



Field Notes

October 2014



Eastern mud turtle

A publication of The LandTrust for Central NC

Events

Paddling, Hiking, History Tours and More: Join us for our Fall and Winter Events!



We hope you can join us for one or more of these fun fall and winter field trips and gatherings! Please review the dates listed below and get them on your calendar so you won't miss out! You can find out more on pages 11 and 14.

Uwharrie Trail Cookout & Autumn Leaves Hike - Sunday November 9th
Boone's Cave Park Hike & Holiday Gathering - Sunday, November 23rd
Uwharrie Trail Workday - Saturday December 13th
Near Years Hike at Morrow Mountain State Park - Thursday January 1st
Earth Day Jam - April 17-19th at Cloninger's Dark Before Dawn Farm
3rd Annual Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend - May 9th and 10th

Land Protection

The LandTrust Announces Opportunity to Preserve one of the State's Most Important Historic Sites

Since our inception in 1995, we have desired to see the permanent protection the Historic Fort York/ Camp Yadkin property located above the Yadkin River in Davidson County. The LandTrust secured an option to purchase this property over the summer, and we have until April 2015 to raise the necessary funding to acquire this nationally significant site. The nearly 13 acre property is primarily

known as being the site of one of the last major Confederate victories in the Civil War, although the skirmish that occurred there happened 3 days after General Lee's Surrender at Appomattox. However, what is particularly unique to this property is not just what happened there, but also how well the integrity of the earthworks have been preserved at this major Confederate Fort.

(Continued on page 8...)



The Yadkin River as seen from Wilcox Bridge, just west of the 13-acre Fort York Property that The LandTrust is working to protect. The Battle at the Yadkin Bridge was the last Confederate victory during the War Between the States in North Carolina.

Preserving the History of our Region

Letter from The Director, Jason Walser

American novelist James Baldwin once wrote “People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them.” How true this is, especially in the Southern Piedmont of North Carolina!

As I write this article on the eve of the 20th Anniversary of The Land Trust for Central NC, I am reminded not just of our organization’s history, but what we have done the past nineteen years to save the history of this region.

This organization’s very first project involved the placement of a conservation easement on the 1900 acre National Historic Landmark “Cooleemee Plantation.” Our most recent project that you will read about in this newsletter involves trying to save historic Fort York along the Yadkin River.

Our newsletter often touts the natural or recreational significance of land that we have protected. However, preservation of historic places is arguably our greatest contribution to the region to date. Beginning in 1995, we set out to identify the most significant cultural resources of the region that we would love to see protected. On the list of regionally significant places that we wanted to help protect were the Cooleemee Plantation and Fort York.

However, what is striking is how many other sites that were also on that list have been, or are in the process of being, protected by The LandTrust. In Rowan County we have succeeded in preserving some of the oldest farms in the Piedmont – the Barber, Knox, Cowan, Bost, and Alexander Long farms are all remarkable places with remarkable histories. We have protected the land around the nearly 250 year old “Old Stone House,” which many consider to be among the most significant and best preserved German houses from the 18th Century in all of America. In Iredell County we tried (but failed) to help purchase land around Fort Dobbs, site of a Cherokee attack on Frontiersmen during the French Indian War in 1760. We were, however, successful in ensuring the protection of Historic Daltonia Plantation along Hunting Creek. In Stanly County we advocating strongly during the Alcoa hydro-electric relicensing process for permanent protection of the Native American Hardaway Site (home to 11,000 years of human history along the Yadkin-Pee Dee River.) In Montgomery County, we have protected and helped interpret the lost county seats of Lawrenceville and Henderson.

From historic mining areas, to tenant houses, to cemeteries, to lands where Daniel Boone supposedly hunted or camped, I am amazed at the history of this region where I grew up but never fully appreciated. I have even learned more about my own family’s history while working with The LandTrust, as I have been able to connect with “my people” and my family roots in the Yadkin College area of Davidson County.

Although all regions have great history, ours truly is special. Not many places have documented history dating back before the civilizations of Mesopotamia or the extinction of the Sabor Toothed tiger! And as you will read in the story on Fort York, our region’s written history began when Juan Pardo explored the interior of the state and observed that the lands around the Yadkin River were among the “good lands that exist in the world” - some twenty years before Sir Walter Raleigh’s men described our coastal region as the “goodliest soile under the Cope of Heaven.”

