

CATAWBA
LANDS
CONSERVANCY

2016

ANNUAL REPORT

STEWARDSHIP IS FOREVER

Closing on a piece of land CLC vows to protect in perpetuity is just the beginning

By Page Leggett

Stewardship Associate Sam Kirk on a monitoring visit to Viles Preserve, a 218-acre conserved property in Lincoln and Catawba counties. Photo by Nancy Pierce

S

tewardship resembles a marriage.

Except marriage is only “‘til death do us part.” Stewardship is forever.

It takes a lot of work and sometimes multiple years to get to the closing on a property Catawba Lands Conservancy (CLC) is vowing to protect. But that’s just the beginning of a relationship that will outlive anyone involved in the transaction.

CLC’s Land Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson said there are three major components to stewardship. The first is related to compliance. (This is where good communication comes in – just as it does in marriage.) The Land Trust Alliance, of which CLC is a member, provides stewardship guidelines CLC adheres to.

“When you hold a conservation easement, the goal of stewardship is to make sure that the terms of the easement are carried out,” reads the Land Trust Alliance website. “Of course, it’s far better

to avoid a violation than to have to resolve one, which makes maintaining positive relationships and clear communication with landowners a core stewardship activity.”

MONITORING THE LAND

“Some landowners are, by necessity, absentee,” Sharon said. “We’re their eyes and ears on the ground.” It helps that Sharon is a meticulous note keeper ... and that she’s been with CLC for 14 years. To monitor the nearly 200 properties CLC oversees, Sharon photographs and documents each one and notices even subtle changes from year to year.

Compliance doesn’t just involve being a witness to changes; it also involves resolving problems. Sadly, there’s vandalism,

“The work of the stewardship crew is the essence of this organization’s mission. Everything else done by all our staff is ultimately to support their efforts to take care and watch over the land entrusted to us.”

– Tom Okel, Executive Director

illegal hunting and illegal dumping to deal with.

It may be hard to imagine just how many issues Sharon and the stewardship team – affectionately known as “The Stew Crew” – confront. GIS Director and Biologist Sean Bloom and Stewardship Associate Sam Kirk and Sharon visit, photograph and document land CLC owns and privately owned land on which CLC monitors a conservation easement. On larger properties, the whole team – plus staff and volunteers – may be involved.

Firewood cutting and illegal deer stands are typical trespass violations “The Stew Crew” finds. But some violations shock even a veteran like Sharon. Recently, she discovered someone had

created a driveway through a protected property to a nearby fishing hole. It’s typically not the landowners in violation; it’s often a neighbor. So, a lot of detective work goes into identifying the culprit. And that’s *before* the team can even think about working on a resolution.

> *Continues on page 3*

Litter is an ongoing stewardship concern. Volunteers and Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson (second from left) pick up trash along the Rocky River at CLC’s Pharr Family Preserve in Midland, N.C.



Photo by Nancy Pierce

Letter from the Board Chair

2016 marked Catawba Lands Conservancy's 25th anniversary, and in many ways it signaled the end of one era in our history and the beginning of a new chapter.

For much of our first 25 years, our attention has been on acquiring and protecting as much land as possible. And while we're still focused on conserving remaining swaths of significant natural space, we're also very focused on the meaningful responsibility and opportunity we have with the 15,000 acres we have already conserved.

In 2016, we began to set a course for the next 25 years.

The creation of nine conservation areas (profiled in our last newsletter)

will guide our land protection efforts and ensure we add to large-scale areas that will wield the most impact. Stewardship of all those acres will continue to be a huge undertaking (as evidenced by our cover story) — as is figuring out how to best use all of this protected land for the benefit of the public.

We received a grant from the Women's Impact Fund in 2016 enabling us to provide more access to our conserved properties through environmental education and public programs like hikes, bike rides, paddles, stargazing and more. As you'll see on page 6, in 2016 we reached more than 2,000 people in the initial six months of programming.

With a new logo and brand unveiled last fall, we have a strong identity for launching our newest event, our upcoming

Pop-Up Picnic, which in April will help us tell our story, grow our membership and continue to innovate on how we connect our mission through events and experiences.

Our focus is clear, and the path forward is promising. Thanks to your support, we have an exciting future in store. I hope you'll enjoy taking a closer look at what CLC accomplished in 2016 with your support and imagine the possibilities for 2017 and beyond!



Jenny Ward

Jenny Ward
Chair, CLC Board of Directors 2016-18

FIELD NOTES

Southern Spring Show Preview Celebrates Third Year Benefiting CLC

The third annual preview celebration of the Southern Spring Home & Garden Show on Feb. 25 was a resounding success. Nearly 500 guests enjoyed music and hors d'oeuvres provided by Perkins surrounded by masterfully landscaped gardens representing "America the Beautiful." 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 again selecting us as the nonprofit beneficiary, and to Perkins, Harris Teeter, Yellow Duck Marketing and all our corporate sponsors for their support.

#GivingTuesdayCLT Raises \$65,000 for Conservation

Thank you to everyone who donated during SHARE Charlotte's 2016 #GivingTuesdayCLT campaign! From Nov. 15-29, CLC raised over \$65,000 that will go towards saving land and connecting lives to nature. The 170 participating local nonprofits together raised \$72 million.

SHARE Charlotte created #GivingTuesdayCLT in 2014 as a local campaign that leverages the global Giving Tuesday movement. It is an unprecedented collaboration of over 170 Charlotte nonprofits and more than 80 businesses working together for the greater good. SHARE's mission is to create a more engaged community by connecting individuals with local nonprofit organizations.

Wildlife Watching at Catawba Springs Observation Deck

Two man-made ponds on CLC's Catawba Springs Preserve, a former hunt club, in Lincoln County are an important refuge for migrating waterfowl, and now those species are easier to see thanks to a new observation deck built by staff and volunteers from Wells Fargo, Husqvarna, Lowe's and Duke Energy.

Highly affected by rainfall, the waterfowl impoundment was completely dry at the beginning of November. After just a small amount of rainfall, it was full and once again a viable habitat for these migrating waterfowl. During the winter, staff conducted surveys of the impoundment and they spotted mallards, wood ducks and numerous songbirds such as the common yellowthroat warbler.

