

FROM GRASS TO GLASS

Lincoln County dairy farm plans for the future
with conservation easement and creamery

Piedmont Jerseys dairy farm in Lincolnton, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

For Corey and Bridgette Lutz, farming and family life go hand-in-hand. The couple has run Piedmont Jerseys, a dairy farm nestled in the bend of the South Fork River in Lincolnton, N.C., since 1997. There they have 320 acres of sprawling green pastureland where the family milks 220 registered Jersey cows.

Dairy farming seemed like the logical choice for a family business considering Corey grew up on his family's dairy farm in Hickory where they milked registered Jersey cows. Meanwhile, Bridgette was raised on a farm with Holstein Cattle in Taylorsville. Their son, James Pearson, now works alongside them as a herd manager at Piedmont Jerseys. Pearson completed his degree in animal science and agribusiness at N.C. State University as Corey did before him.

The cows are similarly considered a part of the family. Some of the cows at Piedmont Jerseys can be traced back to the farm Corey grew up on, as the family keeps track of the bloodlines.

"We've had Jerseys in our family history for more than 100 years," Corey said.

**"MY ANCESTORS WERE
ONE OF THE FIRST
FAMILIES IN NORTH
CAROLINA TO OWN
REGISTERED JERSEY
COWS, SO YOU COULD
ALMOST SAY IT'S WHAT
WE WERE BORN TO DO."**

"We're passionate about caring for our cows, our land and preserving our heritage."

In September 2020, the Lutz family decided to protect 266 acres of their farm through a

conservation easement with the Catawba Lands Conservancy. This will ensure the property remains a farm indefinitely.

"The benefits of farmland preservation projects are not only about enabling a family to maintain their farm operation by reducing property taxes and providing cash for capital investments," said Amanda Byrum, Land Conservation Director for CLC. "The Farmland Protection Program (formerly the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program) also helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture use and prevents conversion of the land to non-agricultural uses."

The Conservancy focuses on protecting farmland because local farms support rural economies, reduce environmental and transport costs for food, and allow local chefs to offer

farm-to-table dining options. Piedmont Jerseys is situated next to the Conservancy's Riverbend Conservation Area. With the recent conservation easement, there are now 806 adjoining acres being preserved, which safeguards the water quality and wildlife of the South Fork.

Sustainability is likewise a key value in the Lutz family's daily operations, according to their daughter, Olivia Miller. She earned her Master's degree in animal science and agribusiness from N.C. State University. While she currently works for Carolina Farm Credit, she also helps out at Piedmont Jerseys.

"For my family, Jersey cows prove to be more sustainable for grazing because they eat less feed, drink less water and use less of the land," she said. "The cows do intensive, rotational grazing where they roam on the grass 365 days

Continued on page 2





LETTER FROM THE CLC BOARD CHAIR

2020 was an extraordinary year. Our community and the Catawba Lands Conservancy organization faced unprecedented challenges. While our community battled Covid-19, our team at the Conservancy pivoted to a remote/hybrid office, managed traffic increases of 50-100 percent on our Carolina Thread Trail, and significantly increased our region's preserved green space in support of our community's health and recreation, clean air and water and even mental health in a pandemic. I imagine every one of us sought refuge in nature at some point during the turmoil of 2020.

With gratitude for our dedicated Conservancy staff, generous individual and corporate donors, as well as public/private partnerships and grant funding, our work did not stop. In fact, it accelerated. During 2020, we succeeded in preserving an additional 514 acres of open space across our six-county footprint. The conserved land includes two centuries-old working family farms, hardwood forests and waterfowl habitat, and several areas critical to water quality in our rapidly developing area.

Additionally, we developed a first-of-its-kind partnership with Duke Energy to restore Piedmont Prairie habitat to utility rights-of-way. The pilot program was such a success that the effort is expanding to multiple rights-of-way and rapidly restoring native pollinator, bird and other species' habitats (including our own!) that are part of a sustainable, healthy environment. As of this letter, we have reached new milestones of 17,184 acres of land conserved, 160 miles of water frontage protected and 3,700 acres of farmland preserved.

Finally, we remain committed to providing all of our region's citizens access to the benefits of nature. We continue to provide outdoor programming that is available to all with additional emphasis on underserved communities

Thank you for your support! Together, we can be part of what makes our region one of the greatest places to live and work. Forever is a long time and all of our conserved land is preserved – forever.

We look forward to working with you in 2021 to be good stewards of the natural beauty that surrounds us – forever.



KELLY KATTERHAGEN

INDEPENDENT BOARD DIRECTOR,
FOUNDER, BLACKARCH PARTNERS

continued from cover

a year. They're about 60 percent fed on grass each day. They produce milk that's higher in solids, meaning it has more butterfat, for a more premiere product with a rich, creamy taste."

Piedmont Jerseys is one of just a few farms in the Southeast with this kind of farm management practice. Currently the family does not sell its milk products directly to the public. Instead, they are shipped to the Appalachian Milk Cooperative and bottled under the Laura Lynn brand for Ingles Markets grocery stores. Milk from Jersey cows offers more protein, calcium and levels of essential vitamins like B12 than milk from traditional dairy cows. Jerseys also produce the A2 type of beta-casein protein instead of the more common A1 protein found in most milk. Individuals with lactose intolerance often find A2 milk to be easier to digest.