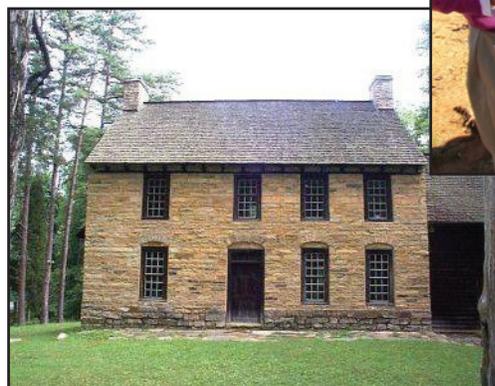
We have much heritage to be proud of here in this region. Thanks to your support, The LandTrust has been able to ensure that some of our most important natural AND cultural landscapes will exist for future generations to appreciate, and from which, to learn.



Historic Daltonia Plantation



Arron Capel presents Native American projectile points found on our Capel Property to The LandTrust.



Michael Braun - “Old Stone House”

More than 600 Acres of New Gamelands Coming to the Uwharries Thanks to The LandTrust!

The LandTrust is excited to announce that by the end of this year, thanks to your support and our efforts, the gamelands in the Uwharries will have two new key additions for your hiking, hunting, kayaking, and fishing enjoyment! This is a monumental accomplishment, as the transfer of these two properties together will directly open more than 600 acres of gorgeous land to the public!

Both of these tracts are strategically located adjacent to existing national forest land, and they possess unique views of the surrounding Uwharrie Mountains, high biodiversity, and unlimited recreational opportunities. “These are two tracts of land that should belong to the people of North Carolina,” Executive Director, Jason Walser, observes. “From the Native American archeological significance here that has yet to be fully explored, to the trophy deer, smallmouth bass, and gorgeous panoramic views, these are two landmark properties in our region that we have always known should be available for all to enjoy.”

The LandTrust was able to act quickly to secure these tracts with private donations and loans in 2006 and 2009. In the meantime, our staff worked diligently to write grants and work with our partners at the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) to find the funds needed to fully pay off the debt on these tracts and transfer them to the state for inclusion in the gamelands system.

One of these tracts is our 310-acre Capel Property located at the confluence of the Uwharrie River and the Yadkin-Pee Dee River, with frontage also on Hidden Lake. NCWRC will not only make this tract open for hunting, but they have plans to develop a formal canoe and fishing access here as well. The development of this access is a continuation of our

Highway 109 Access on the Uwharrie River is open thanks to partnership with NCWRC!



Panoramic views from the Capel Property - soon-to-be open to the public as a NC WRC Uwharrie gamelands thanks to The LandTrust.

partnership with NCWRC on the Uwharrie River Blueway, with newly opened access locations upstream at Highway 109 on NCDOT-owned land, and at our Land Trust-owned Low Water Bridge Preserve. “This final stretch of the Uwharrie River has to be my favorite - hands-down,” says Associate Director, Crystal Cockman. “It was the first place I ever kayaked and had a bald eagle fly directly over my head. This year I caught my first Uwharrie River smallmouth bass. It won’t be my last. It is incredibly rewarding to have worked to make this stretch of river more easily accessible by all.”

The second property that will become gamelands this year is our 290-acre Birkhead property. This tract provides the only eastern access to the Birkhead Wilderness area, and ties into the historic Camp 3 trail. This unique trail (scouted and blazed by Uwharrie Trail founder Joe Moffitt himself) takes you by several of the sites mentioned in his book, *An Afternoon Hike Into the Past*, including such mystical-sounding locations as Fern Valley and Stegosaurus Rocks.

Many partnerships and grants made the public accessibility of these properties possible, including private donations, grants from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, the State Wildlife Grants Program, the NC Natural Heritage Trust Fund, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and the National Wild Turkey Federation. Only through your dedicated financial support of The LandTrust are we to make big things like this possible. Look for a notice of a celebration marking this momentous occasion in our LandMark newsletter in the spring. Thanks as always for your support as we work not only to save, but also to enjoy the places we love in the Piedmont!

Unique Partnership Provides Permanent Protection for Cabarrus County Property

A special property near the intersection of Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, and Iredell Counties has brought together three separate local conservation organizations in a unique partnership unlike any other seen before in North Carolina. The 10-acre property boasts rolling hills and fields, along with an impressive north-facing slope that is home to significant wildflower diversity and a scenic creek. What makes the property so special, however, is its location in a rapidly developing area of Cabarrus County along Highway 73 between Davidson and Kannapolis. Bill Wilson of Statesville donated the site in fee to the Davidson Lands Conservancy to be used for conservation last December.