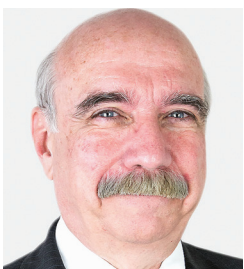
Use the Forney Creek Trail, a segment of the Carolina Thread Trail, to access the observation deck and see this unique, man-made habitat!



Meet CLC's New Board Members

Catawba Lands Conservancy is pleased to welcome two new members to its Board of Directors: Daniel Clodfelter and Thomas Lee.

Former Mayor of Charlotte **Daniel Clodfelter** has a long history of public service, including serving on the Charlotte City



Council from 1987-93 and in the North Carolina Senate from 1999 until his appointment as mayor in 2014. He is currently counsel at

Parker Poe. He has practiced law since 1978 and focuses on bankruptcy, financial restructuring and insolvency litigation.

Thomas Lee, CEO of Appian Textiles, has served two previous terms on the CLC board, including two years as chairman. From 1996-2006, Thomas was employed with Duke Energy Corporation in various leadership positions, both in the U.S. and abroad. After leaving Duke Energy, he founded Appian Textiles, a fabric and

faux leather provider to the hospitality, contract, residential, marine and truck seating markets. Thomas is also current chairman of the Wellness Board of Directors at Myers Park Presbyterian Church, where he serves as an elder.



- CATAWBA -
LANDS CONSERVANCY
LAND | WATER | FARMS | NATURE



MISSION

**Saving Land and Connecting
Lives to Nature**

Staff

Tom Okel – Executive Director
Bret Baronak – Carolina Thread Trail Community Coordinator
Sean Bloom – GIS Director and Biologist
Margaret Brantley – Development Director
Matt Brantley – Carolina Thread Trail Fellow
Robin Buckler – Finance Direct
Saxby Chaplin – Legal Counsel
Matt Covington – Land Acquisition Director
Vanessa Covington – Carolina Thread Trail Outreach Coordinator
Alesia DiCosola – Marketing Director
Mary Ann Harrison – Program Coordinator
Lynda Hunley – Land Protection Legal Assistant
Andy Kane – Carolina Thread Trail Senior Director
Sam Kirk – Stewardship Associate
Allison Schwartz – Development Associate
Elizabeth Miller – Executive Team Assistant
Tammy Pfaff – Land Protection Paralegal
Sharon Wilson – Land Stewardship Director

Board of Directors

Jenny Ward – Board Chair
Sustainability Engagement Manager, Duke Energy
Candace Taylor Anderson
Former Director of Sustainability, Belk, Inc.
Phillips Bragg
Vice President of Planning, Bragg Financial Advisors
Jessica Braswell – Chair, Land Stewardship Committee
Associate Professor of Environmental Science, Queens University of Charlotte
Daniel Clodfelter
Counsel, Parker Poe
Jarred Cochran – Chair, Membership and Development Committee
Vice President, Wells Fargo Securities
John Culbertson
Owner, Cardinal Real Estate Partners, LLC
Ralph Falls
President, Pace Commercial LLC
Walter D. Fisher, Jr. – Vice-Chair
Managing Partner, Troutman Sanders
Claudia Heath
Owner, Claudia Heath Fine Art
Lud Hodges
Senior Vice President, Crescent Communities
Jim Hovis – Chair, Land Acquisition Committee
Attorney at Law, Moore & Van Allen, PLLC
Kelly Katterhagen
Managing Director, BlackArch Partners
Thomas Lee
CEO, Appian Textiles
John Mader
Vice President, Director of Connections, Wray Ward
Jonathan Mangels
Partner, Greer Walker
Julianne McCollum – Chair, Marketing and Outreach Committee
Principal, Yellow Duck Marketing
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

Contact

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Former Stewardship Associate Andy Kane on a monitoring visit to Mountain Creek Preserve in Catawba County. Photo by Nancy Pierce

Photos are an important stewardship tool for ensuring compliance and documenting changes. Taking photos at the same locations every year enables staff to compare current conditions to baseline conditions.

Logs were installed in the bog to help mimic natural sheet-flow of water.



STEWARDSHIP IS FOREVER

Continued from front cover

PARKS AND REC

The second component of stewardship is maintenance. (Any marriage requires a certain amount of housekeeping.) “We own a lot of land – nearly 5,000 acres of the 15,000 acres we protect,” Sharon said.

“In those cases, we act almost like a small Parks and Recreation department,” she continued. Since part of CLC’s mission is connecting humans to nature, eight of CLC’s properties are open to the public via segments of the Carolina Thread Trail. That means CLC is responsible for maintaining 17 miles of trail and three kayak launches.

“There’s always trash to be picked up and invasive species to be removed, Sharon said. “Our staff of three plus lots of support from volunteers handles all of that. And when it comes to trash pickup, we couldn’t do it without a strong corps of volunteers.”

Not only does “The Stew Crew” need to look out for the land CLC owns and manages, but they also need to be aware of what’s happening on adjacent properties. Land changes over time, and those changes – some natural and others man-made – can have a major impact.

Man-made changes include erosion from nearby construction that impacted McAlpine Creek on a CLC preserve. Natural enemies include the emerald ash borer, an invasive beetle, which has made its way onto CLC-protected lands in Lincoln and Gaston counties and is killing all the native ash trees. “The Stew Crew” is treating some of the infected trees and removing the dead ones that pose a safety risk.

THE BEST PART OF THE JOB

The third bucket is what Sharon refers to “as the cool stuff.” This is the sweeping romantic part of stewardship – connecting people to nature, restoring or improving habitats, protecting rare or endangered species and seeing the fruits of all that labor.

And for that, sometimes, the team has to look really closely.

One piece of property CLC protects is home to North America’s smallest turtle. In fact, that tiny turtle is the reason the land was conserved in the first place. The bog turtle is a “federally listed species” – that’s a level just below threatened or endangered. The adult bog turtle is no more than 4 or 5 inches long, and it likes hiding in mud, which makes it difficult to find and monitor them. Davidson College students and CLC staff stop by often to look for signs of their tiny wards.

