality, wildlife habitat

Home to rare bigleaf magnolias and adjacent to the Spencer Mountain Conservation Area, this 22-acre property is an important addition to CLC's land protection program. Landowners Randy Goble and John Huffstetler partnered with CLC to permanently conserve their land, which safeguards water quality and wildlife habitat in an ecologically significant region of Gaston County.





accidentally. But she's a conservationist on purpose. She studied news writing at the University of Minnesota Journalism School and got an internship after graduation at the Rochester (Minn.) Post Bulletin. But her internship was in the photo department. She figured she was still telling stories — just through a different

ancy Pierce became a photographer

She discovered a talent for photojournalism and also discovered, as she said, "It suits my way of being and my metabolism. I get to move around a lot."

medium than she had been trained to do.

Unlike the happy accident that led to her career as a freelance photographer, her respect for nature is no accident. It's part of her DNA.

Nancy, 62, was one of six kids in a family that never stayed in hotels but went camping a lot. And they always camped near water. "If there wasn't a swimming place nearby, we just didn't go," she recalled. Minnesota is called "The Land of 10,000 Lakes," so

she grew up surrounded by water.

Hired by The Charlotte Observer in 1979, she became the paper's first female staff photographer. But Charlotte was a shock to her system. "There was no place to swim," she said. "It drove me nuts."

She avoids lakes because she doesn't like power boats, but she uses her paddleboard on the state's free-flowing river sections.

And she and her husband, Mickey Shaver, introduced their sons, now 26 and 30, to the outdoors. "We never went to Disney, Carowinds or malls," she said of her family's leisure time. "We always went to water."

They still do. When she had family in town recently, they headed for the South Fork River Blueway.

When she left The Observer in the 1980s to begin a freelance career, she quickly gathered new clients. One was a

real estate developer. Ever the conservationist, she wanted a counterbalance

to her work with a developer and thought volunteering with Catawba Lands Conservancy It's part of her DNA. could fill that role. She believed,

> at the time, that people who developed land couldn't also have an interest in conserving it.

Nancy contacted Ron Altman, the new group's part-time executive director, to ask how she could help. Her first assignment was shooting CLC's first acquisition — the Catawba Wildflower

Glen below the Mountain Island Lake Dam.

It was the first of countless assignments Nancy has taken on for CLC. Over the course of her nearly three decades of involvement, she's probably photographed every trail, stream and wildflower glen in CLC's vast portfolio.

Sharon Wilson, CLC's land stewardship director, estimates that Nancy has visited

more CLC properties than any

other volunteer. Nancy's learned an import-

> ant lesson, too. Although no less a conservationist than when she was in her 20s, she now knows -

through her work with clients as well as with CLC - that it's not good vs. bad. "Many of my clients' livelihoods depend on land development, but they also care deeply about

She admires CLC's staff for building a bridge to the development community. And for showing others, including Nancy herself, you can do more good for your cause when you build coalitions.

conservation," she says.

Nancy may have softened her stance over the past three decades, but she remains a

formidable force. At 49, she started

Nancy Pierce at Hagans Forest.

Photo by Sharon Wilson

competing in triathlons. She's finished more than 50 sprint, Olympic and half-Ironman distance triathlons and often wins her age group.

She doesn't care much about displaying or even keeping her race awards and trophies. The one she's held on to because it's the most meaningful is her 2003 Volunteer of the Year award from CLC.

Sharon Wilson says there's nothing Nancy won't do for the Conservancy. "She's drawn to water, but she'll just as happily go to a farm or forest," Sharon said.

And on top of her big heart, gorgeous photography and can-do spirit, Sharon said, "Nancy's just a lot of fun to be around."

Nancy said her work with CLC has led to much of her career success: "I can trace nearly every major client I have back to the Conservancy."

And Nancy appreciates all CLC has done to give people access to nature. When she first moved to the area, she felt disconnected from the land and water. No longer.

Nancy said the Carolina Thread Trail is "the smartest, best thing anyone has done in this area since I moved here."



Unlike the happy

accident that led

to her career

as a freelance

photographer, her

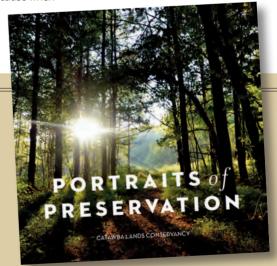
respect for nature

is no accident.

Top to bottom: Cedrone Farm in Mecklenburg County; Oak Springs in Iredell County: Garter snake on Seven Oaks Preserve in Gaston County; Eastern tiger swallowtail butterflies at Hagans Forest in Gaston County. Photos by Nancy Pierce







YOU CAN JUDGE THIS **BOOK BY ITS COVER**

See Nancy's stunning photographs throughout "Portraits of Preservation," the fine art photography book CLC published to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Nancy's work graces the cover and many of the 95 pages. From intricate close-ups of spider webs to gorgeous old barns set amidst green hills, every photo tells a story of the impact CLC has had on this region and its citizens. The book also features photography by Allan White, Debbie Warren, Debbie Russell and Charlotte Kidd.

Books are available for \$25. To order, visit catawbalands.org/photobook or call 704-342-3330 x 220.

WHERE NATURE AND HISTORY CONVERGE

Continued from front page

The Fork provides habitat for game and non-game wildlife species. Quail, dove and duck hunting is carefully monitored and done in a way that allows those species to thrive. There is a once-a-year deer hunt. Participation is chosen by raffle, and the winner can take one buck off the property.

Even if you don't set out to find deer, you may end up practically tripping over them. The Fork adheres to Quality Deer Management Association standards — providing

plenty of cover, food crops and hunting controls that promote a healthy herd.

Surrounding The Fork's picturesque horse stables are 100 acres of fenced pastures. N.C. State University students and scientists conduct ongoing research on the grasses here — looking to improve upon what's already considered drought-tolerant and disease-resistant.

The horses at The Fork are privately owned and boarded. And the 15-room stable that serves as their home base looks like it came straight out of Virginia hunt country. Next to the stable is the newly opened Carriage House. The



two-bedroom house has its own back patio with a fire pit.

It's the smaller of the two guest facilities on the property. The Lodge offers nine bedrooms, a community kitchen and a front porch just made for the rocking chairs that stand sentinel there.

The Fork is Jim and Bernadette Cogdell's sanctuary. But they've made it hospitable to all kinds of creatures, including the human variety.

2015 BY THE NUMBERS

163
preserved properties
monitored in 2015

Andy Kane monitoring at Mountain Creek Preserve, photo by Nancy Pierce





880milkweeds planted to restore habitat for monarch butterflies

Volunteers and staff planted milkweed at Buffalo Creek Preserve, photo by Sean Bloom



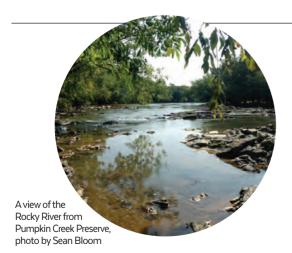
new juvenile bog turtles discovered on a CLC preserve

A bog turtle found on a CLC-protected property in Gaston County

66 CORPORATE PARTNERS SUPPORTED OUR WORK IN 2015

\$87,491

raised for CLC and the Thread Trail during Giving Tuesday



SIX

new properties conserved in 2015

67 PEOPLE

participated in guided hikes on National Trails Day and Land Trust Day on June 6, 2015



Volunteers at the South Fork Trail, photo by Nancy Pierce



Guests at the 4th annual Taste for the Land, photo by Charlene Simmons

380 PEOPLE

attended Taste for the Land

\$1.5 MILLION

in grants awarded to CLC in 2015

MEET CLC'S NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Catawba Lands Conservancy is honored to welcome four new members to its governing board: Candace Taylor Anderson, Kelly Katterhagan, Jim Hovis and Lud Hodges.

CANDACE "CT" TAYLOR ANDERSON

Director of Sustainability, Belk Inc.
Sustainability has been a hallmark of Candace's career. Prior to joining Belk, she was a management consultant focused on environmental sustainability, retail sales and corporate social responsibility for clients such as Barclays Capital in London and The Sustainability Consortium. From 2006 to 2011, she served as director of strategy and sustainability with Wal-Mart Stores. Inc.

Candace became involved with CLC through Belk's sponsorship of the Southern Spring Show preview,

and she particularly
hopes to help CLC
engage more
companies
through its work
with the Carolina
Thread Trail.
Her volunteer
civic engagement

activities include Charlotte Evening Rotary Club, Leadership Charlotte Class 36, Myers Park Foundation and Myers Park High School PTSO. Candace is a proud alumna of Howard University.

KELLY KATTERHAGAN

Managing Director,
BlackArch
Partners
Kelly has over
25 years of
experience
advising
privately held and
sponsor-backed
middle-market compa-

nies in merger and acquisition transactions. Prior to starting BlackArch, she was president of IOA Corp., a director at Bowles Hollowell Conner & Co. and an assistant treasurer in the Foreign Securities Group at J.P. Morgan.

