



# landscape

SAVING THE PLACES YOU LOVE AND NEED SINCE 1994

SUMMER 2016  
VOLUME 21 ISSUE 2

## LEARNING FROM THE LAND



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**Our Mission** *Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy is dedicated to protecting and stewarding land and water resources vital to our natural heritage and quality of life and to fostering appreciation and understanding of the natural world.*







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COVER PHOTOS - TOP:  
 GRASSY CREEK CASCADES - PHOTO BY GORDON TUTOR  
 BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT: MUDDY SNEAKERS  
 BOTTOM CENTER: PHOTO BY DANIELE ALBERT

“CMLC always depends on the cooperation and support of our landowner partners; the sisters of the Community of the Transfiguration are some of the most heartfelt and genuine with whom we’ve had the pleasure to work.”

*From the Executive Director*

Although CMLC has conserved more than 30,000 acres at more than 170 sites, there are certain conservation projects in our history that stand out as milestones—projects that permanently affect CMLC and how we work. Some of these milestones include: the 1996 conservation of the 600-acre Florence Nature Preserve, our first and largest land donation to date; the donation of our first conservation easement on the Humphrey Farm in Mills River that same year; the 2005 purchase and transfer of the 1,568-acre World’s Edge tract that led to the creation of Chimney Rock State Park; the 2007 acquisition of the 2,600-acre conservation easement at Green River Preserve summer camp; and the 2009 initiation of a multi-year effort to protect 8,000 acres in Transylvania County, now slated to become Headwaters State Forest.

Our latest milestone project was the conservation of 410 acres in Bat Cave in partnership with the Community of the Transfiguration, an order of Episcopal nuns, to create the Hickory Nut Gorge Teaching and Research Reserve (TARR). CMLC board and staff are excited by the opportunities TARR offers to advance an element of our mission we have not fully emphasized until now: *to foster appreciation and understanding of the natural world.*

CMLC always depends on the cooperation and support of our landowner partners; the sisters of the Community of the Transfiguration are some of the most heartfelt and genuine with whom we’ve had the pleasure to work.

“The aspect of the property that always touches me deeply is the silence of the mountains, the song of the river and



KIERAN ROE

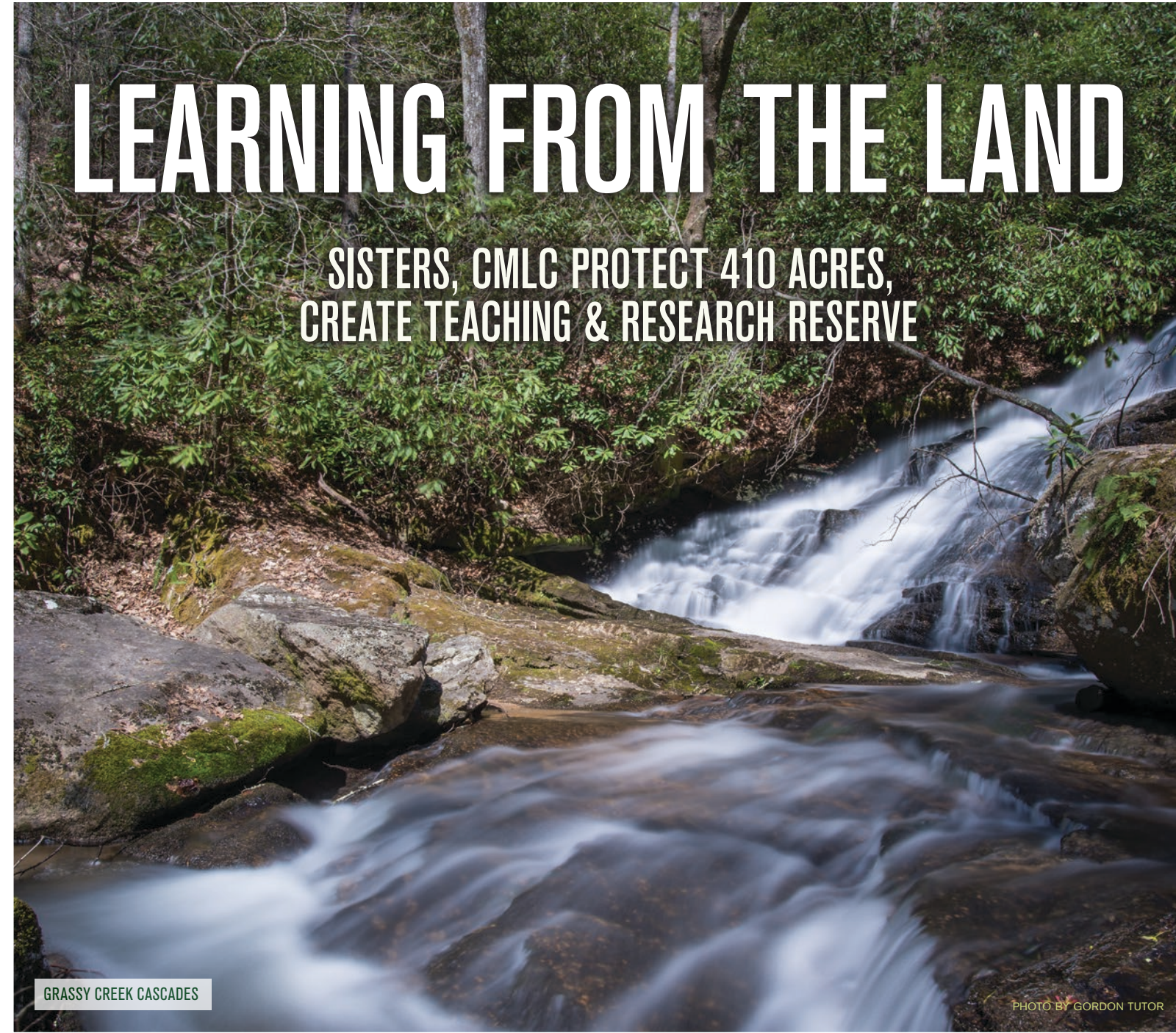
the tree frogs in the evenings,” states Sister Teresa M. Martin, Superior of the Community of the Transfiguration. “This beautiful and pristine land has been and continues to be a great gift to us. Above all, we want to see it protected and gently used in a way that will honor it and will give back to the larger community.”