Running a small business with the goal of keeping its herd size small, the family knew they would have to expand in some capacity eventually. So, in 2012, they began planning to build a farm store and creamery on their property. In 2019, they broke ground on Riverbend Creamery, which will open later in 2021. Miller has been assisting with the marketing and sales for this new endeavor.

"When we open our farm creamery, we will begin selling directly to the public, as well as to grocery stores, convenience stores, retail outlets and restaurants that want our products," Corey said.

Riverbend Creamery plans to sell whole, low-fat, skim and chocolate milk, as well as buttermilk, half-and-half and heavy cream in gallons, half gallons, quarts and pints. Additionally, some shelf space will be reserved for local products from area farms. Perhaps most important to those with a sweet tooth, 24 flavors of ice cream will be on sale, including some seasonal flavors.

"We are going to have a farm store inside the creamery where you can come get ice cream, hang out on our patio with fun games or relax on our front porch with a view of the countryside and the cows," Miller said.

Once Riverbend Creamery is up and running, Miller said the family plans to offer wagon ride tours of farm's scenic views from the spring through the fall. Their hope is to educate future generations about a dairy farm's operations while they indulge in some fresh ice cream. The family will process the milk it sells to the public on-site, and a viewing window inside the creamery will offer customers a sneak peek into how milk is pasteurized and bottled.

"This is our passion – it's what we love to do every day and it's what we were born into," Miller said. "It's near and dear to our hearts to make sure this family farm continues. One hundred years down the road, we still want the family contributing to feeding the community and ensuring food security. We still want the land to be preserved."

CLC/CTT STAFF

Bret Baronak, Carolina Thread Trail Director
Liam Barr, Program Coordinator
Amanda Byrum, Land Conservation Director
Sean Bloom, GIS Director and Biologist
Jennifer Clark, Communications and Marketing Manager
Vanessa Covington, Engagement and Volunteer Manager
Alesia DiCosola, Development Director
Lindy Hedges-Wright, Land Conservation Paralegal
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LETTER FROM THE CTT BOARD CHAIR

In a curious way, the challenges of 2020 have shown us how people and nature work together, and when done intentionally, how it benefits both. Catawba Lands Conservancy and Carolina Thread Trail do the same.

The Conservancy's work to protect land helps create a world where the Thread Trail can connect 88 communities through 1,600 miles of trail. Walking, running or biking on the trails not only encourages good health, it also allows people to safely come together to enjoy each other and the benefits of nature.

The Greater Charlotte Area (10 counties) is expected to approach three million people by 2030 – nine years from now. This is great for our economy, but it is not good in many ways – less tree cover, more traffic, environmental challenges and more. As Charlotte's developed footprint expands, the partnership of the Thread Trail and Conservancy become more imperative.

We are committed to face those challenges head-on. The Thread Trail is gearing up to more than double the miles of trails opened (with the help of our community partners and volunteers) annually. We are expanding our staff and reach to improve the close connections we have with each county and city. As we connect communities, we will be connecting the residents to local businesses, to nature and to each other.

Your financial and volunteer help is truly needed. We respect and appreciate your help as we bring people and nature together.



LAT PURSER
CEO, LAT PURSER & ASSOCIATES

WELCOME NEW CLC & CTT BOARD MEMBERS!

- MAY CARTER BARGER - CLC**, *Artist*
- LISA RICHARDS- CLC**, *Director of Stewardship, Crescent Communities*
- CHRIS THOMAS - CLC**, *Partner, Childress Klein*
- KACEY THOMSON - CLC**, *Senior Manager for Diversity and Inclusion, TIAA*
-
- JON MORRIS - CTT**, *Senior Partner, Industrial Division, Beacon Development*

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

We welcomed two new staff members at the end of 2020. We are excited to add their expertise and enthusiasm to our team!



GAIL OLSEN, *Finance Director*



LINDY HEDGES-WRIGHT, *Land Conservation Paralegal*



NEWLY CONSERVED IN 2020

Even during a pandemic, the Conservancy protects more than 500 acres in 2020.

BRADFORD FARM

The Bradford Family Farm is a historical 29-acre parcel in Mecklenburg County. Owned and operated by the Bradfords since 1760, the property is also registered with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission.



Bradford Family Farm, Mecklenburg County, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

ST. JAMES PRESERVE

Just south of the Old Stumpy Preserve, the Saint James Preserve adds another 73 acres to the Forney Creek Conservation Area. Working in concert with the adjacent conserved properties, the Saint James Preserve will allow for future expansion of the Carolina Thread Trail and offers water quality protections in a rapidly developing part of Lincoln County.