Preserving the natural beauty of North Carolina and the local environment has long been a passion of Kelly's. "It is clear that we only have a limited time to create a path for preservation amid the path of progress, so that our region is both dynamic economically, but also a great place to live for generations to come."

Kelly earned a master's degree in business administration from the Harvard Business School and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Colgate University. She also serves on the boards of Charlotte Latin School and the Women's Impact Fund.

JIM HOVIS

of his family.

Attorney, Moore & Van Allen
Jim's lifelong passion for the outdoors started
at a young age. He grew up on a Gaston County dairy farm operated by
multiple generations

Jim is a
lawyer in
Moore & Van
Allen's financial
services practice
group. He earned
his undergraduate
and law degrees from UNC
Chapel Hill.

"Watching the rapid development of the Charlotte area over the past 30-plus years, I believe preserving open space is an increasingly important need for our community," says Jim.

A longtime resident of the Steele Creek community, Jim is involved with the Steele Creek YMCA Board of Directors and the Land Use Committee, which represents the Steele Creek community in connection with rezoning and other development matters.

LUD HODGES

Senior Vice President, Crescent Communities Lud manages commercial development and realty services throughout Florida, with a focus on Tampa. Before joining Crescent, Lud was an assistant vice president with Bank of America and a civil engineer with Dalton Morgan Shook & Partners in Charlotte.

He is a board member of the Tampa chapter of the National Association of

Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP) and a board member of Westshore Alliance. Lud has

a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Georgia Tech and a master's degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

MEMBER EVENT

Redlair Preserve Hike
Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Gastonia, N.C. Exact address
provided upon registration



One of the largest of CLC's protected lands, Redlair is host to every ecological community native to our Piedmont home. Join us for a guided hike to experience the incredible bigleaf magnolia.

Open to current members of Catawba Corps, Catawba Society, Trailheads and Greenway Gals.

Space is limited; advance

registration is required at

www.catawbalands.org

Volunteer Workday Saturday, May 14, 9 a.m.-Noon Buffalo Creek Preserve Trail 7911 Malibu Road Mount Pleasant, N.C.

Volunteers will help cut back vegetation on the sides of the trail and ensure that the tread has well-defined water runoff paths to ensure the sustainability of the trail. Advance registration is required at www.carolinathreadtrail.org

MEMBER EVENT

Spider Lilies Paddle
Thursday, May 26
8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Landsford Canal State Park
2051 Park Drive
Catawba. S.C.

This one-of-a-kind paddle trip takes Greenway Gals along the Catawba



River through the largest known stand of rocky shoals spider lilies. Kayaks will be provided and the group will be led by an expert from Catawba Expeditions.
Open to current members of Greenway Gals and their guests.
Space is limited; advance registration is required at www.carolinathreadtrail.org



National Trails Day: South Fork Trail Saturday, June 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. 119 Willow Drive McAdenville, N.C.

It's two times the celebration because it's National Trails Day and Land Trust Day. Join us for a guided nature hike along a segment of the Thread Trail on land protected by CLC, or hop into the South Fork River for a paddle. Plus, we'll have a food truck, beverages and activities. SAVE THE DATE

Clays for Conservation
Benefiting Catawba Lands
Conservancy
Thursday, Sept. 22, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
The Fork Farm & Stables
3200 Fork Road
Norwood, N.C.

Join us for a Sporting Clays Shoot in celebration of our 25th anniversary. The event will be held at the idyllic Fork Farm & Stables, CLC's largest conserved property.
\$1,600 per four-person team or \$400 per individual includes three sporting clay games, drinks, snacks and a BBQ lunch.
For more information, visit catawbalands.org/clays or call



SAVE THE DATE

Taste for the Land
Thursday, Oct. 27
Dressler's at the Metropolitan
1100 Metropolitan Ave #125
Charlotte, N.C.

Join us for a festive fall fundraiser celebrating local food, farms and land conservation. Savor nature's local bounty with hors d'oeuvres and libations inspired by the season, and enjoy live music. Free with Catawba Corps or Catawba Society membership; Tickets \$100

Left to right: Redlair Farm and Forest in Gastonia, N.C., photo by Nancy Pierce; Paddling at Landsford Canal State Park, photo by Nancy Pierce; South Fork Trail in McAdenville, N.C., photo by Nancy Pierce; Clay shooting at The Fork, photo by Debbie Russell



N.C. Forest Service conducts a burn at CLC's Buffalo Creek Preserve in Mt. Pleasant, N.C., photo by Sean Bloom

espite what Smokey the Bear tells us, not all forest fires are bad.
Many ecosystems and the plants and animals that thrive within them evolved with fire, and now those species depend on fire to maintain their habitat.

Buffalo Creek Preserve in Mt. Pleasant, N.C., is home to the remnants of one such ecosystem: the Piedmont oak savanna, an open natural area conducive to the growth of native warmseason grasses. Recently, CLC and the North Carolina Forest Service (NCFS) conducted a



View of the Piedmont oak savanna at Buffalo Creek Preserve, photo by Nancy Pierce

prescribed burn that will help re-establish important populations of native plants and grasses.

The Feb. 29 burn occurred on a 62-acre portion of the 392-acre preserve. Within the next four months, an array of native grasses will grow within the burned area, providing an ideal habitat for grasshopper sparrows, wild turkey, quail and other birds. The burn also reduces the potential for destructive wildfires.

A Natural Force

Fire is a natural part of both the forest and grassland ecology. Before Europeans settled in North America, fires regularly occurred naturally due to lightning strikes, but were also started accidentally and intentionally by man. Native Americans deliberately set fires to hunt, improve visibility and protect their villages from wildfires. Today, this natural tool is being reclaimed by natural resource managers.

A Glimpse of the Past

Historical documents dating back to the 1540s show that prairie-like habitats were common in the region surrounding present-day Charlotte.

But over time, farming, fire suppression and development destroyed most of them. A few scattered remnants endure — largely along roadsides and utility lines and on conserved land — where they preserve rare native plants and offer a glimpse of our region's past.

"Savanna habitats are vital to many species of wildlife and are among the most rapidly declining ecosystems in the state," said John Isenhour, a technical assistance biologist with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC).

Prior to acquiring the property in 2011, CLC staff observed native warm-season grasses in an area where trees had been harvested in 2008. Working with biologists from WRC, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), CLC identified this area as one that would provide an opportunity to restore an important wildlife habitat.

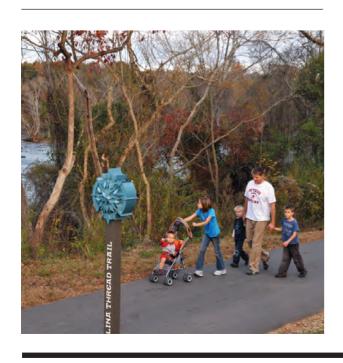
A two-mile segment of the Carolina Thread Trail winds through the savanna, offering visitors a unique opportunity to see the habitat restoration in progress. The trailhead is at 7911 Malibu Road, Mt. Pleasant, N.C.

WHAT IS PRESCRIBED BURNING?

Prescribed fire (or controlled burning) is a means of reintroducing a natural process. A controlled burn involves identifying the area to be burned, establishing control lines in order to prevent the fire from burning unintended areas and intentionally setting the burn unit on fire.

N.C. Forest Service staff that are certified to conduct burns are present to ensure the safety of surrounding properties and natural areas. They operate from a burning plan that is designed to manage the fire conditions and smoke.

GRANTS RECEIVED IN 2015



CLC IS GRATEFUL FOR THE GRANTS AWARDED TO US IN 2015:

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Agricultural Land Easement

\$195,000 to assist with costs associated with the Elmore-Catawba Farm Conservation Easement

Community Foundation of Gaston County

\$18,500 for educational enhancements of the Seven Oaks Preserve Trail, including signage and a field guide

\$5,000 to replace collapsed culvert at Seven

Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC) Farmland Forever Fund

\$10,000 for the costs associated with the Elmore-Catawba Farm Conservation Easement

Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC)

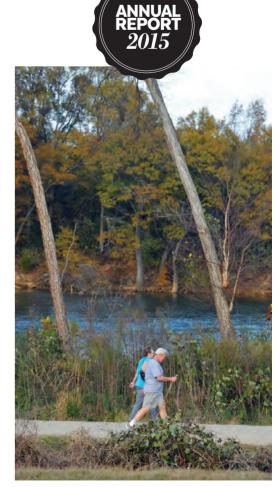
\$3,000 through the CTNC Max Mukelabai Diversity Internship program to hire an intern to support CLC's work during summer 2016