CMLC is grateful to the sisters and to many other partners and contributors who have made possible this latest milestone of conservation within our region.

Kieran Roe | Executive Director

# LEARNING FROM THE LAND

**SISTERS, CMLC PROTECT 410 ACRES,  
 CREATE TEACHING & RESEARCH RESERVE**



GRASSY CREEK CASCADES

PHOTO BY GORDON TUTOR

**This is the story of an order of Episcopal nuns, a remote corner of southern Appalachia, and a commitment to teaching young minds. Bridging the suburbs of Cincinnati, Ohio, to a quiet hollow in Bat Cave, the story began more than a century ago. And now it will go on forever.**

“The Sisters were seeking a place to get away and recharge, so with some relatives in this area they decided to come down to western North Carolina,” said Sister Teresa Martin, Superior of the Community of the Transfiguration. That was in 1901. Just three years earlier, Mother Eva Lee Matthews and Sister Beatrice Henderson founded

the Community of the Transfiguration in Cincinnati. The women’s ministry focused on working with mothers and children in the inner city in an effort to help them survive the rigors of urban life at the turn of the 20th century.

“Those first few years were terribly stressful, as you can imagine,” she said. “So they

**“The land will be utilized as a multi-discipline outdoor classroom for the use of students and researchers from local schools, colleges, and other educational programs.”**



“Right from the start, our ministry has focused on education of the children.”  
-Sister Teresa



COMMUNITY OF THE TRANSFIGURATION  
SISTERS JEAN GABRIEL, TERESA,  
ELEANOR, & ANNE



PHOTO BY DANIELE ALBERT

needed a place where they could go to be rejuvenated.”

The two Sisters enjoyed three weeks in the shadow of Chimney Rock at the Esmeralda Inn. So entranced by the region's natural beauty, they began to look for property in the area to which they could return in the coming years.

“They found an old farmhouse off of Highway 9 and rented it for \$25 a year,”

said Sister Teresa. While the home was charming, it was the surrounding landscape that was truly revitalizing. Tucked between the Rocky Broad River and the steep slopes of the Hickory Nut Gorge, the stunning natural beauty was exactly what they were seeking to soothe their spirits.