Though the land was donated, to ensure that the site was truly preserved in perpetuity, Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) reached out to The Land Trust for Central NC (LTCNC) to assist them with the creation of a conservation easement for the site. With the easement in place, DLC can explore transferring the property to another public or private entity that could establish a passive park or community garden or another conservation use helpful to the community. With the location in Cabarrus County and the conservation values found here, the LTCNC board thought this would



Native coral honeysuckle in bloom on the Wilson Property. This site has a rich botanical biodiversity, providing important pollinator habitat.

offer a perfect opportunity to work in partnership with Cabarrus Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). “We have a unique memorandum of agreement with Cabarrus SWCD that we believe is the first of its kind in the nation, to work together to protect special lands in a rapidly developing county,” says Jason Walser, LTCNC Executive Director. The Cabarrus SWCD board voted to unanimously approve joining on as co-holder.

Final plans for the site have not yet been determined, but the easement allows for a variety of possibilities. One use not allowed though, is excessive development. This beautiful rolling property with agricultural soils, forested riparian areas, and diversity of wildlife and flora will remain intact for the benefit of future generations, thanks to one generous donor, and the collective efforts of these three conservation agencies.

Accreditation

The Land Trust for Central North Carolina Achieves National Accreditation from Land Trust Alliance!

The Land Trust for Central North Carolina (LTCNC) has achieved land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. “We are absolutely thrilled to be a part of this elite group of land trusts operating at the highest levels of professionalism,” noted Jason Walser, Executive Director of LTCNC. “Our land trust is a stronger organization today having gone through the rigorous accreditation program,” he added.

LTCNC is one of only 280 land trusts from across the country that has been awarded accreditation. Accredited land trusts are authorized to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation. According to the Land Trust Alliance, more than 1,700 land trusts have worked with willing landowners to protect more than 47 million acres of farms, forests, parks and places people care about across the United States.

About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, based in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., awards the accreditation seal to community institutions that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. [See more at <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/newsroom/press-releases>, and on the Commission’s website, www.landtrustaccreditation.org.]

About The Land Trust Alliance

The Land Trust Alliance, of which LTCNC is a member, is a national conservation group that works to save the places people love by strengthening conservation throughout America. It works to increase the pace and quality of conservation by advocating favorable tax policies, training land trusts in best practices and working to ensure the permanence of conservation in the face of continuing threats. See more at www.landtrustalliance.org.

The LandTrust Joins EarthShare - Workplace Giving Network for the Environmentally Conscious

Workplace giving provides an opportunity to involve friends and co-workers as supporters of our work. The LandTrust for Central North Carolina recently became affiliated with EarthShare NC – a coalition of 70 like-minded organizations working to improve North Carolina’s environment. The workplace giving program allows participants to establish a payroll deduction program with 100% of the employee contribution accruing to the environmental non-profit agency of their choice. Of course, we’d like to suggest that participants identify The LandTrust for Central NC as the recipient agency, but we recognize we’re all in this together!

Please contact Joe Morris, Development Director at 704-647-0302 or joe@landtrustcnc.org to learn how simple it is for your company or employer to participate in EarthShare NC.



Outreach

Are You Up to the Challenge? Hike-Paddle Your Way to a Cool Free Patch, and Check out Preserved Lands!



LandTrust interns Erika Hansen and Leeann Chen complete the Hitchcock Creek Paddle on our Challenge.

Did you spend too much time indoors this summer? Now that the cooler fall weather has arrived, are you ready to go out and explore but don't know where to go or what to do? Wish someone had a cool challenge set up to motivate you to get out and about? Look no further – The LandTrust for Central NC has you covered!

Based on the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy's Hike Challenge (<http://www.carolinamountain.org/hikingchallenge2>), The LandTrust for Central NC has launched a sister hike and paddle challenge in the Uwharrie region. These two new challenges will be an organized and fun way to get to know the region better, with its vast natural areas, awesome views, and rich history less than two hours away from Charlotte, Greensboro, and the Triangle!

To participate in the challenge you must be a member of The LandTrust, but don't worry – becoming a member is easy, and as a member

you receive other cool benefits including being the first to know about our great hikes and events (which can also help you towards completing the challenge!). You can learn more about becoming a member here: <http://landtrustcnc.org/giving/>. As you do the challenge you'll see first hand some of the special places you have helped us preserve in our region. There are two ways to participate, as the Hike Challenge and Paddle Challenge can be completed separately. You can find a list of qualifying hikes and paddle routes online. Each participant must finish and report eight hikes or eight paddles to complete the respective challenge. Once you complete the requirements for a challenge, you'll receive a distinctive embroidered patch to signify your accomplishment!

