



# landscape

SAVING THE PLACES YOU LOVE SINCE 1994

WINTER 2010  
VOLUME 15 ISSUE 3

## BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN: A LONG-RANGE VIEW

BY **PETER BARR** CMLC LANDOWNER INFORMATION ASSOCIATE

Mountains upon mountains dominate the horizon. Distant peaks rise like islands from a tranquil sea of clouds. A cool breeze sweeps across the grassy meadow. The thin, crisp air heightens your senses. You feel like you can see forever.

The spectacular view from the summit of Bearwallow Mountain has been sought by visitors for generations. Thanks to the vision of the Barnwell family and the dedicated work of Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, the surreal experience from this mountaintop will be enjoyed by countless generations to come.

In 2009, the Barnwell family of Edneyville chose to conserve 81 acres of property atop their beloved mountain. Now, CMLC is awaiting news on grant proposals that if successful will allow us to conserve an additional 86 acres near Bearwallow's summit.

Ultimately, CMLC has an option with the landowners that will allow the perpetual protection of more than 470 acres surrounding the mountaintop from future development. Such a tract "comprises one of the largest unprotected, undeveloped areas in Henderson County," according to Tom Fanslow, CMLC's Land Protection Director.

Rising to an elevation of 4,232 feet, Bearwallow Mountain stands as one of the highest peaks in eastern Henderson County. Marking the northwestern end of Hickory Nut Gorge, it is most identifiable as the mountain dominating the western view from Lake Lure. In fact, the iconic crest of Bearwallow is visible all the way from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Chimney Rock State Park, a span that includes four counties.

A grassy bald occupies the summit of Bearwallow Mountain enabling a 360-degree view that includes Hickory Nut Gorge, Mt. Mitchell and the Black Mountains, and Shining Rock and the Great Balsam Mountains. Both downtown Hendersonville and the skyline of Asheville are visible from the summit, as are the flatlands of South Carolina. The view from Bearwallow Mountain is so extensive that the North Carolina Forest Service erected a lookout tower on its summit for the spotting of distant forest fires.

In addition to protecting its land, CMLC wants the beauty of Bearwallow Mountain and its stunning views to be accessible for everyone to enjoy. Along with the conservation easement, CMLC purchased a right-of-way for a mile long hiking trail to the summit. REI contributed a generous grant for the trail's construction, which began with a National Trail Days work project last summer. To build the trail, CMLC is partnering with the Carolina Mountain Club and volunteers from Warren Wilson College and Asheville Green Opportunities. Thus far, about one half of the trail's length has been dug; its completion is planned for 2011. CMLC is seeking volunteers for the formation of a trail crew to finish the trail's construction and regularly maintain it.

A hiking trail to the top of Bearwallow Mountain will one day become a segment of the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail, a loop that will connect Bearwallow to CMLC's Florence Preserve to the north. It is one of several budding



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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. As an effective nonprofit organization 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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## From the Executive Director

There is no place I would rather be than right here in western North Carolina watching our Southern Appalachian mountains transform into a vibrant palette of autumn colors. Yet, for a few days in late September I found myself promoting conservation in a very different setting...the marbled corridors of power in Washington D.C.

I was there speaking to staff of our region's congressional representatives about the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which was created by Congress in 1965. The LWCF Act designated that a portion of receipts from offshore oil and gas leases be placed annually into a fund for federal, state and local conservation. For 45 years LWCF has underwritten the development of more than 37,000 park and recreation projects around the country and has contributed to the creation and maintenance of state, local, and national parks and forests. Unfortunately, LWCF has only twice been funded at its full authorized annual budget level during its 45 year existence.



In promoting LWCF, I made our congressional offices aware of key CMLC conservation projects that protect and maintain water quality and wildlife habitat near the Pisgah National Forest – land that we hope to conserve with the support of LWCF funding in the coming year.

Much of CMLC's success in conserving our region's farm, forest and natural land is largely attributed to the strong support of our local community and our personal relationships with local landowners. In addition to these partnerships, state and federal programs are paramount in facilitating effective voluntary conservation at the grass roots level – in western North Carolina and around the country.