“They kept coming down for rejuvenation, as did other sisters who joined the order.” After a few years, they purchased

the house and several acres of land surrounding it. “They began bringing children down from Cincinnati to give them an experience out of the city.”

**HELPING THE COMMUNITY THEN**

“Sister Beatrice, the second Superior of the Community of the Transfiguration, had a special passion for the mountains and the mountain people,” said Sister Teresa. “Right from the start, she began having

wonderful relationships with the people living in the mountains.”

During the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, Sister Beatrice and the order began buying land from local residents who were at risk of losing their property due to financial hardship.

“She wanted to give them some substance to live on. That’s how we ended up with how many acres we did—more than 400.”

These days, the Sisters make the journey from Cincinnati to Bat Cave with less frequency. But their connection to their beloved mountain land remains as strong now as it was a century ago, as does their yearning to give back to the local community.

Worried about their long-term ability to care for their land, members of the Community of the Transfiguration began discussions with Tom Fanslow, Land Protection Director at Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy (CMLC), in 2008.

“We knew we wanted to keep it from development. We wanted it to stay as pristine as possible,” explained Sister Teresa.

**A LONG ENGAGEMENT**

Figuring out exactly how to do that, while also remaining true to the order’s values, proved to be a lengthy process. But it was more than worthwhile.

“There is a folkloric aspect to it. Some of our projects, like this one, take a very long time. You just have to have patience. If you do, good things will happen,” said Fanslow.

“Tom helped us figure out what we wanted to do to protect this property, to envision the potential and possibilities,” said Sister Teresa. “It was a long process and we discussed a lot of ideas.”

Nearly a decade after the first conversation, their collective vision was finally realized when the Community of the Transfiguration placed 410 acres into a permanent conservation easement with CMLC.

Hosting more than five miles of water resources—including two miles of the Rocky Broad River and several major waterfalls—and teeming with natural heritage, such as cliffs, rock outcroppings, and rare flora and fauna, the tract had long been identified as the conservancy’s highest conservation priority in the Upper Broad River watershed.

Now permanently protected, the property will forever safeguard clean water, provide harbor for many plant and animal species, and preserve scenic views within the Hickory Nut Gorge.

The project was made possible with funding from the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund as well as generous private donations, including contributions from the Community of the Transfiguration.

“There were a lot of bumps in the road to get here, but it has been a joy and privilege to be part of this wonderful organization,” said Sister Teresa. “We [and CMLC] are kind of married to each other now, but it was a long engagement.”

**HELPING THE COMMUNITY NOW, AND FOREVER**

But conservation of the Sisters’ land is only one half of the story.

“Right from the start, our ministry has focused on education of the children,” explained Sister Teresa.

In addition to the protection of the property’s abundant natural resources, Fanslow understood that the order desired the land to be used in a way that supports its mission of education and service.

To achieve that mission, the Community of the Transfiguration conveyed ownership of 368 acres of the now protected property to CMLC to establish the Hickory Nut Gorge Teaching and Research Reserve, continuing the Sisters’ legacy of education.

The land will be utilized as a multi-discipline outdoor classroom for students

and researchers from local schools, colleges, and other educational programs.

Currently, Warren Wilson College faculty are instructing students on the tract. Dr. J.J. Apodaca and his students have used the property to gather data for his work on the genetics of the green salamander (*Aeneus aneides*), which is endangered in North Carolina.

Muddy Sneakers and Lake Lure Classical Academy have also expressed interest in hosting students at the new teaching and research reserve in the near future.

Said Fanslow, “the potential for how this project can give back, not just in intrinsic conservation value, but to educate the next generation, is immense.”

“It is wonderful to be able to find this use for it. We still have a great love for the community,” said Sister Teresa. “Our roots here in the mountains are deep.”

Now, and forever, those roots will hold tightly to their cherished land—and keep growing the minds of generations seeking to learn from it.



PHOTO BY OWEN CARSON

“The potential for how this project can give back, not just in conservation value, but to educate the next generation, is immense.” –Tom Fanslow



# CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY'S 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONSERVATION CELEBRATION



**JOIN US** as we celebrate another year of conservation! This year, we celebrate again at Grand Highlands at Bearwallow Mountain. Bearwallow Mountain is a treasured CMLC-conserved property. Experience the sweeping views from Bearwallow Mountain as you enjoy the company of fellow conservationists. Proceeds support CMLC's work in your community, conserving the farms, forests, parks, mountains, streams, and scenic views that make our region special.