When the bog these turtles call home started to get a channel in the center of it, Sharon and her team went to work to determine how to repair the channel and keep it from draining the bog. They enlisted the help of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Davidson College and engineers and contractors. A “partners grant” from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funded the habitat restoration.

The restoration was a two-day endeavor that involved tedious detective work – searching for turtles the size of a quarter – and then temporarily relocating them before bringing in the heavy equipment needed to fix the channel.

The work wouldn’t be possible, Sharon said, without the help of dedicated partners: “who all played a huge part in improving the habitat for these bog turtles.”



Finding and relocating the tiny bog turtles before their habitat restoration could take place.



Stewardship: A Promise

When CLC agrees to protect land, either by owning it or by holding a conservation easement, we promise to take care of that land over the long term. It’s easy to get excited about new transactions, but it’s only by keeping your promises — through consistent, capable stewardship — that we truly protect the land entrusted to us. This involves annually monitoring all of CLC’s 189 protected properties and conducting baseline visits in preparation for conserving new properties.

Two Paths to Stewardship

Sharon and “The Stew Crew” monitor and protect two types of land:

- Land owned by CLC (about 5,000 acres)
- Land that’s privately owned, but on which CLC holds a conservation easement (about 10,000 acres)

Either way, the team is fully committed to protecting it – today, tomorrow and in perpetuity.



BEFORE trash blocking McAlpine Creek on a CLC-protected property.



AFTER stewardship staff led a clean up effort with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services and volunteers.

Charlotte Landscape Architect Jane McNeary Leaves Major Gift to CLC



Jane Green McNeary grew up going to Wing Haven and the Nature Museum, and her childhood summers were spent sailing on Lake Wylie and scouting. Through those experiences she developed a tremendous love for the outdoors and gardening that would influence the rest of her life and beyond.

Jane passed away on Jan. 25 leaving the majority of her estate to CLC. This major gift will result in a significant amount of permanently preserved natural space—a wonderful legacy to her life and values.

“She didn’t have children, but as she saw Charlotte getting developed, she wondered whether the next generation would have the same outdoor experiences that she did,” said Lydia McNeary, Jane’s sister-in-law.

A native Charlottean, Jane was born on March 19, 1945. She graduated from N.C. State University and became a landscape architect, practicing in Charlotte, Minneapolis and Atlanta. Upon returning to Charlotte to open commercial greenhouses, she become involved in many facets of the community, including serving on the Park and Recreation Commission, the board of the Carolina Raptor Center and on the Friends of the Library Board for Charlotte/Mecklenburg.

“She never missed an opportunity to teach children about nature, gardening and wildlife, nor one to plant a plant, especially pansies which became her trademark,” said Lydia.

Remembering Conservation Champion Ruth Samuelson

When former state representative and Charlotte native Ruth Samuelson passed away this winter, the state lost one of its major conservation champions.

Her leadership on the Mecklenburg County Commission was instrumental in the restoration of Little Sugar Creek and the ultimate establishment of the Greenway, and she spoke of it as one of her proudest accomplishments. As a legislator, Ruth provided strong support for the state’s conservation funds including the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, which has been a critical source of financing for CLC and the Thread Trail, having funded over \$6 million in trail projects to date.

“Ruth’s support of conservation has had a significant impact on our region,” said Executive Director Tom Okel. “As much as Ruth did in her public life, she was every bit as impactful in her private life. She cared deeply about our work and was willing to help in any way she could. She was a great friend, a great inspiration and a wonderful advisor.”

Ruth and her husband Ken were loyal supporters of CLC and the Thread Trail, and last May she served as a moderator for a legis-

lative forum that allowed the public to interact with elected officials and express support for trails and conservation. At the forum, she spoke about spending many hours at Little Sugar Creek as a child playing and building “frog houses” with her friends. She said she was saddened decades later when Little Sugar Creek became renowned not for its beauty, but its pollution.

Ruth began her career in the securities/insurance business, but found her true calling in politics. She served as a Mecklenburg County Commissioner from 2000 to 2004 before getting elected to the N.C. House in 2006. She represented her south Charlotte district for four terms. She was working in Charlotte for Excellence in Giving when she passed away.



Little Sugar Creek Greenway, part of the Carolina Thread Trail.

Wildlife Welcome Here

With native plants and other offerings, you can make wildlife feel at home in your yard

Loss of habitat, often as a result of human action, is the greatest threat to wildlife in the United States. Creating habitat at home is a small way we can help wildlife thrive, so we spoke with Ernie McLaney, the president of CROWN (Charlotte Reconnecting Ourselves With Nature), the Charlotte Chapter of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, and he shared five easy, low-cost actions we all can take to be more wildlife-friendly.

5 Wildlife-Friendly Actions

1. Start with water.

“Water is actually more important than providing food,” says Ernie, and drought can quickly dry up water sources wildlife normally depend on. Provide birds, small animals and insects with additional water sources by placing small basins of water in your yard. Replace the water every two to three days to inhibit mosquito growth. Save water that may otherwise go down the drain – like leftover water in a tea kettle – to fill them.

2. Get outside, and bring the kids.

Take time to discover the wildlife that lives close to your home, school, work or place of worship. “Sit down and watch the wildlife,” encourages Ernie. Learn about plants and wildlife to replace fear with knowledge. Inspire children to appreciate and care for nature because, as Ernie points out: “What we don’t love, we don’t take care of, and what we don’t take care of goes away.”

3. Create a small wildlife-friendly area.

Ernie recommends fall as the perfect time of year to transform a small section of lawn into a more wildlife-friendly area. Visit CROWN’s website for a collection of resources on how to get started, including native plants suited to the Piedmont’s climate. Some favorite natives to consider: buttonbush, winterberry, beautyberry and spicebush. And providing cover can be as simple as a hollow log turned on its side or a broken clay flower pot flipped upside down to harbor lizards or toads.