Registration is now open and can be found on the LandTrust's website under Get Involved (or at the direct link: <http://landtrustcnc.org/get-involved/hike-paddle-challenge/>). There is no time limit to complete your chosen eight routes, and any hikes or paddle trips completed after January 1st, 2014 count toward the challenge! Make note of the date, route completed, and any notes or comments to enter into the online reporting form. We encourage photo and "selfie" submissions on our Facebook page. Hope to see you out there! For questions or more information, visit The LandTrust's website at www.landtrustcnc.org or email Crystal at crystal@landtrustcnc.org.



Stewarding These Lands

When The LandTrust protects a piece of land in perpetuity, we have made an obligation to take care of it forever. In accepting a conservation easement, The LandTrust for Central North Carolina (LTCNC) is making an important long-term commitment. The LandTrust assumes the legal responsibility of carrying out the donor's intentions (conservation values) by upholding the terms of the conservation easement – forever. In fact, the IRS regulations that empower The LandTrust to function as a non-profit conservation organization (eligible to accept and defend donations of tax-deductible conservation easements) require that the “eligible donee...have the resources to enforce the restrictions” of the easements. The LandTrust visits the land at least once per year to determine the consistency of the use of the land with the easement's restrictions. The monitor prepares and files a report to document the findings. If a violation is found, The LandTrust will take action to prevent further damage and remedy the problem. This action generally requires only explanation and negotiation of a solution. However, legal remedies may be taken if necessary.

At the very least, this stewardship and monitoring responsibility involves costs for staff time, travel, photographs, and documentation for annual site visits and preparation of monitoring reports. For this purpose, The LandTrust requests that for each easement, we find the funds needed to steward that site and invest them in our Stewardship and Legal Defense Fund (SLDF). The amount, based on projected costs, is set aside and placed in The LandTrust's restricted SLDF solely to cover the future costs of monitoring, managing, and defending the property. Donations to the fund are generally pooled into a single account for administration and investment purposes.

For some landowners, it may be difficult financially to make a donation to this fund. There are mini-grants from state agencies that can assist with this expense, but they are not always available. Contributions to our SLDF have a direct impact on the number of projects we are able to complete each year. Please consider giving to this fund today.

There are stewardship and management expenses on lands we own, as well. Managing invasive species, carrying out prescribed burns, and restoring habitat all comes at a cost. Opening our preserves to the public by developing trails, trailheads, parking areas, canoe access points, and informational signage is also an expensive endeavor. We can sometimes obtain grant funds for these projects, but private funds directed towards our Land Management Fund help us get more of these amenities in place, which in turn, gets more people out on the land to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of our region.

In Memory of a Leader, Billy Joe Kepley

Billy Joe Kepley was truly a leader in our region, involved in a wide variety of great community service organizations, including being an active member of our board here at The LandTrust. Billy Joe was not just a passive board member of any organization he was involved with, and ours was no different. He not only participated in all of our board meetings and as many events as he could, but he also practiced what he preached - placing his 100 acre farm in Davidson County under conservation easement with The LandTrust, never to be developed. Billy Joe was a truly special person and his contributions to this organization and this region display the wonderful legacy he has left us all.



Spencer Woods Youth Conservation Corp Improve Trails, Goats Tackle Invasive Kudzu



These goats spent a few weeks at Spencer Woods ridding the preserve of invasive kudzu to the entertainment of local residents.

Thanks to a partnership with The Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC), the Youth Conservation Corp spent two weeks this summer diligently working to improve the trails at Spencer Woods. The LandTrust worked with the Town of Spencer to protect this property a few years ago, and though the town now owns the land, The LandTrust continues to assist with management of the park. These young people, varying in ages from 18-24, grubbed, benched, pruned, and raked the trails here to make them more easily visible and walkable for all. Thanks to CTNC and to a grant from the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) for providing the money that made this work possible. In September, The LandTrust contracted with a local group to rent a herd of goats. Their main mission? Tackle the expanding kudzu invasion that had begun at the edge of the Spencer Woods property. Goats are a great natural way to rid the area of the kudzu, without spraying chemical herbicides or paying for more costly hand removal of the tough vines.

Uwharrie Trail Audio Tour - Listen to Stories as you Hike!

Now as you hike along the beloved Uwharrie Trail, you may come upon a newly installed “Uwharrie Trail Audio Tour” marker and wonder what it is. If you have cell service you can click on the QR code shown and hear a short story about the historical, natural or cultural significance of the very spot to which you have hiked in the wilderness. This unique experience has been made possible thanks to the work of Life Scout Chris Moncrief, Land Trust intern Rebecca Schoonover, trail founder Joe Moffitt, and many other Uwharrie Trail and LandTrust partners and friends.