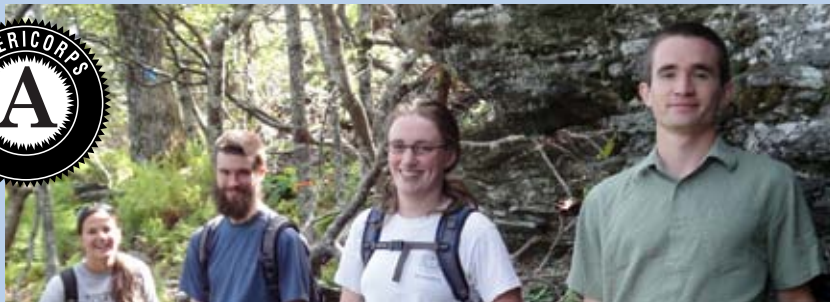
I was excited to find that the federal officials who serve our region, both Democratic and Republican, are uniformly supportive of federal land conservation programs such as LWCF and tax incentives for donors of conservation easements. I commend Senators Burr and Hagan and Representative Shuler for their strong support of these conservation programs. The contentious election year climate in Washington presents a challenge to the passage of new legislation – even for programs as sensible and broadly-supported as LWCF. Their support now is more important than ever.

Observing the machinery of our federal government up close during my visit to Washington was an interesting change of pace. However, I appreciate that most of my conservation work takes place here in western North Carolina. Regular opportunities to enjoy our region's outstanding natural places never fail to reinforce my passion for their conservation. I also appreciate all that you, our friends and supporters, do to make CMLC's conservation success in this region possible.

For more information on LWCF and the ways you can contact federal officials to express your support of the program, check out the website [www.lwcfcoalition.org](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org).

Kieran Roe  
Executive Director

# Get to know our AmeriCorps Project Conserve members



September brought the start of a new AmeriCorps Project Conserve year with 30 new members beginning 11-month terms of service at 18 organizations across western North Carolina. The positions, which are funded by the N.C. Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service through an AmeriCorps grant administered by CMLC, will address critical land and energy conservation needs through activities including educational and outreach programs, volunteer and community engagement, land stewardship and weatherization.

Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy is excited to welcome our four new AmeriCorps Project Conserve members: Peter Barr-Landowner Information Associate, Jenna Anderson and Kelly Nipp-Land Program Associates, and Chet Howland-Outreach Associate. We asked them each a few questions to help introduce them:

Q: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

**Peter:** Charlotte, NC

**Jenna:** western Pennsylvania

**Kelly:** Elmwood Park IL- just outside Chicago

**Chet:** Asheville

Q: WHAT MAKES A PERFECT WEEKEND FOR YOU?

**Peter:** Anything that involves a mountaintop.

**Jenna:** Being outside: hiking, canoeing, picnicking.... and having time to read a good book.

**Kelly:** Reading, grocery shopping, eating good food, taking a nap, and hanging out with friends.

**Chet:** Being able to go for a run with my dog.

Q: WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE YEAR TO COME?

**Peter:** Learning everything that I can about land conservation, visiting the beautiful places we protect, and meeting our landowners dedicated to conservation.

**Jenna:** Learning as much about land trusts and conserving land as I possibly can and monitoring lots of neat properties.

**Kelly:** Learning a lot of new skills and about how a land trust works, getting back into hiking and camping in the mountains, and enjoying what Asheville has to offer.

**Chet:** Figuring out how this place works, exactly.

ABOVE FROM LEFT: Jenna Anderson, Peter Barr, Kelly Nipp, and Chet Howland

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## BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN

trail projects in the region. The proposed Summits Trail will one day circumnavigate Lake Lure, linking ridges and peaks including CMLC's Weed Patch Mountain tract as well as other public or conserved lands. Eventually, this trail may be connected to the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail and Bearwallow Mountain, creating miles and miles of hiking opportunities in Henderson and Rutherford counties.

The conservation of Bearwallow Mountain is significant for its biological and hydrological implications, too. More than 230 species of plants and animals have been identified at its summit alone. A biological survey of Bearwallow's slopes revealed one of the county's densest and most expansive carpets of spring wildflowers. The mountain also harbors a rare Rich Cove Boulderfield Forest and old-growth forest; trees dating more than 240 years-old have been discovered. Bearwallow is also home to the rare crevice salamander.