4. Speak up.

Ask for native plants when you visit garden centers and nurseries to strengthen demand for them. Talk with neighbors, homeowners associations, landscapers and developers about conserving and creating habitats for wildlife. They benefit wildlife and people, providing areas for outdoor appreciation and recreation that can make where we live, learn, work and connect with others even more enjoyable.

5. Certify your home, school, business, or place of worship as a Wildlife Habitat.®

Visit the National Wildlife Federation’s website (www.nwf.org) to learn more about achieving certification by providing food, water, cover and places for wildlife to raise young. Keeping Charlotte a certified Community Wildlife Habitat™ requires the participation of community members – acting individually or collectively – to continue to grow the number of Certified Wildlife Habitats® in the city.



HOW WE PROTECT WILDLIFE

- 11,750 acres of the land CLC conserves is designated as wildlife habitat.
- Our lands are home to 4 federally protected species: Carolina heelsplitter, bog turtle, Schweintz’s sunflower and dwarf-flowered heartleaf ginger.
- The 250+ miles of Carolina Thread Trail are highways for wildlife allowing animals to move and interact with each other, creating a healthy ecosystem.



Photos from Ernie McLaney’s yard.



Learn more about CROWN by visiting www.crowncharlotte.org.



SAVING LAND

LAND PROTECTION SUCCESSES IN 2016

With your support, CLC permanently protected four new properties in 2016. Totaling 158 acres of land, these conserved lands are vital to our region's wildlife habitat and water quality. Three will be open to the public for outdoor recreation via future segments of the growing Carolina Thread Trail and the Mecklenburg County Greenway system.

To date, CLC manages and monitors 189 properties comprising 15,307 acres of natural land across the Southern Piedmont of North Carolina.

PROTECTING WATER, EXPANDING THREAD TRAIL

Carpenter Conservation Easement

23 Acres / Lincoln County

Conservation Values: wildlife habitat, clean water, connection to nature

With grant funding from the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund, CLC saved 23 acres on NC-150 in Lincolnton, N.C. The property protects 2,647 linear feet along the South Fork Catawba River and will also have a half-mile segment of the Carolina Thread Trail that will extend the existing 2-mile South Fork Rail Trail and eventually connect to the nearby Marcia Cloninger Rail Trail.

The Carpenter property expands CLC's Historic Rhyne Conservation Area, which encompasses 440 acres of protected land listed as a Significant Natural Area by the N.C. Natural Heritage Program due to the presence of high quality natural communities and a number of rare plants, including the threatened dwarf-flowered heartleaf ginger.



Photo by Nancy Pierce

PROTECTING THE QUEEN CITY'S TREE CANOPY

Gum Branch Conservation Easement

45 Acres / Mecklenburg County

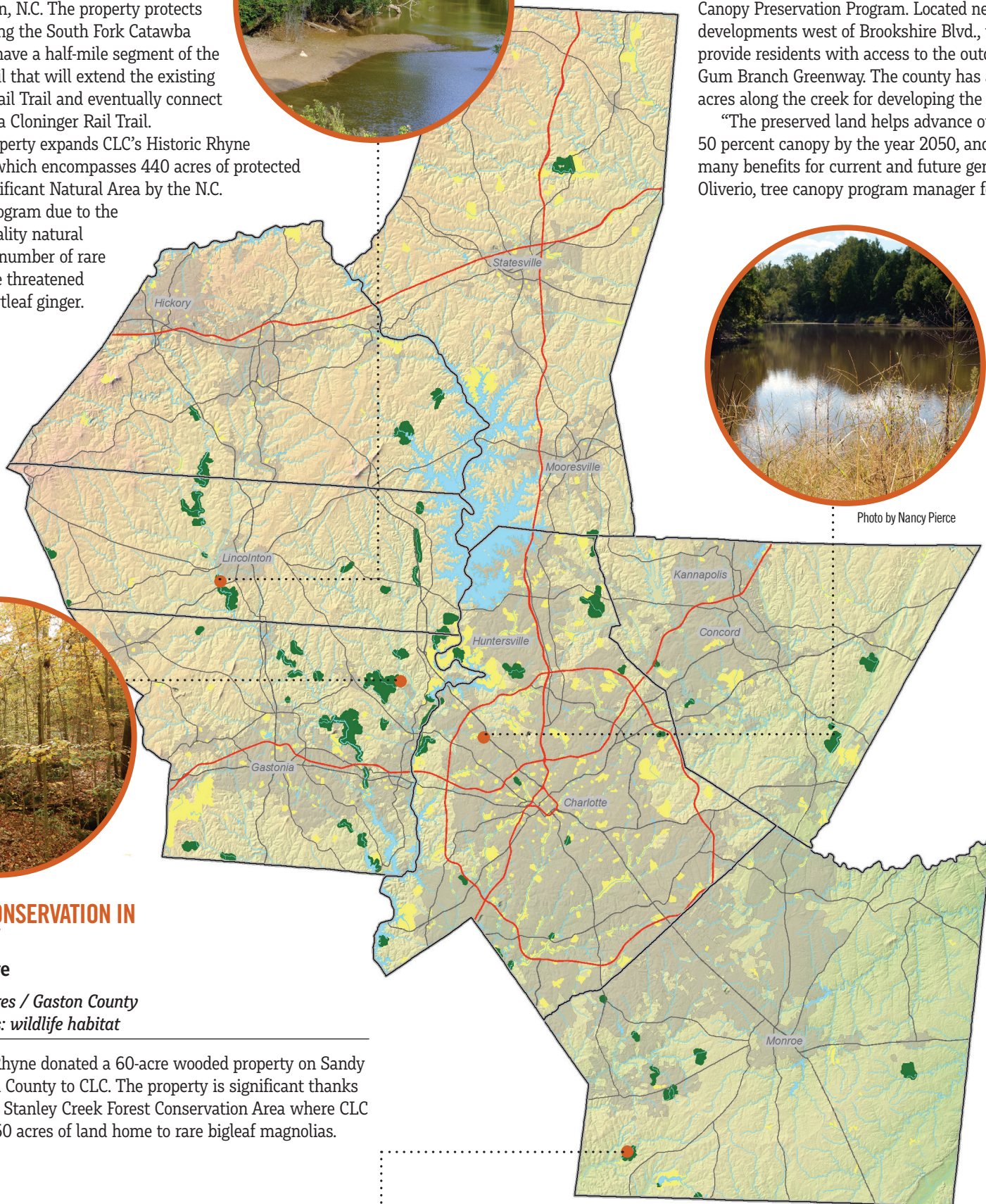
Conservation Values: clean water, wildlife habitat, connection to nature