This Uwharrie Trail Audio Tour project builds off work done by LandTrust staff and interns to identify locations and sites of interest on the trail. The LandTrust settled on 24 points along the trail, and Chris and his team spent several long days installing markers of these points of interest over tough terrain. “We had no idea how mountainous this area was when we started this project,” Chris tells LandTrust staff. “It was a very challenging and rewarding experience.” He recorded these stories in an audio format and uploaded these to a website so that they can be listened to during a hike of the trail (for those with cell phone service).

The LandTrust has also uploaded these audio files as zip files to our website (<http://landtrustcnc.org/ut-audio-tour/>) so that hikers will also have the option of downloading the stories before a hike as a podcast. This allows hikers to listen to the stories as they reach the designated sites whether or not they receive a mobile phone signal (which can prove a challenge in the remote Uwharrie wilderness). You can also listen to the stories now at this website: <http://grooveshark.com/#/album/Uwharrie+Trail+Audio+Tour/9813897>

[com/#/album/Uwharrie+Trail+Audio+Tour/9813897](http://grooveshark.com/#/album/Uwharrie+Trail+Audio+Tour/9813897)

The main goal of this project was to document some of the stories and folklore of the Uwharries using the Uwharrie Trail as a thread to weave the stories together. The stories celebrate a shared natural and cultural heritage special to so many people in the region, as well as providing a sense of place to visitors. The Uwharrie Trail was created in the 1970s and historically was 53 miles long, always going through some public national forest land and some private land. The trail founder, Joe Moffitt, secured handshake agreements to create and keep the trail open; however, as time passed eventually parcels were sold or people moved away. The trail was limited to the 20 miles on U.S. Forest Service land. Conservation partners have filled 3 of 4 gaps in the trail and this audio trail is also a way to document those conservation success stories. The LandTrust is excited that trail users are now able hear about unique glade communities, old firetowers, the ghosts of settler’s past, and a wide array of other interesting tales that make this landscape and community so special. Hopefully this experience will add another dimension to the unique and magical opportunities that abound in the wild Uwharrie landscape.



Life Scout Chris Moncrief at one of the markers he installed for the audio tour.

2nd Edition of the Uwharrie Lakes Region Trail Guide Now Available!



Author, Don Childrey, on left at the end of our 2013 Uwharrie Trail Thru Hike with intern, Rebecca Schoonover, and Associated Director, Crystal Cockman

If you are wondering how to do your own 40 mile thru hike of the Uwharrie Trail, look no further than Don Childrey’s revised and updated 2nd edition of the Uwharrie Lakes Region Trail Guide. The new sections of the Uwharrie Trail that have been restored and reopened are included in this new version of the guidebook. Now you can plan your very own thru hike, or overnight trip on any of the more than 215 miles of trail Childrey maps out for you in this guidebook. The book includes hiking and biking trails, with detailed maps, elevation graphs, and descriptions of the trails step-by-step.

What else is in the new book? Addition trails not featured in the previous version, including NC Zoo preserve trails, Boone’s Cave Park, Densons Creek Preserve in Troy, and more! You can pick up your copy today from this website: <http://donchildrey.com/books/uwharrie-lakes-region-trail-guide-second-edition/>. Or join us for our November 9th hike to meet the author and get a personalized signed copy!

Fort York Historic Site Protection Continued...



*One of the earthenware trenches found on the Fort York site.
(Continued from page 1...)*

It is also a very high conservation priority because of its location adjacent to the River and Interstate 85. With recent widening of the interstate and a new bridge, the NC Department of Transportation Is donating a historic arch spandrel bridge (the “Wil-Cox bridge”) and some unneeded right-of-way to establish a pedestrian and cycling crossing of the river, as well as a small educational park.

At this location, many aspects of America’s history can be told. Just below Fort York is the historic Trading Ford Area, where Native Americans engaged in trade at this low water crossing section of the river. It was near this site that the first recorded history of our region began when Spanish Explorer Juan Pardo documented his meeting of the Guatari Indian Tribe (led by a female chief) in 1567. (That is twenty years before the Lost Colony at Roanoke was settled!!) Fort York also overlooks the location where Nathaniel Greene oversaw a narrow escape of his Patriot Troops from the grips of General Cornwallis’ men in the American Revolution, allowing the Patriot troops time to join reinforcements at the Dan River in Virginia.

With regards to the Civil War Importance of this site, the Fort was built by hand in 1863 or 1864 to protect the important railroad bridge crossing the Yadkin River. This railroad crossing provided vital supplies to not just the Salisbury area, but all points south as well. The railroad also brought in captured Union soldiers to the prison in Salisbury. The fort was originally called “Camp Yadkin” and was heavily manned. In the closing days of the “War Between the States,” General Stoneman came to Salisbury to free captured Union soldiers held in the Confederate prison. After torching many buildings in his path, he marched

eastward to take the Yadkin River rail bridge. Confederate soldiers under the leadership of Zebulan York, fought valiantly on the afternoon of April 12, 1865 to prevent the destruction of this bridge from their strategic higher ground provided at Camp Yadkin.

The fort consisted of a system of small artillery batteries connected by rifle-trenches for infantry. What remains today is probably half of the original Fort, the remainder having been destroyed by three generations of road-building around the property. The earthworks are in remarkable shape after being left in a natural state by previous owners who valued history and have served as good stewards of the site. There is arguably no more important Civil War landmark left unprotected in the western part of North Carolina, and, as noted previously, the site also is an important area to relate all other historic periods of America - including the exploits of Daniel Boone that occurred in the area as well!

Next April (2015) will be the 150th anniversary of Stoneman’s Raid and the “Battle of Fort York.” We want to be able to celebrate this milestone with a public announcement and dedication of this site for permanent preservation and public educational purposes. We are excited to share that with the awarding of a substantial grant from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, we have secured well more than half of needed funds to purchase the property. But we are still in need of more than \$100,000 to be able to purchase and secure the site, and welcome your participation in this campaign to “Save Fort York.”

We intend to work with peer nonprofits who focus on history, as well as with public agencies to find the optimal long term ownership scenario for both protecting and interpreting the site for public benefit.



The Wilcox Bridge over the Yadkin River. This river access area will soon incorporate the history of the nearby Fort York Property.

Event Recap

RiverDance 2014

RiverDance, the annual fundraiser for The LandTrust for Central North Carolina, was held at the Historic Salisbury Train Station on August 9th. The 325 guests in attendance enjoyed an evening focused on Local Farms, Local Foods and Local Spirits.

A delicious, locally-sourced meal was catered by Morgan Ridge Vineyards. Chef Jason Nain took special care to utilize locally grown summer vegetables and mushrooms, along with locally produced poultry, wheat (for breads and crackers) and regional cheeses. Specialty cooks, Butch Hudson and Seth Morris prepared beef brisket and wood-smoked barbecue. The meat products were sourced from Cruse's Meats in Cabarrus County. Albemarle's Poppin' John's Ice Cream served up cool, summertime deserts. Beverages for the evening featured locally produced, Yadkin Valley wines and craft brews, including a RiverDance Red Ale brewed by Tommy Baudoin from Morgan Ridge Brewhouse.

The musical backdrop for RiverDance was provided by a variety of performers including, singer-songwriter, R.J. Adams, the traditional and folk sounds of siblings Gabe and Grace Bemus and Red-Clay Roots and American artists The Flatland Tourists.

We would like to express a huge thank to you all the sponsors and supporters who provided financial support for this event, and to everyone who purchased a ticket. Thanks go out also to the committee and volunteers who pulled together another fabulous RiverDance event. It would not be possible without the help and support of all of you!



The Flatland Tourists put on a great show at RiverDance 2014! Many thanks to all of our sponsors, committee members, volunteers, and attendees who made this event a success! Thanks for your support of The LandTrust for Central North Carolina!



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*RiverDance 2014- A Celebration of
Local Farms, Local Food, Local Spirits*

Earth Day Jam

The LandTrust worked with a great group of volunteers and sponsors for third annual Earth Day Jam (EDJ) 2014, which was held on May 3rd at Saving Grace Farm in Salisbury. Under the leadership of founders Ashley Honbarrier and Stacey Carter, EDJ has become a signature event for The LandTrust that celebrates local music and food and, of course, Mother Earth! The event benefited two important non-profit organizations, The LandTrust and Saving Grace Farm. In its brief history, Earth Day Jam has grown to be more than just a festival; it is an outreach opportunity to create a community that takes positive action for the environment in our region.



Attendees enjoying beautiful weather and good music at the third annual Earth Day Jam event in May.

Uwharrie Trail Thru-Hike 2014



Views from the Uwharrie Trail Thru-Hike camp and cookout location for the last night.

More than 50 people joined us on our second annual Uwharrie Trail Thru-Hike! This year the thru-hike took place the last weekend in May, and though the first two nights brought rain showers, it did not dampen the spirits of the thru hikers. Daytime weather was beautiful, and views of the Uwharrie mountains, cool running springs, wood thrush singing in the forest, and good fellowship with friends old and new was reward enough for making the 40 mile trek. Thanks to years of conservation work, the full trail can now be hiked in its entirety. A new section over Little Long Mountain and King Mountain was a highlight for many attendees. We hope you will join us next year - May 28th through 31st 2015! More details and info coming soon!

2nd Annual Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend

This year's naturalist weekend brought out more than 50 people for hikes and kayaking at our unique 1300-acre Low Water Bridge preserve. A plethora of flora and fauna were spotted during the weekend, including scarlet tanagers, prothonotary warblers, woodcock, dwarf larkspur, rough green snake, pickeral frog, atamasco lilies, crayfish, eastern box turtles and many more. Our Saturday afternoon kayaking ended up as an adventure when a passing thunderstorm brought a bit of marble-sized hail our way, but we made it safely to our take-out and had a great story to tell. Many thanks to John Gerwin, curator of ornithology at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh for leading the event.



More than 50 people attended our Naturalist Weekend

Annual Meeting at Cooleemee Plantation



LandTrust staff thought it only fitting to have our annual meeting this spring, which marked the beginning of our 20th year of operation, at Cooleemee Plantation - the site of the first conservation easement donation to our organization. As with many of our spring events this year, rain was a challenge, but our staunch supporters braved the inclement weather to tour the historic house and grounds and learn about the conservation work completed last year. Thanks to Peter Hairston for hosting us at this beautiful property, and to all who support us in our efforts year after year to save the places we all love in the Piedmont. Here's to 20 years, 25,000 acres preserved, and many more to come!

Hitchcock Creek Blue Trail Paddle Trip



The LandTrust hosted our first ever canoe trip in Richmond County on October 19th on the Hitchcock Creek Blue Trail near the City of Rockingham. Nearly 50 friends joined us to paddle this beautiful recreational resource in our region. The weather and the water level were perfect, and the leaves had just begun to turn, making this a perfect fall paddle trip. Thanks to Boy Scout Troop 442 and leaders for providing canoes. The LandTrust has several conservation easements in Richmond County, a number of which are on the scenic and pristine waterway of Mountain Creek. Richmond County boasts a number of great paddling venues, and we plan to host a future outing again soon.

Upcoming Events

Uwharrie Trail Cookout & Autumn Leaves Hike - Sunday November 9th

On November 9th, instead of having a Uwharrie Trail workday as we typically do on the 2nd Saturday of each month, we will have a cookout and hike to celebrate the more than 1000 hours of volunteer work that has gone into restoring more than 8 miles of the historic Uwharrie Trail! We will meet at the Robbins Branch Trailhead at 1:00 pm and hike the approximately 6 mile loop around Hannah's Creek and Birkhead Trails. For those who would like a longer hike, a group will take the Camp 3 loop which adds another approximately 2 miles more. We will then caravan down to the newly protected McArthur Property, a future trailhead of the Uwharrie Trail, on High Pine Church Rd. Food will be provided, please RSVP to Crystal at crystal@landtrustcnc.org or 336-633-0143. Hope to see you there!



View from McArthur Property future trailhead for the Uwharrie Trail.

Boone's Cave Park Hike and Holiday Gathering, Sunday November 23rd

Join us as we hike through the rolling forest and wetlands of Boone's Cave Park on Sunday, November 23, 2013 and following the hike we will gather to celebrate the steadfast support of our LandTrust friends. This 100 acre park is located in Davidson County near Lexington. Forty-six acres of the park are designated as a Natural Heritage Site. We will meet at the picnic shelter at 2:00 p.m. for a guided hike led by Davidson County Outdoor Recreation Specialist, Sheila Zuccaro, starting with a tour of the cave rumored to have been used by the family of Daniel Boone who roamed this area in the mid 1700s. We'll walk near the Yadkin River water front to see the prized Eastern Cottonwood Tree that rises over 160 feet and also to an impressive Southern Red Oak that nearly ranks in the top ten for NC. We'll walk along the boardwalk, view a log cabin constructed in the 1740s style, and finish up by visiting the wetlands. This hike is suitable for all ages and is approximately 3 ½ miles long. Make sure to wear comfortable hiking shoes and apparel. After the hike we will meet back at the picnic shelter to enjoy warm apple cider and snacks. We'll also have a small fire to toast marshmallows and the fixings for s'mores! If you cannot attend the hike but still want to stop by for some fellowship, please do! The park closes at 5:00 p.m. Start your Thanksgiving week with a refreshing walk in the woods with friends. Directions: the park is 3.4 miles off NC Hwy 150 on Boone's Cave Road.

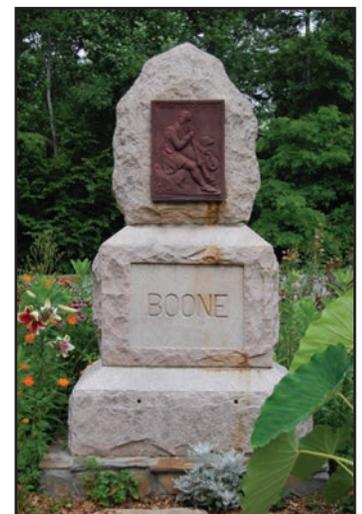


Photo by Dennis Brown.