North Carolina Agriculture Development & Farmland Preservation Trust

\$106,700 for the purchase, legal fees, survey and baseline documentation of the Elmore-Catawba Farm Conservation Easement

North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund

\$1,019,000 for the acquisition of the Holly Track Preserve and Conservation Easement



Piedmont Medical Center Trail at Riverwalk was extended thanks to grant funding from REI, photo by Nancy Pierce

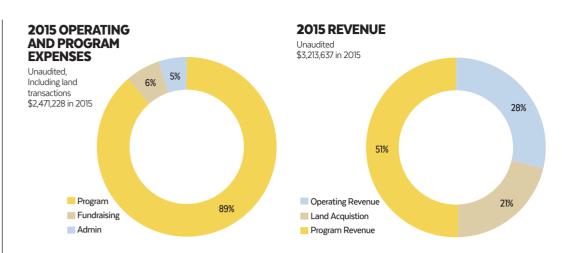
FINANCIAL REPORT



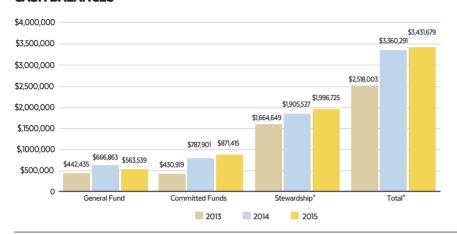
OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY 2014-1015/GENERAL FUND²

		2014 ACTUAL	2015 ACTUAL ¹	ANNUAL AVG. DELTA
REVENUE	Donors	\$723,035 3	\$474,545	-34%
	Foundations & Gov't	\$123,094	\$145,697	18%
	Corp. Partners	\$88,805	\$255,933	188%
	Other	\$19,126	\$7,338	-62%
	Stewardship Transfer	\$25,000	\$25,000	0%
	Total Revenue	\$979,060	\$908,513	-7%
EXPENSES	Compensation	\$560,056	\$553,463	1%
	Office/Administrative	\$157,918	\$183,722	16%
	Outreach & Development	\$114,633	\$124,337	8%
	Total Expenses	\$832,607	\$861,522	3%
	Operating Net	\$146,453	\$46,991	-68%

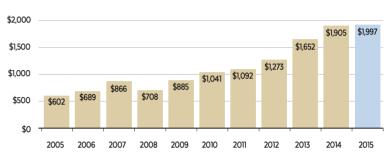
1. Unaudited. 2. Excludes land acquistions and programs, including the Carolina Thread Trail 3. Includes \$250,000 one-time gift



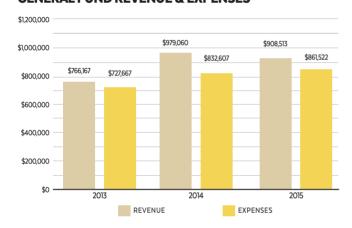
CASH BALANCES



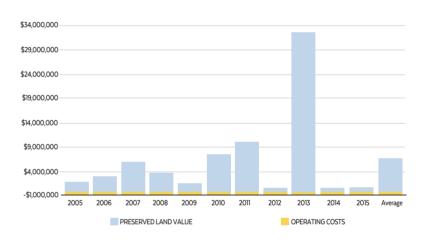
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GENERAL FUND REVENUE & EXPENSES



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*denotes donors who have given to CLC for 10 or more consecutive years

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We have tried our best to ensure all names and amounts are correct. If you see an error, please contact Margaret Brantley at 704-342-3330 x 218 or margaret@catawbalands.org.



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passes issued for Spencer Mountain River access to paddle the South Fork River

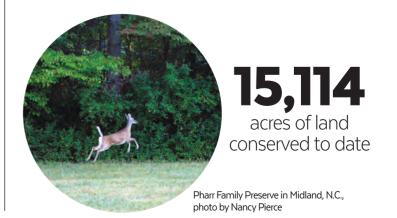


South Fork River Blueway, photo by Nancy Pierce

887
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the length in feet of a new suspension bridge spanning Forney Creek at Sally's Y Preserve





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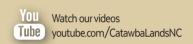


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Pharr Family Preserve in Midland, N.C., photo by Shelby Wells; Paddlers on the Catawba River, photo by Nancy Pierce; South Fork Catawba River in Lincolnton, N.C., photo by Debbie Warren; Mountain bikers on the South Fork Trail in McAdenville, N.C., photo by Nancy Pierce; Eastern box turtle at Hagans Forest, photo by Nancy Pierce