## FEATURES:

- Guided pre-celebration hike
- Live drawing for our Trip Raffle
- Live music by Whitewater Bluegrass Company
- Local cuisine by Chef Michael
- Live and Silent Auctions

## DATE AND LOCATION:

Saturday, August 27th 4:00-8:00 pm  
Grand Highlands at Bearwallow Mountain Lodge  
Hendersonville, NC

## RESERVATIONS:

\$90 per person

Three ways to reserve:

Securely online at:  
[carolinamountain.org/conservation\\_celebration](http://carolinamountain.org/conservation_celebration)

Call 828-697-5777

Mail your check to CMLC with a note  
requesting attendance to:  
847 Case Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792



# TRIP RAFFLE

## THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

Buy a raffle ticket for our Annual Trip Raffle and support conservation! The winner may choose from:

- 1. COSTA RICA** An 8 day/7 night stay in Costa Rica for two. Arrive in San Jose and drive up the mountains to Chayote Lodge where for 3 nights you will be treated to a unique blend of authentic Costa Rican lifestyle and culture. Several recreational options are available, including hiking to beautiful Toto Waterfall or experiencing Naranjo—home of Costa Rica's best coffee plantations. Next, you will be transported to the Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort for the next 4 nights. You will be treated to the elegant Rainforest Suite where indoor luxury blends with outdoor enchantment.



- 2. SANTA FE** A 5 day/4 night stay for two at the award-winning Four Seasons Rancho Encantando Resort in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Enjoy the luxury of your Patio Casita, which includes an indoor wood-burning fireplace and a private terrace with stunning views. This property is serene, relaxing and located at the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains with many resort amenities. Activities include hiking, horseback riding, skiing, white water rafting, fly fishing, mountain biking, hot air ballooning, historical attractions, and more!



- 3. TRIP OF YOUR CHOICE** Just imagine the possibilities! Customize the trip of your choice with travel expert Tamsin Allpress of Tamsin & Cooke, LLC. Our 2014 trip raffle winner decided to use the raffle prize to fulfill a lifelong dream to take his family to Scotland. He told Tamsin that without this prize, he may never have been able to do it. "I can't tell you how grateful we are for all your help and how excited we are about making the trip." The raffle prize is a \$3,000 credit toward the trip of your choice.



**RAFFLE TICKETS ARE \$100 EACH;  
ONLY 150 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD.**

Drawing will be held on August 27th  
at the Conservation Celebration.  
You need not be present to win.

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION  
AND COMPLETE  
RAFFLE TERMS,  
PLEASE VISIT

[carolinamountain.org/raffle](http://carolinamountain.org/raffle)





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"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." ~ Native American Proverb



# YOUR LEGACY MATTERS

Planned giving helps CMLC expand conservation of our land, water, and cultural resources—creating a lasting gift to future generations.

Joining CMLC's Land Legacy League with a planned gift will help sustain conservation efforts for many years 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 \*202 | lynn@carolinamountain.org

## Yellow Lady Slipper Volunteer

# JORDAN LUFF

The desire to make "positive, restorative change in our ecosystems" drives Jordan Luff in everything that he does. Jordan began volunteering for CMLC last year after a stewardship workday with his Haywood Community College natural resources class. For Jordan, this experience was a game changer, because he quickly became one of our most dependable volunteers out in the field. Every time he "enters the forest with CMLC," Jordan is "motivated by the difference that is made; the fruit of our efforts is the most rewarding feeling." In his time with CMLC, Jordan has definitely been a part of some great efforts.

With the guidance of David Lee, Natural Resources Manager, and Jack Henderson, AmeriCorps Stewardship Associate, Jordan was able to take on an independent project—tackling the non-

native invasive Reed Canary Grass at Lewis Creek Nature Preserve. To Jordan, non-native invasive species are "one of the most serious ecological issues" in our region and in the world, and he is doing his part to protect and restore our region's natural lands, not only at Lewis Creek, but through his regular attendance at other stewardship workdays.