CLC worked with the city of Charlotte to preserve 46 acres of forestland along Gum Branch Creek as part of the city's Tree Canopy Preservation Program. Located near numerous residential developments west of Brookshire Blvd., this green space will provide residents with access to the outdoors via the future Gum Branch Greenway. The county has already acquired 47 acres along the creek for developing the Greenway.

"The preserved land helps advance our goal of achieving 50 percent canopy by the year 2050, and the trees will provide many benefits for current and future generations," said Erin Oliverio, tree canopy program manager for the city of Charlotte.



Photo by Nancy Pierce



LARGE SCALE CONSERVATION IN GASTON COUNTY

Big Rock Preserve

Acquisition / 60 Acres / Gaston County

Conservation Values: wildlife habitat

The heirs of Stella Rhyne donated a 60-acre wooded property on Sandy Ford Road in Gaston County to CLC. The property is significant thanks to its location in the Stanley Creek Forest Conservation Area where CLC already protects 1,150 acres of land home to rare bigleaf magnolias.



SAFEGUARDING DRINKING WATER AND IMPERILED SPECIES

Little Lake James Conservation Easement

31 Acres / Union County

Conservation Values: clean water, wildlife habitat, connection to nature

Landowners Dennis and Debbie James worked with CLC to conserve their 31 acres of forested land along Waxhaw Creek in southwestern Union County. Land protection along this portion of Waxhaw Creek has emerged as a key focus area of CLC's conservation effort because of its impact on the water quality of the Catawba River, a major source of drinking water for residents south of Charlotte.

Three imperiled aquatic species also call this section of Waxhaw Creek home: Carolina heelsplitter mussel (federally endangered); Carolina darter fish (federal species of concern); and rare Eastern creekshell mussel (N.C. significantly rare). CLC used grant funding from the Duke Energy Water Resources Fund to purchase the easement.



LAND PROTECTION TO DATE

- 15,307 acres of land conserved for public benefit
- 143 miles of stream frontage protected
- 250+ miles of Carolina Thread Trail open to the public
- 4,640 acres of farmland conserved
- 4,128 acres of Significant Natural Heritage Area protected

TAKING CARE OF THE LAND

Managing Invasive Species

Thanks to active monitoring of conserved properties, the stewardship team quickly discovered that dying ash trees at two preserves in Lincoln County were caused by emerald ash borer (EAB). We worked with the N.C. Forest Service to confirm that the invasive beetle, which was first detected in N.C. in 2013, had officially made it's way to Lincoln County.



Thanks to lots of volunteer manpower from Husqvarna employees, the ash trees that posed a safety risk to trail users at Sally's Y and Catawba Springs Preserves were removed this fall.

Native to Eastern Asia, EAB hitched a ride into the U.S. in 2002 via packing materials imported from China. Adult beetles lay eggs on the bark of ash trees and when the larvae hatch, they bore into the tree and feed on tissues beneath the bark, ultimately killing the tree.



Restoring a Rare Piedmont Savanna at Buffalo Creek Preserve

CLC and the N.C. Forest Service worked together in February 2016 to conduct a prescribed burn on Buffalo Creek Preserve in Mount Pleasant, N.C. The burn occurred on a 62-acre portion of the preserve as part of a habitat restoration to re-establish a Piedmont oak savanna, an open natural area that is conducive for the growth of native warm-season grasses and wildflower.

Surveying for Endangered Plants

CLC's stewardship team assisted the N.C. Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) with this year's survey of the endangered *Hexastylis naniflora*, known commonly as the dwarf-flowered heartleaf ginger. This survey was a part of the NCNHP's five-year status review of the species.



A guided paddle on the Catawba River was co-hosted with the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation.

Beyond saving and stewarding land, connecting people to nature is an integral part of CLC's mission. After all, how can we expect people to care about saving land if they haven't experienced it?

With your help, we connect people to nature in two ways: through our leadership on the Carolina Thread Trail (see the Thread Trail section enclosed) and by hosting environmental education and nature programs, many of which take people onto our conserved properties!



Members hike on the Ridgeline Trail at Crowders Mountain State Park.



A group gets to know the Irwin Stewart Creek Greenway in Charlotte on a guided bike ride. Monthly Queen City Joyrides introduce people to local Greenways through guided group rides.

Queens University biology students visit Whitehall Nature Preserve in Charlotte to collect samples of water and leaf litter.

Visit a CLC Nature Preserve

Come experience conserved land! These eight CLC protected properties are open to visitors 365 days a year from dawn to dusk:

Seven Oaks Preserve

6900 S. New Hope Rd.
Belmont, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Buffalo Creek Preserve

8229 Malibu Rd.
Mt Pleasant, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Pharr Family Preserve

8928-9372 Mt Pleasant Rd. S,
Concord, N.C.
Hiking, Mountain Biking and Paddling

Girl Scouts Hornets' Nest Council

1716 Turnersburg Hwy.
Statesville, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Sally's Y and Catawba Springs Preserves

Forney Creek Trail
1601 Forney Creek Parkway
Denver, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Long Creek Preserve

5500 Whitewater Center Parkway
Charlotte, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Paul and Agnes Rhyne Preserve

South Fork Rail Trail
2648 Laboratory Rd.
Lincolnton, N.C.
Hiking and Mountain Biking

Pharr Yarns Preserve

South Fork Trail and Blueway
149 Willow Dr.
McAdenville, N.C.
Hiking and Paddling



CLC welcomed its first program coordinator in June 2016, thanks to a grant from the Women's Impact Fund! Mary Ann Harrison has been hard at work creating engaging public programs and leading member outings.

From August through December 2016, CLC connected more than 2,066 people to nature through 44 programs with 23 partners such as the N.C. Wildlife Federation, Catawba

Riverkeeper and N.C. Native Plant Society. These guided hikes, bike rides, paddles and other outdoor adventures have introduced people to seven conserved properties and 14 segments of Thread Trail.

Our conserved lands are also living laboratories and are frequently used by professors, students and other special groups for teaching and research.

2016 by the NUMBERS

Photo by Nancy Pierce



189
properties monitored by
our stewardship crew in 2016



Photo by Nancy Pierce

8
CLC preserves
open to the
public

Photo by Nancy Pierce



4
new
properties
protected

70 corporate partners
supported our work

896 members of
Catawba Lands Conservancy

520 guests at our second
Southern Spring Show
Preview Party



430 people attended
Taste for the Land



2,066
people connected to nature through
our new public programming

Photo by Nancy Pierce



8
new segments
of Thread Trail
opened



88 participated in our first
Clays for Conservation
clay shoot at The Fork



4 federally protected
species found on CLC
conserved lands



44
public
programs held

GRANTS RECEIVED IN 2016

We're grateful for the following
grants awarded to us in 2016:

Community Foundation of Gaston County

\$4,700 to plant a pollinator garden at the Seven Oaks Preserve Trailhead in Belmont, N.C.

Women's Impact Fund

\$74,000 to fund a full-time program coordinator to develop public environmental education and programs for two years

N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund

\$89,700 for the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement on farmland in Lincoln County

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program administered through the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

\$158,000 for the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement on farmland in Lincoln County

FINANCIAL REPORT

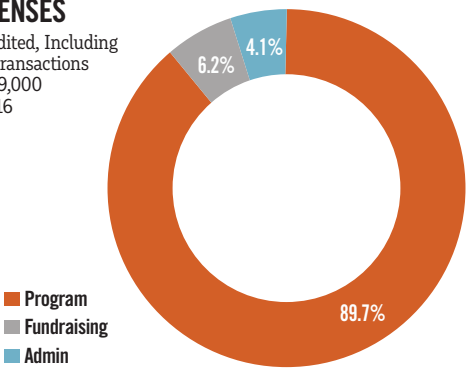
OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY 2015-2016/GENERAL FUND

	2015 ACTUAL	2016 ACTUAL ¹	ANNUAL AVG. DELTA
REVENUE	Donors	\$474,545	\$1,020,308 ² 115%
	Foundations & Gov't	\$145,697	\$153,614 5%
	Corp. Partners	\$255,933	\$263,159 188%
	Other	\$7,338	\$7,335 3%
	Stewardship Transfer	\$25,000	\$25,000 -0%
	Total Revenue	\$908,513	\$1,469,416 62%
EXPENSES	Compensation	\$553,463	\$533,723 -4%
	Office/Administrative	\$183,722	\$159,258 -11%
	Outreach & Development	\$124,337	\$145,395 17%
	Total Expenses	\$859,712	\$838,376 -2%
	Operating Net	\$48,801	\$631,040 1193%

1. Unaudited. Excludes land projects, other project funding and costs, including the Carolina Thread Trail revenue and expenses. 2. 2016 Includes one-time \$536,000 gift