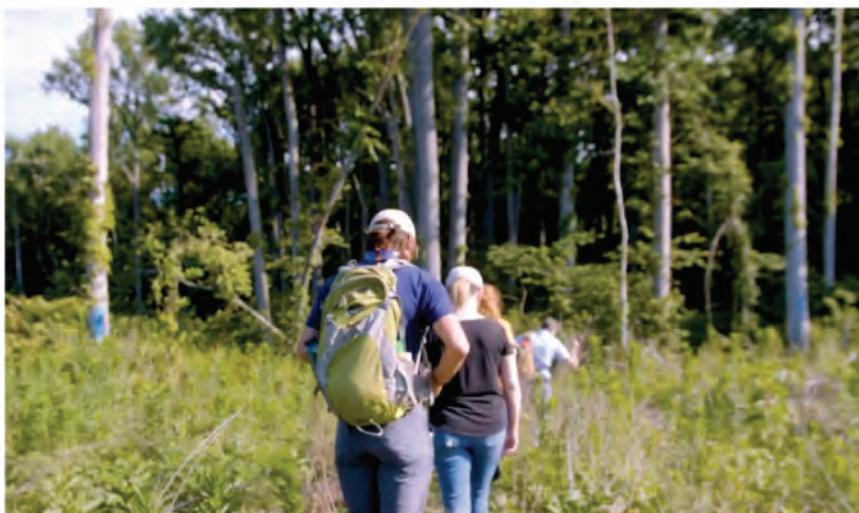


St. James Preserve, Lincoln County, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

JOSEPH BENNETT MCCOY PRESERVE

Just upstream from Mountain Island Lake and centrally located in the Charlotte suburbs, the 61-acre Joseph B. McCoy Preserve plays a critical role protecting the water quality in Gar Creek and protecting green space in an increasingly urban area.



Joseph Bennett McCoy Preserve, Mecklenburg County, N.C.

Photo by: Kim Brattain Media

PIEDMONT JERSEYS FARM

Piedmont Jerseys Farm is a 266-acre dairy farm in Lincolnton, N.C., owned and operated by two generations of the Lutz family.



Piedmont Jerseys Farm, Lincoln County, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

OLD STUMPY PRESERVE

This property contributes an additional 87 acres to the Forney Creek Conservation Area in Eastern Lincoln County and allows for a half-mile expansion of the existing Forney Creek Trail.



Old Stumpy Preserve, Lincoln County, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

30 YEARS OF SAVING LAND

IN 2021, THE CONSERVANCY CELEBRATES ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY.
IN THOSE 30 YEARS WE HAVE PROTECTED:

17,184 TOTAL ACRES

12,847 ACRES OF WILDLIFE HABITAT

3,719 ACRES OF FARMLAND

203 PROPERTIES

160 MILES OF WATER FRONTAGE



Photos by: Nancy Pierce

LEAVING A LEGACY IN LANCASTER

Lindsay Pettus's dream of conservation lives on in new greenway

For decades, Lindsay Pettus worked tirelessly to protect the natural beauty of the Catawba River Valley. A resident of Indian Land, S.C., his crowning achievement arrived in 1992 when he founded the Katawba Valley Land Trust (KVLT). To date, the nonprofit organization has protected more than 11,000 acres of land. This includes 350 acres along Gills Creek in Lancaster where the Lindsay Pettus Greenway (LPG) now gracefully dots the landscape and pays homage to the conservationist who passed away in January.

The 1.8-mile greenway officially opened to outdoor enthusiasts for walking, running and cycling in November 2020 as a part of the Carolina Thread Trail. The trail runs through a beautiful hardwood canopy full of wildlife and features an environmental education area with a small covered pavilion where future naturalists can gather and learn. Yet just as Pettus wore many hats as realtor, Lancaster city councilman, local historian and patron of the arts, his namesake trail is also multifaceted. It leaves the woods and passes by two city parks that flank Main Street to bring visitors into the heart of Lancaster's downtown district. It is also the first segment of the Thread Trail in the city.

"Lindsay had a quiet and respectful but persistent leadership style that brought people together to accomplish good things for the natural world," said Sherri Gregory, President of Lindsay Pettus Greenway Inc. "He saw a need for land conservation in his own backyard of Lancaster County and became a key leader in several preservation projects like Landsford Canal State Park and Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve that many have visited and greatly treasure."

The first phase of the greenway cost \$5 million with money coming from private donors, businesses, foundations, the City of Lancaster, the Lancaster County Recreation Bond and the State of South Carolina. The Thread Trail also provided a grant of \$75,000 in 2016 for the initial two-mile phase. Another \$1 million via a Transportation Alternative Program grant through the state DOT will fund additional improvements including widening sidewalks and a pedestrian bridge. It will also enhance connectivity between the trail, two area schools and the city's Main Street business district.

Gregory said the trail will eventually extend to six miles in length. Once LPG has its plans and permits finalized, it will build the remaining trail in segments as funding becomes available. In December 2019, the Thread Trail offered a \$30,000 grant toward financing this endeavor.

"Our first hope is to connect Gillsbrook Road to Forest Drive, as this will continue the trail west and make it more accessible to the many residents who live in that area," Gregory said.

The roots of the greenway extend back to the late 1980s and early 1990s when Pettus began acquiring property along Gills Creek for conservation through the KVLT. He was already envisioning an attractive walking path along its banks at that time.

"When the Carolina Thread Trail was developing its 15-county regional trail master plan [in 2011], the Lancaster County planning team adopted what is now the Lindsay Pettus Greenway corridor into its master plan, further cementing the concept," Gregory said. "In 2014, the then-Director of the Katawba Valley Land Trust, Barry Beasley, and I organized and recruited a group of volunteers to begin raising awareness and funding to start building the trail."

From there, they formed LPG with a mission to develop and maintain the future greenway named after Pettus and work with the city and county of Lancaster to establish and promote additional trails.

"As we build a trail, we turn it over to the City of Lancaster to operate and maintain within its public parks system. We continue to partner to help with programs and activate it and to provide volunteers to help the city keep it clean and well-maintained," Gregory said.

LPG wants schools, running and garden clubs, art groups and other civic and service organizations to see the trail as a public space where they can act out their own missions. Soon visitors will find a Track Trails youth activity kiosk sponsored by the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation on the greenway, as well as more environmental education amenities.

For Lauren Thomas, a LPG Board Member, developing greenways is a public health issue.

"We are creating accessible, free, safe outdoor exercise opportunities for the public to frequent," she said. "The beauty is that the natural asset of Lancaster has been here all along. We just need to scratch the surface and

make a pathway so all people can experience and value it."

Seven years ago, Thomas was on maternity leave with her infant son. She began reading Richard Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods," which discussed how children are becoming less engaged with nature. This prompted her to search for a local organization with conservation goals.

"Selfishly, I didn't want that to be my son's experience nor my own experience! Spending time outside is time well-spent; it's a life well-lived," she said. "The Lindsay Pettus Greenway organization had just recently become a nonprofit, and I began volunteering immediately."

Gregory echoed these sentiments, adding that trails have the power to strengthen communities and transform them into vibrant, healthy places.

"There are many subtle benefits to trails such as the economic benefits of making a community a more attractive place to live and work," she said. "They also foster more connectedness among residents giving them more opportunities to meet and interact."





- GROWING - THE THREAD TRAIL

The last year has shed a light on how people look to trails and nature for respite during challenging times. We are meeting that desire not only by keeping current trails open, but also by continuing to grow our network each year. Here are the new trails that opened in 2020, and a few that are in the works. We anticipate opening nearly 200 new miles of trails over the next five years.



HECTOR H. HENRY II. GREENWAY - WEDDINGTON ROAD
Concord, N.C. • 1.3 miles

Photo by: Jennifer Clark



CATAWBA RIVERFRONT GREENWAY
Mount Holly, N.C. • 1.2 miles

Photo by: Jennifer Clark



LINDSAY PETTUS GREENWAY
Lancaster, S.C. • 2 miles

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

- OPENING SOON - IN 2021

- **LITTLE SUGAR CREEK GREENWAY**
I-485 to Polk Historic Site Charlotte, N.C. • 1.8 miles
- **MCDOWELL CREEK GREENWAY**
Cornelius, N.C. • 1.4 miles
- **IRISH BUFFALO CREEK GREENWAY**
Kannapolis, N.C. • 2.4 miles
- **THE VINE**
Huntersville, N.C. • 0.9 mile
- **DUTCHMAN'S CREEK GREENWAY**
Mount Holly, N.C. • 0.6 mile
- **ATWATER TRAIL**
Kannapolis, N.C. • 1.5 miles
- **ROCK HILL RIVER PARK CONNECTOR**
Rock Hill, S.C. • 0.25 mile
- **AVON-CATAWBA GREENWAY EXTENSION**
Gastonia, N.C. • 0.5 mile

FIND A TRAIL NEAR YOU!

- VISIT -
[CAROLINATHREADTRAILMAP.ORG](https://carolinathreadtrailmap.org)



FIELD NOTES

TRAIL REROUTE AT GIRL SCOUTS HORNETS' NEST

After historic flooding in 2020, our team worked hard to reroute a section of the Girl Scouts Hornets' Nest Trail. Huge thanks to former Board Member Bill Mumford for assistance with materials, engineering and construction of the new bridge along the trail. If you're looking for a good hike, make sure to head up to Iredell County to check it out!



Photos by: Will Ruark

THREAD TRAIL PILOTS NEW SIGNS IN GASTON AND CABARRUS COUNTIES

Over the last year the Thread Trail developed designs for new trail signs and debuted them along several trails in Cramerton, McAdenville, Concord and Kannapolis. If you're out and about and see some of the new signs, make sure to snap a picture and share it with us on social media.



Photo by: Jennifer Clark

UNCOMMON MIGRATORY BIRD SPOTTED ON CONSERVANCY-PROTECTED PROPERTY

Every year, Conservancy volunteer Chris Bolling participates in the Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Counts, visiting several of the properties the Conservancy protects to look for birds. This year Chris was excited to spot a white-crowned sparrow, a winter migrant that breeds on the arctic tundra. While our region is within the edge of its winter range, the birds are rare on this side of the Appalachian Mountains.



Photo by: Gary Kramer

SAVING THE SCHWEINITZ'S SUNFLOWER

A native Piedmont prairie species, Schweinitz's sunflower is a tall and brilliant perennial that is endangered due to habitat loss. Last year, our team started working with the N.C. Botanical Garden, the N.C. Plant Conservation Program, Duke Energy, Catawba College and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to collect and propagate Schweinitz's seeds. The goal is to reintroduce the sunflowers to our Buffalo Creek Preserve in Mount Pleasant, N.C.



Photo by: Will Ruark



Photo by: Jean Woods



THE CONSERVANCY REACCREDITATION

We are excited to announce that Catawba Lands Conservancy’s land trust accreditation has officially been renewed! The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, promotes national standards for organizations working to protect America’s natural lands. A land trust that is accredited by the Commission holds the distinction of having been rigorously vetted for quality of financial practices, ethical conduct, governance and land stewardship. There are currently over 400 accredited land trusts in the U.S., 18 of which are in North Carolina.

The Conservancy was first accredited in 2007 and this is its second renewal. We are proud of the high-quality work this organization has done to save land and connect lives to nature since its last accreditation in 2014 and are pleased that the Commission has acknowledged it through this renewal. We look forward to continuing this work for many years to come.



GIVING TUESDAY

Because of generous support from our donors, we were able to exceed our matches of \$40,000 for both the Conservancy and Thread Trail!

We are so grateful to Bragg Financial Advisors and an anonymous donor who matched the gifts made on #GivingTuesday. We raised \$45,490 for the Conservancy, which was matched by \$40,000 for a total of \$85,490, and \$20,910 for the Thread Trail, which was matched by \$20,910 for a total of \$41,820!

BRAGG
— FINANCIAL —

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO NATURE SAFELY IN 2020

Although the pandemic posed a challenge for hosting programs and volunteer workdays in 2020, we were able to safely host some small group gatherings. After pressing pause on in-person gatherings last spring, we worked to ensure the safety of workdays and programs by capping attendance at a lower capacity and focusing on socially-distanced opportunities like kayak and bike rides. We ended up hosting 30 in-person volunteer workdays and 38 public programs, as well as participating in five virtual outreach events.

We also worked to build upon our existing partnerships and host creative, educational content during the pandemic. In partnership with Lakeview Neighborhood Alliance (LNA) we worked to confront food scarcity by providing 20 weekly farm shares from Wild Hope Farm, providing local produce to a historically under-resourced community for 14 weeks last year. We are continuing our partnership with LNA in 2021 to host bike rides and community garden programs for community members.

OUTDOOR PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY:



LAKEVIEW FARMSHARE MADE POSSIBLE BY:



LAKEVIEW PROGRAMS MADE POSSIBLE BY:



The Conservancy partnered with the Lakeview Community and Trips for Kids Charlotte to host several bike rides in 2020.



Kayakers paddled the Catawba River on several of our socially distanced outdoor programs in 2020.



Members of the National Black MBA Association during a bike ride along McAlpine Creek and Campbell Creek Greenways.



Volunteers performed trail maintenance at Crowders Mountain State Park and Overmountain Victory Trail during National Public Lands Day in September 2020.



VIRTUAL TRAIL FORUM

For the first time in our 13 years of hosting Trail Forum, the event was fully virtual in 2020. We were thrilled to have Jesi Stracham as one of our keynote speakers, sharing her experience as a wheelchair user who loves nature and trails. We were so honored to hear Jesi's perspective and hope that everyone attending was inspired to overcome their obstacles.

A short video of Jesi using two of our trails in Lincoln County can be viewed on our YouTube channel, [YouTube.com/carolinathreadtrail](https://www.youtube.com/carolinathreadtrail).



SPONSORS:
Fortified Data
Blue Blaze Brewing



Trail Forum keynote speaker Jesi Stracham filming at Forney Creek Trail in Lincoln County, N.C.

Photo by: Liam Barr

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are excited to bring back in-person, socially distanced programs in late April. For more details, check our online calendar at catawbalands.org.



PRESENTED BY:
 **DUKE ENERGY**

SPONSORS:
 **CaroMont Health**

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2021
Catawba Riverfront Greenway and Tuckaseegee Park • Mount Holly

Join us for this outdoor celebration of American Hiking Society's National Trails Day! With socially-distanced small group activities like hikes, bike rides, kayaking, yoga and more, your family will love getting outside to explore at this free festival event. Some activities may require pre-registration. Visit CarolinaThreadTrail.org/ntd for more information.



POP-UP PICNIC

OCTOBER 2021
Mint Museum Randolph • Charlotte

We are excited to bring back our annual picnic this October! This year will be extra special as the Conservancy celebrates its 30th anniversary. Look for more information as we approach the event at CatawbaLands.org/picnic.

CELEBRATING LONGTIME LEGAL COUNSEL SAXBY CHAPLIN AS HE RETIRES



Saxby Chaplin

Every year we honor one of our hardworking volunteers who has made a difference through their work with the Conservancy and Thread Trail. In 2020 however, our award was a little more special. That's because we renamed our Volunteer of the Year award as the Saxby Chaplin Volunteer of the Year award.

Saxby Chaplin joined the Conservancy and Thread Trail as in-house legal counsel in 2015 and retired last year after dedicating seven years to the organizations. Between his multiple degrees (B.I.E., J.D. and M.A.) and nearly 30 years of experience in private practice law in Charlotte, Saxby brought indispensable knowledge to our team. For five years, his thoughtful insights helped guide our work to save land and connect lives to nature, and through that work he made a lasting impression on the greater Charlotte region and the conservation community.

Even before working for the Conservancy and Thread Trail, Saxby was making a difference in the community. He served in the U.S. Navy as a submariner, was the staff counsel at The Trust For Public Land for 11 years and is active in his faith community. While Saxby's commitment to community service reached well beyond our footprint, our team will always

remember the small joys of working alongside such a funny, kind and open-hearted person. We wish Saxby all the best in his retirement!

Lynn Rivera Recognized as Saxby Chaplin Volunteer of the Year

In 2020, we were proud to honor Lynn Rivera as our Saxby Chaplin Volunteer of the Year. Lynn embodies all the values represented in this award through her work as a lead volunteer Trail Master across our region. Lynn has been tireless in her stewardship and volunteer management efforts to enhance Mineral Springs Preserve and Trail in Union County, organizing volunteer days, removing invasive plants and planting native species. Thank you for all that you do, Lynn!



Lynn Rivera



CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

2020 GRANTS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Thread Trail has now distributed over \$6.7 million in grant funding for trails projects in its history. Here are the projects we supported in 2020.

CITY OF BELMONT, N.C.

\$25,000 To assist in the design of the 1.2-mile Abbey Creek Greenway connecting to the Catawba River at Kevin Loftin Park.

CHEROKEE COUNTY, S.C. RECREATION DISTRICT

\$45,000 To assist in the construction of approximately two miles of sidepath connecting Chesnee, SC to the Cowpens National Battlefield.

CITY OF GASTONIA, N.C.

\$45,000 To assist in the construction of the Catawba Creek Greenway extension within the City of Gastonia, extending the Avon-Catawba Greenway by ½ mile, resulting in a total length of nearly three miles.

CLEVELAND COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

\$40,000 To acquire a key piece of riverfront property to help facilitate the future construction of over three miles of natural surface trail in north-central Cleveland County.

CITY OF SHELBY, N.C.

\$75,000 To fund the construction of a replacement bicycle and pedestrian suspension bridge over the First Broad River on the two-mile First Broad River Trail.

CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY

\$40,000 To assist in the acquisition of an 89-acre property located in eastern Lincoln County, which will allow for a one-mile extension of the existing Forney Creek Trail.

ROCK HILL, S.C.

\$50,000 To fund construction of a ¼ mile of the Manchester Creek Greenway linking River Park to Cel-River Road in eastern portion of Rock Hill.

TARHEEL TRAILBLAZERS

\$38,000 To assist in the construction of a 3,315 ft. unpaved shared-use pathway, the first trail linking Belmont to Cramerton, via the Rocky Branch Mountain Bike Park.

TOWN OF MARSHVILLE, N.C.

\$8,000 To fund improved trail connectivity through two bridge projects, giving a boost to the “active living” opportunities in the community and benefitting the public health of residents.

YORK COUNTY, S.C.

\$25,000 To design a five-mile unpaved trail on the 1,900-acre “Riverbend Property” located south of Rock Hill, a County-owned property intended to provide additional conservation and recreation opportunities for the public.



CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY & CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

2020 GRANTS RECEIVED

BANK OF AMERICA

\$20,000 To engage underserved communities in outdoor recreation, gardening and other programming connecting residents to nature.

CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

\$40,000 For land acquisition of Old Stumpy Preserve.

DUKE ENERGY FOUNDATION

\$28,500 To support the Conservancy’s stewardship initiative to rehabilitate Piedmont savannah habitats on protected properties.

FIG TREE FUND

\$8,000 To fund improvements to Seven Oaks Preserve Trail.

FRIENDSHIP FUND

\$3,000 To fund improvements to the South Fork Trail trailhead and parking lot.

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

\$50,000 To support restoration of Forney Creek in Lincoln County, N.C.

NORTH CAROLINA LAND AND WATER FUND

\$902,497 Old Stumpy Preserve - For land acquisition and costs.

\$551,647 Saint James Preserve - For land acquisition and costs.

\$150,000 Forney Creek - To improve water quality through a stream restoration project.

NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

\$187,461 Piedmont Jerseys Farm - For land acquisition and costs.

PAYROLL PROTECTION PROGRAM

\$100,000 Loan to cover payroll costs during the COVID-19 pandemic

RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT, INC (REI)

\$7,000 For improvements to the South Fork Trail trailhead and parking lot.

THE GASTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

\$15,000 To improve and replace the Spencer Mountain River Access Canoe and Kayak Launch.

UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL CAROLINAS CARES GRANT

\$47,500 For deferred trail maintenance, stewardship work and operational support due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICES AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM-AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENTS

\$346,422 Piedmont Jerseys Farm - For land acquisition.



Pinhook Preserve, Gaston County, N.C.



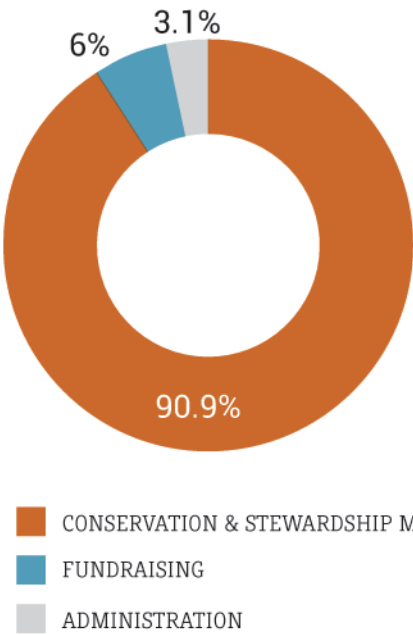
CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY FINANCIAL REPORT

OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY 2019-2020 GENERAL FUND¹

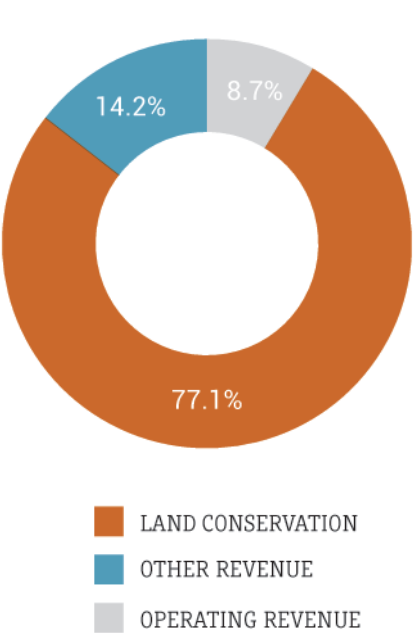
		2019	2020
REVENUE	Donors	\$502,015	\$520,380
	Foundations and Govt.	\$82,547	\$85,075
	Corp. Partners	\$243,643	\$164,486
	Other	\$35,645	\$21,699
	Stewardship Transfer	\$25,000	\$80,000
	Total Revenue	\$888,850	\$871,640
EXPENSES	Compensation	\$563,742	\$590,241
	Office and Administrative	\$152,179	\$139,478
	Outreach & Development	\$109,140	\$51,962
	Land Costs/Other	\$56,939	\$17,173
	Total Expenses	\$882,000	\$798,854
Operating Net		\$6,850	\$72,786

¹ 2020 is unaudited. Amounts reported excludes project revenue and costs, such as land acquisitions and Carolina Thread Trail.

2020 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES* UNAUDITED \$3.3 M

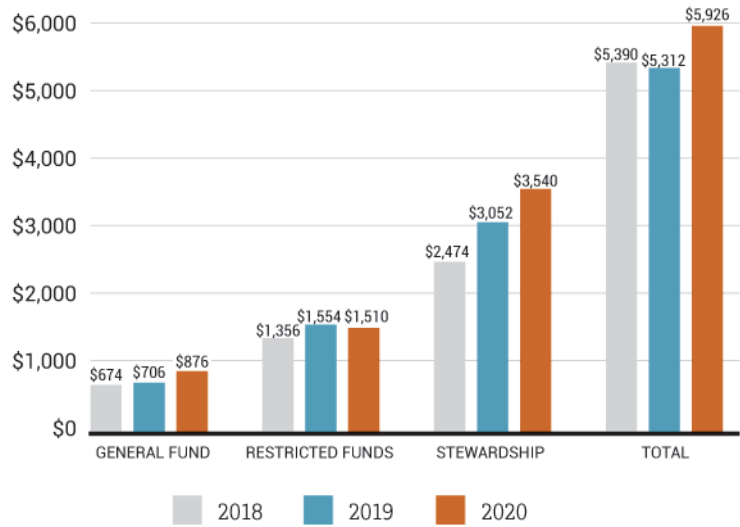


2020 REVENUE UNAUDITED \$10 M

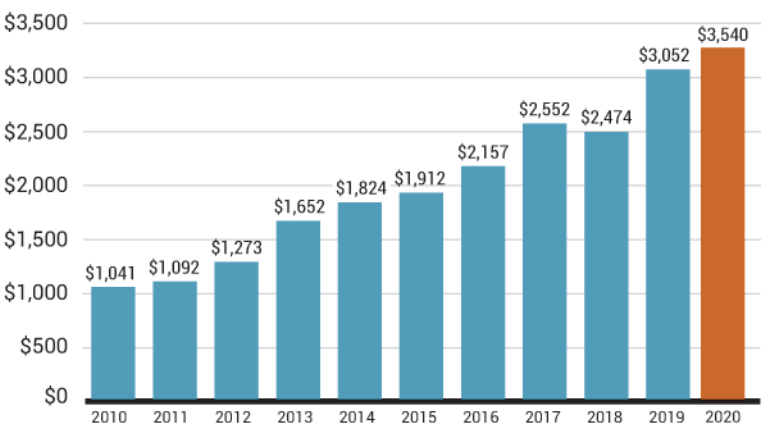


*Includes operating and programming expenses, such as land transactions and Carolina Thread Trail.

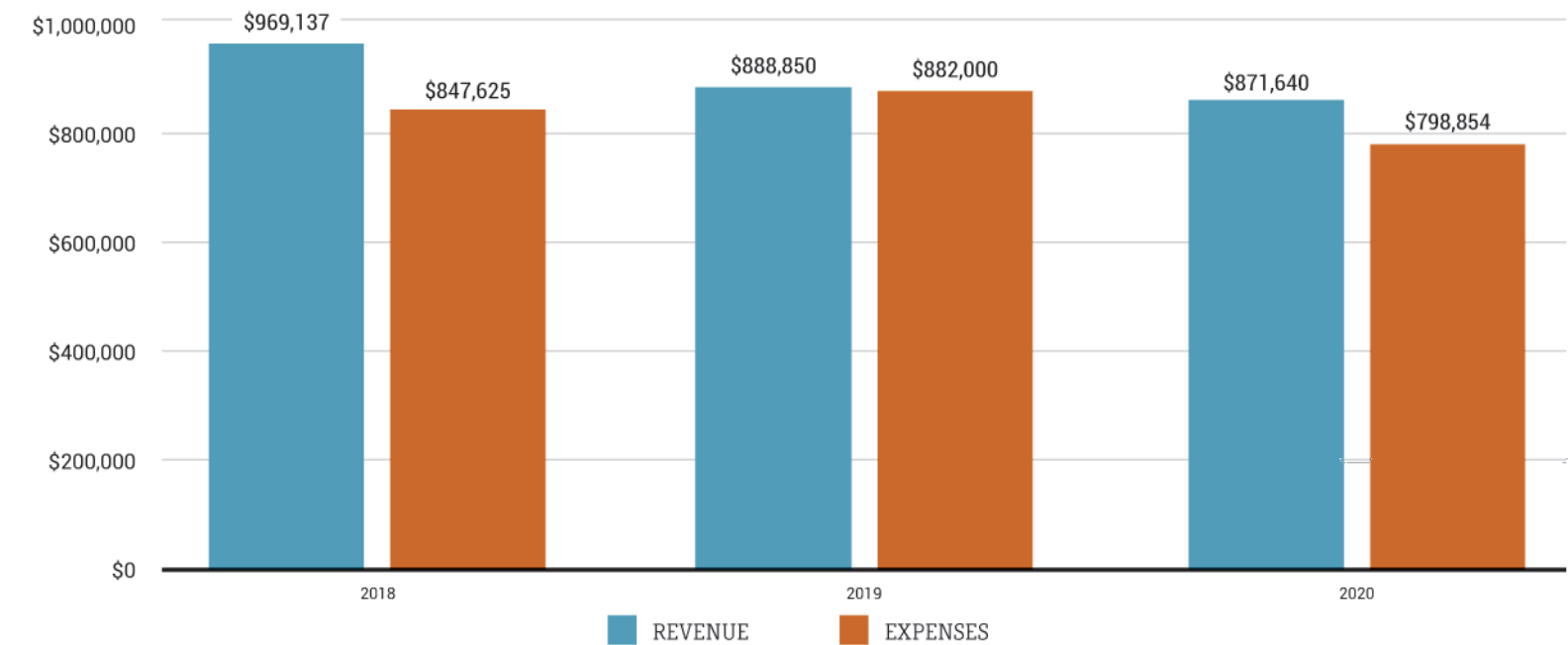
CASH BALANCES



STEWARDSHIP & LEGAL DEFENSE FUND



GENERAL FUND REVENUE & EXPENSES





2020 CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY AND CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL DONORS

Our donors’ generous support each year enables us to pursue our mission of saving land and connecting lives to nature. This list reflects combined gifts to both organizations that were made during the 2020 calendar year.

**Donor for 10 or more consecutive years ^ Nature Sustainers—monthly supports*

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George Foundation Inc.

\$50,000+

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BEQUESTS

We are deeply honored and grateful to acknowledge gifts received during 2020 from the estates of the following individuals

Jack Baker
Jane McNeary

MARY MCDANIEL SOCIETY

Our legacy society is named in honor of CLC founder Mary McDaniel, a visionary whose efforts to save Mountain Island Lake continues to inspire us today. We gratefully acknowledge today's visionaries who are helping secure the future of CLC and CTT by including us in their wills or other estate plans.

Jack Baker
Keith Camburn
Tom Cox
Karen Hales
Kelly Katterhagen
Laurie Smith
Cecil and Willie Teeter
Charlton Torrence III
Diane Watson
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Frances Wood



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Redlair Preserve, Gaston County, N.C



Bigleaf magnolia blossom, Gaston County, N.C.



Catawba Wildflower Glen, Charlotte, N.C.

CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL FINANCIAL REPORT

OPERATING EXPENSE BY PROGRAM

	2019 ACTUAL	2020* ACTUAL	2021 BUDGET
Personnel Cost	\$516,109	\$613,481	\$682,000
Office and Admin	\$89,288	\$89,228	\$140,700
Outreach & Development	\$92,162	\$45,676	\$102,000
Operations	\$35,615	\$98,553	\$60,300
Total Operating Expense	\$733,174	\$846,938	\$985,000

FUND BALANCES

ASSETS	FUND BALANCE: 12/31/2020*
Cash	\$2,275,217
Outstanding Pledges	\$2,574,028
Endowment Fund	\$3,421,621
Total Assets, Net	\$8,270,866

*Unaudited



- CATAWBA -
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LAND TRUSTS
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Catawba Lands Conservancy is part of a network of land trusts that collectively have protected more than 400,000 acres of the places you love in North Carolina.

THIRTY YEARS - OF NATURE -

As Catawba Lands Conservancy celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, we hope you will continue to support our work to save land and connect lives to nature.

HELP US RAISE \$30,000 IN HONOR OF OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY BY VISITING [CATAWBALANDS.ORG/DONATE](https://catawbalands.org/donate) TODAY!

A future conservation project, located in Charlotte, N.C.