Since Bearwallow Mountain straddles the Eastern Continental Divide, it drains

multiple tributaries that makeup the headwaters of both the French Broad and Broad Rivers. This divide makes the mountain doubly important to regional water quality. Its tributaries also form the headwaters of four streams that have been designated Wild Trout Waters by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

Perhaps no one is more thankful for the conservation of Bearwallow Mountain than Clyde Curtis, of Candler, who manned the fire tower and inhabited the cabin atop the mountain for over three decades. "Bearwallow was my home for 35 years. That mountain is such a beautiful place and I'm very glad to know that it will never be developed. The Barnwells are good people and I am thankful that they conserved it," he said.

Don't take our word for it! Visit the mountain for yourself and be inspired by its beauty. The trailhead for Bearwallow Mountain is most easily reached from Gerton in northeast Henderson County. From its intersection with Highway

74A, drive the mostly gravel-surfaced Bearwallow Mountain Road two miles to its highest point at Bearwallow Gap. A gated gravel road will be present on the left at the point the road surface changes to pavement. Parking is available for several cars on the left side of the road; do not block the gate with your vehicle. GPS users may enter N 35.46056, W 82.3680 for the trailhead. Hikers may pass beyond the gate and walk one mile up the gravel road to the top of the mountain until construction of the hiking trail is completed. Be prepared – when you reach the top, you just might see forever.

# CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY'S 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONSERVATION CELEBRATION



## — CONCERT AT THE COVE —



### SPECIAL THANKS TO

Firefly Cove, The Pisgah Forest Pickers, Larkin's on the Lake, Jerry Stone, CMLC's events committee (Genien Carlson, Becky Coleman, Meredith Keever, Jerry McAninch, Amy Wald, Rick Waggoner), and CMLC Supporters for making this event such a huge success!



# THANK YOU TO OUR 2010 SPONSORS

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## THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO GENEROUSLY DONATED ITEMS TO OUR RAFFLE AND AUCTIONS!

*Items were donated by CMLC  
members, trustees, events  
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area businesses*

Tamsin Allpress  
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Johnetta Woods



# OUR YELLOW LADY SLIPPER VOLUNTEER(S) Carolina Mountain Club



“There are three rules today,” Skip Sheldon, Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) Friday Crew leader tells a group of students who have come to Bearwallow Mountain to help build a new trail. “I’m going to start with the least important: build good trail. How could that be the least important? Well, the second rule is to have fun. We haven’t succeeded if you don’t have fun. We want you to want to come back...and if you don’t have fun, you won’t come back. The third and most important rule is to be safe. If we do all of those things, we know we’ve had a good day.”

Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy is happy to award the Ladyslipper Volunteer Award to the members of the CMC Friday Crew. Skip and his crew have brought years of combined experience to Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy’s trail projects. Our partnership with CMC began five or six years ago when the Friday Crew adopted CMLC’s Florence Nature Preserve trails as their winter project. They spent the winter making improvements to several of the trails and have continued to help maintain the trails ever since.

When CMLC began planning a new trail to the top of Bearwallow Mountain as part of expanding the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail System, several members of the Carolina Mountain Club expressed interest in the project. They have since contributed many hours and invaluable expertise to the project, helping to teach and inspire new volunteers along the way.

The all-volunteer crew’s first priority is their commitment to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to maintain the Appalachian Trail from Davenport Gap coming out of the Smokies up to Spivey Gap at Rt. 19 West, a 93 mile section of trail. If they aren’t on the AT, one might find them maintaining or extending the Mountains to Sea Trail westward toward the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This hearty crew doesn’t call it quits in the winter when the parkway closes and snow prevents them from working on the MST. Instead, they find spots like the Arboretum, Florence Nature Preserve or Bearwallow where weather is less likely to impede trail work.

A very heartfelt thank you to all the Carolina Mountain Club members who continue to dedicate their time and

experience to building good trails, having fun and teaching new volunteers!

CMC Friday Crew includes: Jack Albright, Jim Ariail, Lew Blodgett, Jim Bloom, Piet Bodenhorst, Bob Bond, Kirk Bingham, Boyd Brasington, Barth Brooker, Roy Davis, Jeff Dektor, Ken Deal, Carol Deal, Jack Fitzgerald, Alan Frank, Bruce Greenwalt, John Herrety, Erwin Hoadley, