



# landscape

SAVING THE PLACES YOU LOVE SINCE 1994

FALL/WINTER 2016  
VOLUME 21 ISSUE 3



# Get Out There

**The Pardee & CMLC White Squirrel Hiking Challenge 4 launches with eight new hikes that take you up mountains, over streams, through forests and back. Pages 6-7**

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**Our Mission:** *Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy partners with landowners and organizations to protect land and water resources vital to our natural heritage and quality of life. Dedicated to saving the places you love, CMLC works to permanently conserve and actively care for an ever-growing regional network of locally and nationally significant farm, forest, park and natural lands.*





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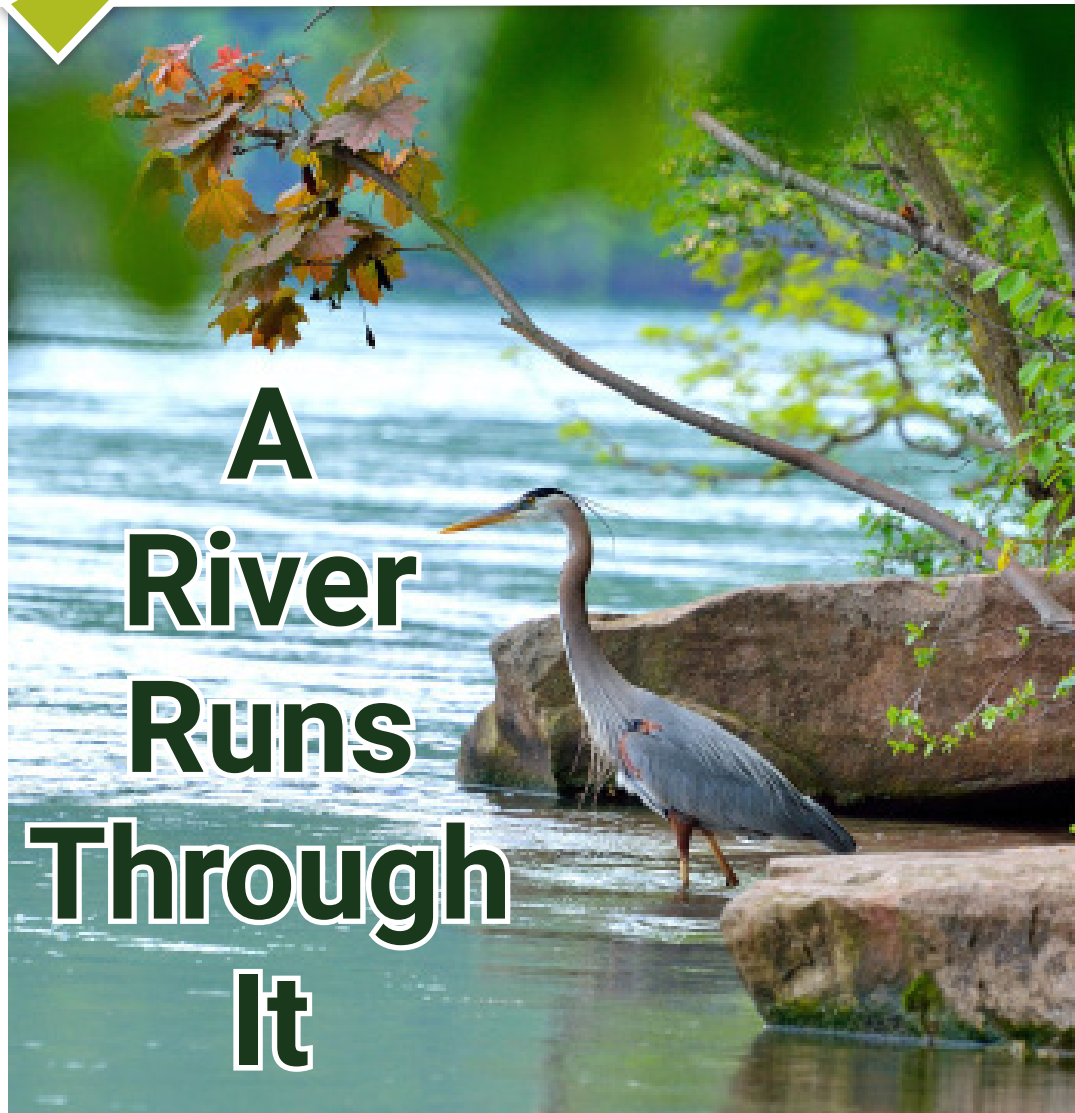
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*“Kayaking the Green River in my area is quiet with only the sounds of the rippling water over the shoals, the breeze, the birds and the critters.”*

*-Juanita Bruce*



## Growing up on the Green

**J**uanita Bruce pushes her kayak off the tree-covered banks of the Green River and takes a moment to soak it all in.

along the shore. She has entered a green oasis and her worries are carried away with the gentle current.

The three-mile stretch that she paddles is bursting with life. River cooter turtles dip into the water. Monarch butterflies flutter around. White-tailed deer bound

“Nature provides us with an overwhelming sense of awe, beauty, security and protection,” shares Juanita. Juanita was born and raised near the Green River at Lake Adger



July 1955: Juanita's baptismal service with the Mill Spring Baptist Church in the calm waters of the Green River

Dam. She has spent most of her 74 years exploring its wonders.

"I was baptized in the Green River. They don't do that much anymore," Juanita smiles. It's where her home is and where her heart is.

In the 1920s, Juanita's grandfather moved his family from South Carolina to become the first superintendent of the newly built Lake Adger Dam and Duke Turner Shoals power plant. Her father and uncles made their livelihood at the plant as well. "Dad met my mom, a local girl, and made our home by the river," reflects Juanita.

## Saving the Land

In April 2016, CMLC partnered with Polk County Community Foundation to acquire 586 acres along the Green River, ensuring people like Juanita have a peaceful place to retreat and local wildlife have a safe place to call home.

The 586-acre property is separated into two tracts. CMLC protects a 155-acre tract located upstream of South Wilson Hill Road and a second 431-acre tract

located downstream of South Wilson Hill Road was purchased by Community Green LLC, a subsidiary of the Polk County Community Foundation.

We were able to purchase the smaller tract with a generous \$225,000 gift from Fred and Alice Stanback of Salisbury and a \$225,000 loan from the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. CMLC has until April 2017 to pay off the loan and is seeking contributions to permanently secure the tract for conservation.

## Every Bit Counts

"We could never be more grateful for the substantial gifts made by our major donors and partners," thanks Lynn Killian, CMLC Development Director. "But, no project is ever completed without the enormous generosity of an army of loyal, everyday conservation donors. The small gifts of many are just as critical to each conservation success."

Combined, the tracts contain more than three miles of spectacular riverside frontage. It's a beautifully dense and

heavily forested area with south-facing bluffs steeply rising up from the banks.

"Saving lands and waters from development means 'nature's own' can be shared by the masses as opposed to only a few," says Juanita. "CMLC helps us connect to nature by creating trails leading us into the forest and protecting waters leading us down the valley."

Over the years, Juanita's family enjoyed tubing the river and when kayaks became popular, she opted for their speed, control and efficiency. "Outdoor activities give us great opportunities to enjoy the God-given beauty of nature," shares Juanita. "It gives us great exercise, provides challenges to 'try our wings' and see what we can accomplish."

## A Place for Life to Thrive

The property boasts healthy populations of hemlocks—a rarity in Western North Carolina—as the invasive hemlock woolly adelgid has taken its toll across our region. The woolly adelgid is native to China and Japan, where hemlock trees possess immunity. Most hemlocks throughout the world are protected by some degree of resistance in their native ranges. Here, with no natural predators, the trees lack

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Juanita finds herself at peace kayaking down the Green River



*“It’s as important to protect our lands and waters for future generations as it is for the current generation—an ongoing source of livelihood, enjoyment, recreation, appreciation and education. Thank goodness CMLC works to save these awe-inspiring places.”*

*-Juanita Bruce*

any defense. Without natural predators, the adelgids take over.

Three rare plant species, whorled horsehair, ashy-leaved hydrangea and climbing milkvine, also prosper in the area. Almost the entire 586 acres are second and third-growth forest and will provide a stronghold for plants and animals to adapt even as the climate changes.

### Exploring Nature’s Gifts

“Kayaking the Green River in my area is quiet with only the sounds of the rippling water over the shoals, the breeze, the

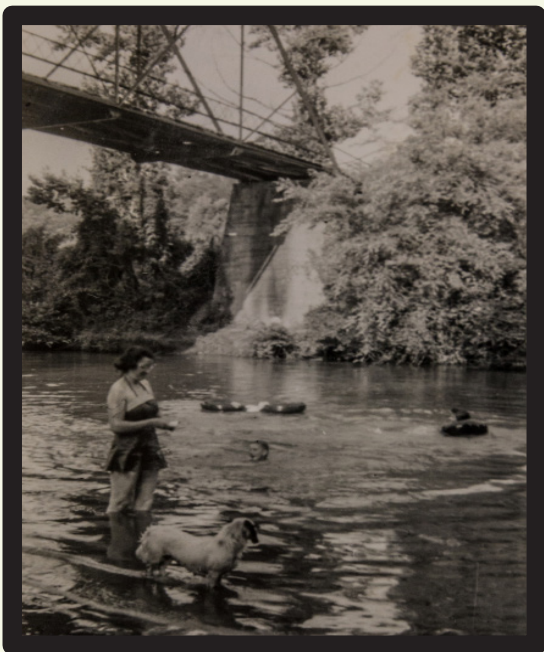
birds and the critters,” says Juanita. “The views are saturated with overhanging trees, boulders, farmlands, dense forests... There are many flowering plants, untouched, unmarred.”

The land protected by CMLC keeps those peaceful views along the river intact. We see the 155 acres as a good site for a potential future rest stop on a paddle trail that could be created along the Green River. There is legal access to South Wilson Hill Road via private roads that pass through a subdivision.

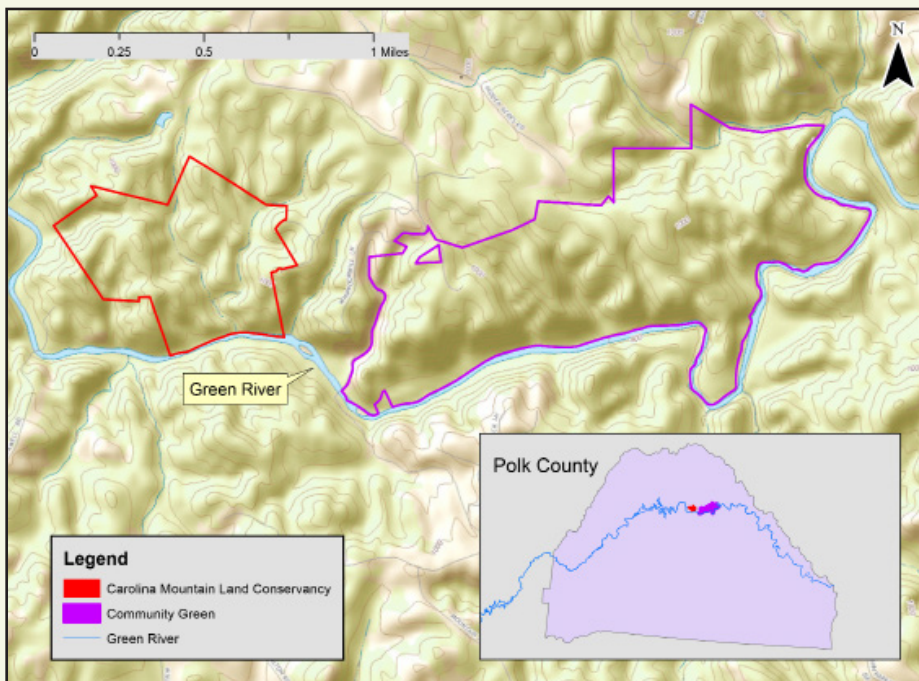
CMLC plans to partner with Pacolet Area Conservancy, which has a strong

presence in Polk County, to help manage the property and assist with future guided hikes and outings. Recent kayaking has stopped short of the Wilson Bridge due to lack of a safe exit. Hopes are high this acquisition will provide a safe experience for hikers, birders, photographers and paddlers alike.

With a few easy strokes Juanita is off, drifting into a place of peace and serenity. “I love the heron leading me down the river, stopping to wait on me before flying on,” she calls over her shoulder. “This is home to me. I love it all.”



June 1954: An evening swim in the Green River



**WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CMLC’S PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS?**



**WE’RE NOW ON INSTAGRAM!**

Follow us at: [carolinamtnlandconservancy](https://www.instagram.com/carolinamtnlandconservancy) for more updates and stunning images of our lands!

CMLC's  
16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# CONSERVATION CELEBRATION

AUGUST 27<sup>TH</sup>  
2016



## 2016 SUCCESSES



362 Guests



\$95,756 Gross Income



37% Net Increase



29 Volunteers



114 Auction Items



486 Photos Snapped

## THANKS TO OUR INDIVIDUAL SPONSORS & AUCTION DONORS:

### SCARLET OAK: \$2,000

Todd & Melinda Morse

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Thank you to **EVERYONE** for making our Celebration a grand success!





# Complete 8 Hikes Get Free Gear Save Land

The Pardee & CMLC White Squirrel Hiking Challenge 4 introduces eight new hikes that take you and your friends and family out on CMLC conserved lands—up mountains, over streams, through forests and back. There is something for everyone, from gentle strolls to more strenuous climbs. Enjoy expansive views, blooming wildflowers, tumbling waterfalls and hallowed historical grounds while staying active, getting some fresh air and experiencing the protected lands you make possible.

**TAKE THE CHALLENGE:**  
[carolinamountain.org/hc4](http://carolinamountain.org/hc4)



## BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN

Climb the most iconic and scenic peak in Henderson County to enjoy a 360° view from the summit meadow.

**DISTANCE:** 2 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate



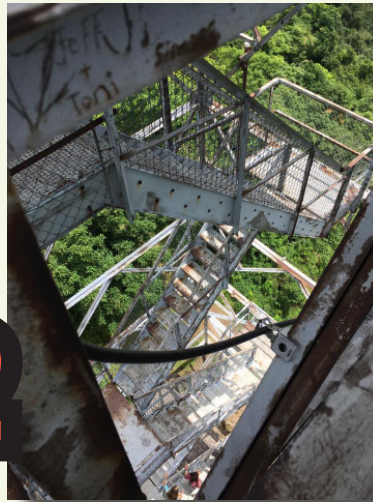
Photo: ncwaterfalls.com

## GRASSY CREEK FALLS

Escape the crowds by hiking to DuPont's beautiful, lesser-known waterfall.

**DISTANCE:** 2.6 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate

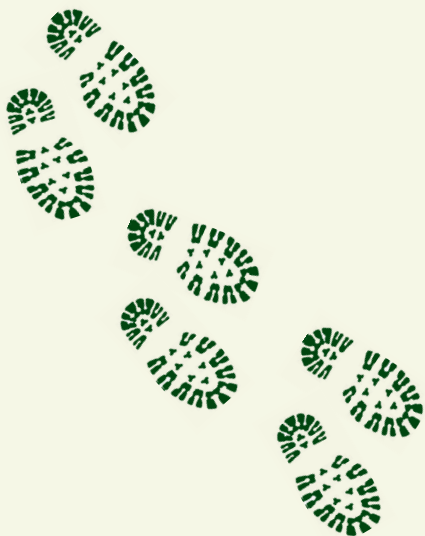


## FRYPAN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT TOWER

Owned by the US Forest Service, the breathtaking vantage point from this historic fire lookout near the Blue Ridge Parkway provides a birds-eye view of thousands of acres of CMLC-conserved land.

**DISTANCE:** 1.4 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate



## OPTION 2: LIT

Climb beyond V Bearwallow on

newest trail in t

**DISTANCE:** 5.8

**DIFFICULTY:** S





4

**THE PARK AT FLAT ROCK**

Walk, run or bike the loop trail in Flat Rock's new village park.

**DISTANCE:** 1.5 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy



5

**WILDCAT ROCK**

Ascend CMLC's newest trail in the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge, beyond 100-foot Little Bearwallow Falls, to an expansive view atop a scenic rock outcropping.

**DISTANCE:** 3.8 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Strenuous



3



Photo: Jeff Rich, courtesy of MountainTrue

8.1

**OPTION 1: FRENCH BROAD RIVER PADDLE**

Float or paddle the venerable French Broad River, starting or finishing at the new CMLC-facilitated Horse Shoe River Access Park.

**DISTANCE:** 3.8 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate



6

**HEADWATERS STATE FOREST**

Take an adventure along the Foothills Trail in NC's newest state forest to a stunning, but secret, mountain vista.

**DISTANCE:** 5.2 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Strenuous



8.2



7



**RHODODENDRON LAKE NATURE PARK**

An easy "walk in the park" circumnavigates historic Rhododendron Lake in Laurel Park, showcasing a restored stream.

**DISTANCE:** 0.5 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy



**LITTLE BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN**

From Wildcat Rock to the top of Little Bearwallow Mountain, the second part of CMLC's trail in the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge.

**DISTANCE:** 3.8 miles round-trip

**DIFFICULTY:** Strenuous



# YOUR LEGACY MATTERS

*"If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it."*  
- Lyndon B. Johnson



Joining CMLC's Land Legacy League with a planned gift will help sustain conservation efforts for generations to come. CMLC offers a variety of convenient giving options such as a simple bequest in your will or a beneficiary designation in a retirement account or life insurance policy. Please let us know if you have included CMLC in your charitable giving estate plans so that we may thank you during your lifetime.

FOR MORE INFO ON JOINING CMLC'S **LAND LEGACY LEAGUE** CONTACT:  
Lynn Killian | Development Director  
828.697.5777, ext. 202  
lynn@carolinamountain.org

## *Yellow Lady Slipper Volunteer:* **CATHY COOPER**



"If it weren't for CMLC, I would still be searching," admits Cathy Cooper. "CMLC changed my life." Cathy wanted to find like-minded people who share her passion for the outdoors. Though, speaking with Cathy, it's hard to imagine anyone as passionate about nature as she is.

Cathy started volunteering with CMLC last winter, but her love affair with nature is a much longer relationship. She has been hiking Bearwallow for nearly 40 years. Since the trail improvements in 2010, she and her shepherd mix, Maddie, go up every single day.

Nothing holds Cathy back. She is typically one of the few women attending Trail Crew days and doesn't mind the hard work, even if she jokes about being trusted to make gravel. Most people Cathy interacts with don't fully grasp her fascination with spending as much time as possible in the great outdoors. She shares, with a laugh, that she is thankful the folks at CMLC understand.

When Cathy is not volunteering with CMLC—she can still be found outdoors—mountain biking and hiking. She hopes more people become inspired to get outside.

"Keep the Earth beautiful and go outside every chance you get, because it is ever-changing," advises Cathy. Now, it's up to us to discover the same passion Cathy has found with CMLC.



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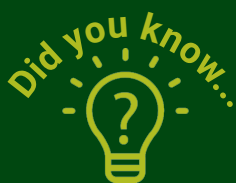
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# WELCOME 2016-2017 AMERICORPS PROJECT CONSERVE MEMBERS!



**Five new AmeriCorps Project Conserve members join CMLC to connect people from all walks of life to our treasured lands and to keep those lands healthy and thriving!**

*LEFT TO RIGHT: KATE LIS, JONATHAN FELDMAN, ADRIENNE BROWN, JEN ADAMS AND MADISON OLLE WILL EACH SERVE 1,700 HOURS OVER THE NEXT 11 MONTHS.*



AmeriCorps Project Conserve, an initiative of CMLC, formed in 2004 in response to growing conservation needs in WNC. This year, Project Conserve placed 32 dedicated AmeriCorps members with 18 local environmental non-profits to increase community understanding of conservation and the environment and create sustainable improvements to at-risk ecosystems in our communities.

## NEW CMLC BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS

22 Board Trustees offer their passion and expertise to CMLC.

We are ever grateful for their dedication and guidance.



MIKE EGAN



GENIEN CARLSON



GREGORY GREINER



# COMING SOON TO A FOREST NEAR YOU

Projected to open in 2018, **Headwaters State Forest** will complete a chain of protected public lands spanning nearly one million acres! The forest contains the East Fork of the French Broad River Headwaters (for which it is named), making it an important area to protect fresh, clean water.

Land acquisition for the state forest began in 2009, when landowner and former congressman Charles Taylor approached CMLC. What resulted was a multi-party partnership dedicated to protecting nearly 8,000 acres of land in Transylvania County. **After the acquisition of another 689.67 acres in August 2016, the project has reached 70% completion.**

Headwaters State Forest will be used to exemplify the best forest stewardship practices, which foster environmental, social and economic benefits. Its main uses include forestry and recreation, but a portion of the area will be used as a wildlife refuge.

Preview what the forest has to offer! A portion of the Foothills Trail, which runs along the North/South Carolina border, cuts through the future state forest. **Hike a 5.2-mile out and back to a scenic view point in the Pardee & CMLC White Squirrel Hiking Challenge 4!**

Learn more about the forest at [eastforkheadwaters.com](http://eastforkheadwaters.com).



**Mountain Bogs at Headwaters State Forest**

Mountain bogs located on the protected land within Headwaters State Forest will be included in the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Mountain Bogs National Wildlife Refuge. These bogs are an important and rapidly vanishing habitat. Mountain bogs are considered to be biodiversity hot spots and are being impacted by the negative effects of climate change.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**November**

**25**  
**Friday**  
**#OPTOUTSIDE**  
Join CMLC and REI to get outside on Black Friday! Gather up your family, hit the trail and make sure to post a picture with #OptOutside on the CMLC Facebook page. Skip the crowded malls and enjoy the great outdoors!

**December**

**13**  
**Tuesday**  
**4:30-6:30pm**  
**CMLC HOLIDAY DROP-IN BURNTSHIRT VINEYARDS**  
Members enjoy a cozy holiday party as we celebrate and thank YOU for saving our beautiful lands and waters!

**April**

**23**  
**Sunday**  
**3:30-6pm**  
**LAND LOVERS PICNIC CAMP PINNACLE**  
Honoring CMLC's 2017 conservation landowners and dedicated volunteers.

**August**




**31**  
**Saturday**  
**LAST CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN 2016!**  
Your tax-deductible, year-end contribution to CMLC protects the reasons you love it here.



**26**  
**Saturday**  
**CMLC'S 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONSERVATION CELEBRATION**  
**GRAND HIGHLANDS AT BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN**  
An evening with friends that share a deep love for our irreplaceable mountains.



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