Thanks to our Donors!

Your donations allow us to continue “Saving the Places You Love” in the Piedmont. The following are new or renewing members from January 1, 2014, through August 31, 2014. Every effort has been made to ensure names are correct. Should there be an error, or if you have questions or comments, please contact us at (704) 647-0302. Thanks for supporting The LandTrust!

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More Upcoming Events:

Uwharrie Trail Workday - Saturday, December 13th

Join us on Saturday December 13th as we continue our work on the Uwharrie Trail. For this last workday of the 2014 year, we will be assisting with the 3rd Eagle Scout Project on this section of trail. Life Scout Edward Teasley from Greensboro will be working on the section of trail on the McArthur Property. Keep up with updates on our website at www.landtrustcnc.org, or on Facebook in the group Uwharrie TrailBlazers.

New Year's Hike at Morrow Mountain State Park - Thursday, January 1st

What better way to start off the new year than a hike in the great outdoors? We will meet for this hike at the horse trailer parking lot and head east on Sugarloaf Mountain Trail to the Morrow Mountain Trail, one of our hike and paddle challenge hikes! This 5.4 mile hike is strenuous, but if you prefer you can do only the Sugarloaf Trail for a shorter hike. Please RSVP to Crystal at crystal@landtrustcnc.org.

Thanks to Our Summer Interns!



Associate Director Crystal Cockman, with interns Jessie Maynor, Jacob Crim, Abaviyah Levi (Shakira's relative), and Shakira Ibrahim enjoy the new put-in location on the Little River on Town of Troy land.



Staff and interns scope out the Hitchcock Creek Blue Trail for our upcoming October paddle. From left to right: Jacob Crim, Zoe Pu, Crystal Cockman, Shakira Ibrahim, Leeann Chen, and Erika Hansen.

This summer, The LandTrust was fortunate to have six fantastic summer interns from a variety of our state's great colleges and universities. Summer internships are a wonderful way for a small nonprofit organization to expand its programming and share its message with a new generation of conservationists. The LandTrust is grateful to the many partners who make funds available for these summer internship opportunities.

Thanks to the Stanback Internship Program, we had three summer interns from Duke University. Erika Hansen is a student at the Duke Nicholas School of the Environment, and she worked on environmental education and outreach this summer. One of her main projects was putting together the wonderful hike and paddle challenge described in more detail on Page 5 of this newsletter. Zhuoyun "Zoe" Pu is a student in the Master of Engineering Management Program at Duke University, and she assisted The LandTrust with wildlife survey work this summer. She helped John Gerwin, curator of ornithology at the NC Museum of Sciences in Raleigh, with bird and vegetation survey work this summer, and also orchestrated a volunteer nighthawk survey (for whippoorwills and chuck-wills-widows). Jacob Crim, an undergraduate student at Duke studying environmental science and policy, assisted with stewardship and management this summer. He monitored a number of properties and coordinated volunteer work days to control invasive species.

Thanks to funding from The Conservation Trust for North Carolina, The LandTrust was fortunate to host two Diversity Interns this summer. Shakira Ibrahim, originally from Charlotte, is an undergraduate Civil Engineering student at NC Agricultural and Technical University. If her name sounds familiar that is because she was also our intern last summer, and she enjoyed her time here so much that she came back this year to continue helping with our outreach and community engagement efforts. Leeann Chen, from Greensboro, is a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill studying Journalism and Mass Communication with an Advertising Specialization. She worked on an Ecotourism Planning Guide for the Uwharries and other marketing and outreach materials.

The Golden Leaf program provided funds for Jessica Maynor, a local Montgomery County native, to join us this summer. Jessie completed a conservation prioritization GIS analysis for us on Mountain Creek in Richmond County. This project will assist us in our conservation planning efforts in that watershed. All of our interns this summer also participated in various other outings, workshops, and events, and all six spent at least some time with us during the Uwharrie Trail Thru Hike (and Erika and Jake completed the full 40 mile thru hike!).

Summer internships are advertised from January to March on our website at www.landtrustcnc.org, if you know of students who may be interested.



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

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



Scarlet tanager spotted during our Uwharrie Naturalist Weekend in May



Montgomery County Communities in Schools camp visits our Low Water Bridge Preserve



Sunflowers in bloom at the protected Hoffner Farm in Rowan County

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