Jordan relocated from Atlanta to western North Carolina with his family in 2002 and has been involved in outdoor and environmental activities ever since. In addition to being an outdoorsman, Jordan is a talented musician whose band just returned from a tour in Europe. In August, he is leaving WNC to pursue his Bachelors, and later his Masters, in Forestry at NC State. We will miss him and his constant enthusiasm and eagerness, but we wish him the best in his future. Thank you, Jordan!



We are proud to present Jordan Luff with our Yellow Lady Slipper Award in appreciation of his dedicated service and commitment to CMLC.



# INSPIRING YOUTH THROUGH EDUCATION— ENVIRONMENTAL FUN WITH THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

In the spring of 2016, CMLC and AmeriCorps Project Conserve continued the previous year's involvement with the Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County by launching an expanded program—a 14-week-long environmental education program at the Boys and Girls Clubs in Henderson and Transylvania Counties. Each week, over sixty 1st and 4th grade students learned about a different aspect of the environment through a lesson and

activity created just for them. CMLC AmeriCorps Project Conserve members Corinne Fretwell and Ericka Berg, along with CMLC Environmental Education Intern Pearl Coogler of UNC-Asheville, created lessons and presented the program. Some of the weekly lessons included learning about pollinators, recycling, camouflage, compost, natural resources, nature journaling, and responsible land use.

The program's aim is to foster a love of the land through fun and educational experiences and to lead our next generation into the world of conservation; it is our hope that we can encourage respect for our natural resources and inspire our youth to join us in responsible stewardship of our beautiful lands. CMLC and its AmeriCorps Project Conserve members are excited to continue this program next spring in 2017!



# NEW FRENCH BROAD RIVER ACCESS PARK

Exciting work is currently underway—in 2014, CMLC facilitated the donation of an acre and a half of land for a public river access point to be built off of US 64 in Horse Shoe. This new access point is one of two official river accesses along the French Broad River in Henderson County and will facilitate access to the river for a multitude of recreational activities. The main idea behind this project is that if you give people an opportunity to experience the river firsthand, their appreciation for the natural resource will grow and foster a greater sense of responsibility. The property is currently being developed with parking, a floating dock, and a boat ramp. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening is planned for July 2016.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2016

## July August September September

**17**  
**Sunday**  
**CMLC GUIDED HIKE: SUNSET AND FULL MOON HIKE**  
 Bearwallow Mountain Hike with us to CMLC-conserved Bearwallow Mountain for a special celestial show.

**17**  
**Wednesday**  
**CMLC GUIDED MEMBERS ONLY HIKE: GET TO KNOW THE HEADWATERS STATE FOREST TOUR**  
 Tour North Carolina's newest state forest with CMLC's Peter Barr and learn about this land's journey into conservation and public ownership.

**3**  
**Saturday**  
**PARDEE & CMLC WHITE SQUIRREL HIKING CHALLENGE 4 RELEASE**  
 Get outside, stay healthy, and explore the best of our protected natural treasures. Begin your quest to complete a new lineup of 8 hikes on CMLC-conserved lands with the Pardee & CMLC White Squirrel Hiking Challenge 4!

**10**  
**Saturday**  
**PARDEE & CMLC WHITE SQUIRREL HIKING CHALLENGE 4 KICK-OFF!**  
 Join Pardee and CMLC to celebrate the kick-off of White Squirrel Hiking Challenge 4 with a guided hike up to the top of Bearwallow Mountain.

PHOTO BY GORDON TUTOR

**22**  
**Friday**  
**VOLUNTEER WORK DAY:**  
 Florence Nature Preserve Remove non-native invasive plants with application of aquatic-safe herbicide and hand pulling to help preserve the biodiversity of the Hickory Nut Gorge.

**27**  
**Saturday**  
**GRAND HIGHLANDS AT BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN**  
 CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY'S 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONSERVATION CELEBRATION

**PARDEE & CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY HIKING CHALLENGE**

**December**

**13**  
**Tuesday**  
**CMLC HOLIDAY DROP-IN**  
 Enjoy a cozy holiday party celebrating each other as friends and conservation enthusiasts.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CMLC EVENTS & HIKES VISIT:**  
**carolinamountain.org**





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CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY'S  
16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
CONSERVATION  
CELEBRATION

Saturday, August 27th  
Grand Highlands at Bearwallow Mountain  
Hendersonville, NC

PHOTO BY GORDON TUTOR



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