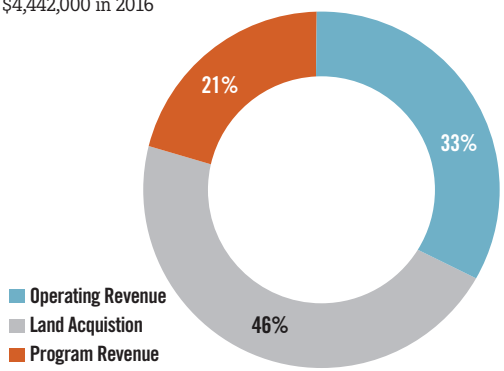
2016 OPERATING AND PROGRAM EXPENSES

Unaudited, Including land transactions \$2,389,000 in 2016



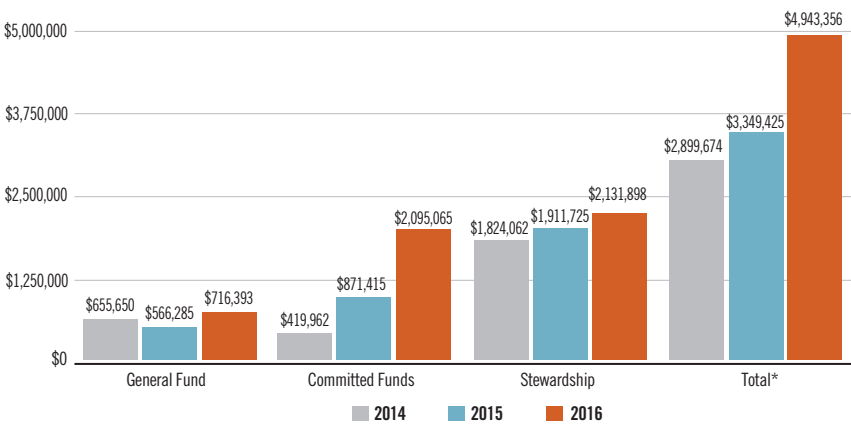
2016 REVENUE

Unaudited \$4,442,000 in 2016

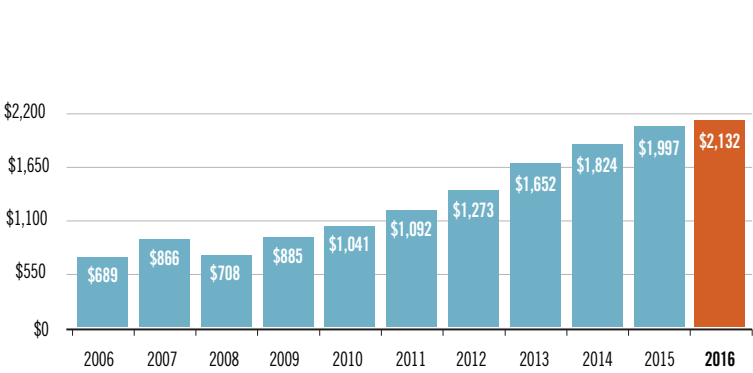


Program revenue includes grants and Carolina Thread Trail

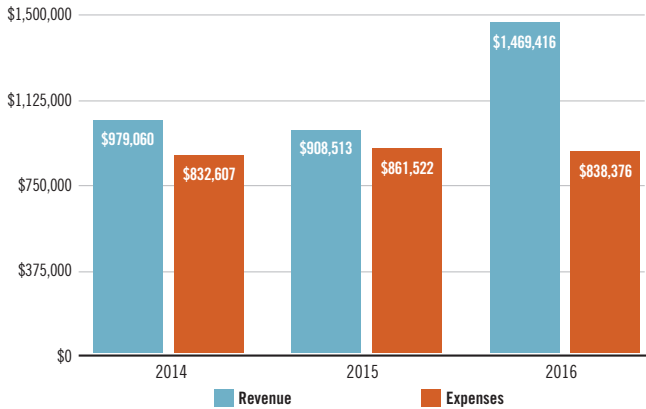
CASH BALANCES



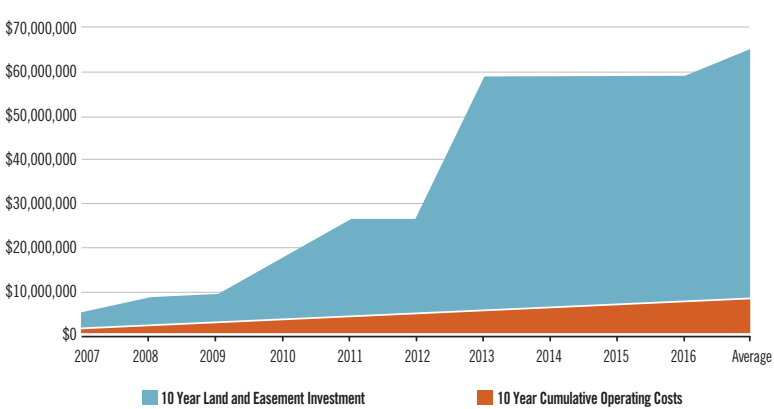
STEWARDSHIP & LEGAL DEFENSE FUND



GENERAL FUND REVENUE & EXPENSES



LEVERAGING CAPITAL FOR CONSERVATION



THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 SUPPORTERS

The generous support of our donors each year enables us to pursue our mission of saving land and connecting lives to nature. This list includes gifts made in 2016.

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & GOVERNMENT

We greatly appreciate the generosity and strong commitment to conservation shown by the foundations and corporations that made gifts during the 2016 calendar year.

\$20,000 +

Estate of Jane G. McNeary
Women's Impact Fund
Bragg Financial Advisors, Inc.
Babson Capital Management
Mecklenburg County
Blumenthal Foundation

\$10,000 +

Akers Foundation
BlackArch Partners
Bank of America Foundation, Inc.
Belk, Inc.
Crescent Communities
Piedmont Natural Gas Foundation
Regions Bank

\$5,000 +

Community Foundation of Gaston County, Inc.
Marsh Properties
Moore & Van Allen, PLLC
Harris Teeter
Cogentrix Energy Power Management

Faison
InterCon Building Co., LLC
O2 emc
Steelfab
Troutman Sanders LLP

\$2,500 +

Conservation Trust for North Carolina
GVA Lat Purser & Associates
Southeastern Architectural Systems
Integra Realty Resources Charlotte
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Appian Group, LLC
Edifice Inc.
McKim & Creed Inc.
Sides Erosion Control Services, Inc.
Beacon Partners
CBRE
Carolina CAT
Carroll Financial
Cato Corporation
Childress Klein Properties Inc.
Choate Construction
Dowd Foundation
Elliott Davis, PLLC

Jones Lang LaSalle
Little
Morgan Stanley
Robinson Bradshaw
Saussy Burbank
Town of Mineral Springs

\$1,000 +

GreerWalker, LLP
Catawba County Planning, Parks & Development
Great Outdoor Provision Co.
Carolina Brewmasters, Inc.
EnPro Industries
Bohler Engineering
Cherry And Associates
ECS Carolinas, LLP
Odell Associates
Sanford Contractors
Alexander Ricks PLLC
Charter Properties
Cushman and Wakefield
Design Resource Group
Grandbridge Real Estate Capital
Horizon Investments
Mythic

ReVenture Park Investments I, LLC
Terracon Consultants, Inc.
Truliant Federal Credit Union
Wildlands Engineering, Inc.
Eleanor and James Barnhardt Foundation
Hendricks Foundation
Trexler Foundation

\$500 +

ESP Associates, PA
Orvis Company
Blythe Development Company
Bowertraust Construction LLC
MECA Realty
Myers & Chapman, Inc.
PM Environmental
The Chambers Group
The Howe Foundation

\$200 +

Berkeley Company
Mecklenburg Audubon Society
Pasta & Provisions
TCG Events

Our donors' generous support each year enables us to pursue our mission of saving land and connecting lives to nature. This list includes gifts made during the 2016 calendar year.

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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Dale and Nancy Allison in honor of Ben Boswell	Charles and Lynn Hodges in honor of Holly and Harry Bryant	Larry and Audrey Mellichamp in honor of Jim Matthews
Linda Ashendorf in honor of Peggy Culbertson	Edward and Leslie Jenkins in honor of Kaye and William McMullen	Mary Margaret Myers in honor of William Bryan
Stanley and Judy August in honor of Ken Golder	Janice Koppenhaver in honor of Anne Davidson	Elizabeth and Wes Newman in honor of Patricia Quattlebaum
Jay and Sylvia Bajorek in honor of Karen and Gary McDougal	Bonnie and Eric Krempa in honor of Gregg and Karen Lockhart	Brian and Alison Nolen in honor of Everett Nolen
Alan and Eleanor Barnhardt in honor of Sara Pressly	Becky Kuhn in honor of Erik Tolsma	Bailey and Mildred Patrick in honor of Margaret Brantley
John Barry in honor of Bill Keenan	Betty Lee in honor of Tommy Lee	Dennis Rash and Betty Chafin-Rash in honor of Tom Webb and Kathryn Heath
Robert Blanton in honor of Dorothy Duffy	Eva Lee in honor of The Bragg Family	Judie Ratcliffe in honor of David Anderson
Frank and Kathy Bragg in honor of Claude and Sallie Broach	Felicia Lee in honor of Reuben Hannon	Judie Ratcliffe in honor of Duncan Anderson
Lynn and David Caldwell in honor of Doug and Laura Caldwell	Page Leggett in honor of Catawba Lands Conservancy staff	Andy and Camille Salisbury in honor of Bob Miller
Dorothea Chambers in honor of Laura Paynter and Patrick Hollowell	Lou Lesesne in honor of Tamara Lesesne	Janice and Kurt Sposta in honor of Constance and John Lapointe
Ernest and Georgianna Cox in honor of James Cox	Rebecca Lesesne in honor of Lou Lesesne	Ring Stafford in honor of Charlton Torrence
William Craemer in honor of Dana and Robert Servatius	Pamela Mahony in honor of Elizabeth Bradford	Martha Walters in honor of Scott Bodien
Donald Dickmann in honor of Marc Dickmann	Pamela Mahony in honor of Herb Jackson	Linda Warner in honor of Bernard Ackerman
Ruth Dromgoole in honor of Paul Wade	Pamela Mahony in honor of Connie Roseler	Jonathan Wells in honor of Dave Cable
Warren and Camille English in honor of Robert Voelker	Pamela Mahony in honor of Kathie Kemp	John Whitlock in honor of James and Cynthia Whitlock
Ann Gaines in honor of Saxby Chaplin	Pamela Mahony in honor of Jim and Laurie Hadley	Sharon Wilson in honor of Mamie Cole
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Sara and Dan Coenen in memory of Everett Bowman	Ivey Sumrell in memory of Alan Kessie	Keith Camburn in memory of David Wright
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STEWARDSHIP FUND DONORS DONATING LANDOWNERS KETNER LAND ACQUISITION

STEWARDSHIP FUND DONORS	DONATING LANDOWNERS	KETNER LAND ACQUISITION FUND DONORS
Jeffrey and Kimberle Burton Conservation Trust for North Carolina Chuck and Lindsay Meakin	Phyllis J. Adams Carpenter Property Group, LLC. The City of Charlotte Sara Lee Davis Glencroft Associates, LLC. Dennis and Debra James James L. Jenkins Jr. Robert Jenkins Jack Rhyne John Rhyne Ted Rhyne	Katherine Boyd Rankin Frank and Kathy Bragg Carolina Thread Trail Duke Energy Foundation Dean Edwards Kathryn Heath and Tom Webb William Noonan Haywood and Sabine Rankin Redlair Foundation Town of Cramerton Dr. T. Price and Mrs. Margaret Zimmerman

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2016 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GIVING

-MAGNOLIA-

SOCIETY

In honor of our 25th anniversary, this giving circle of passionate supporters has committed five year pledges that provide for operational stability and dedicated funding for land protection during this critical period of growth. Named for the bigleaf magnolia, the Conservancy's most impressive protected plant species, this group is the greatest example of commitment to our mission of saving land and connecting lives to nature.

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

CT Anderson	Bob and Sally Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Blumenthal	Bill and Katharina Mumford
Phillips and Leslie Bragg	Tom and Amy Okel
Ann and Ric Browning	Richard J. Osborne
Emily and Jarred Cochran	Tim and Nancy Paschall
Nancy and Ralph Falls	Stephen and Parker Shuford
Walter and Michele Fisher	Laurie Smith
D. Scott Pyle and Eileen Friars	Jack and Melissa Sullivan
Andy and Claudia Heath	Chet and Christine Walker
Jim and Becky Hovis	Henry and Jenny Ward
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Jonathan and Marianne Mangels	Bill and Rita Vandiver
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Beauty in Bloom

Spring wildflowers spotted
on CLC conserved lands

1. Crested Iris, Stanley Creek Conservation Area. *Photo by Sean Bloom*
2. Christmas Fern Fiddlehead, Stanley Creek Conservation Area. *Photo by Sean Bloom*
3. Sweet Shrub, Catawba Wildflower Glen
4. Catesby's Trillium, Catawba Wildflower Glen. *Photo by Sean Bloom*
5. Green and Gold, Catawba Wildflower Glen



HIKE, BIKE, PADDLE AND PLAY

Upcoming Events

**Hike NC for Your Health:
South Fork Rail Trail**
Saturday, May 6 | 10 a.m.

For Members: Native Wildflower Walk
Saturday, May 6 | 9:30 a.m.

**Queen City Joyride: Little Sugar Creek
Greenway**
Tuesday, May 9 | 6 p.m.

**Moonlight Ride on the Thread Trail:
Kings Mountain Gateway**
Thursday, May 11 | 6:30 p.m.

**Kayak with Catawba Riverkeeper:
Tailrace Marina**
Saturday, May 13 | 9 a.m.

**Moonlight Ride on the Thread Trail:
Riverwalk**
Thursday, May 18 | 7:30 a.m.

National Trails Day: South Fork Trail
Tuesday, June 3 | 10 a.m.

**Queen City Joyride: Stewart/Irwin Creek
Greenway**
Tuesday, June 20 | 6 p.m.

**Kayak with Catawba Riverkeeper:
Landsford Canal State Park**
Saturday, June 24 | 9 a.m.

**Queen City Joyride: Little Sugar Creek
Greenway**
Tuesday, July 18 | 6 p.m.

**Kayak with Catawba Riverkeeper:
Tailrace Marina**
Saturday, July 15 | 9 a.m.

*See complete calendar and details:
catawbalands.org/events*

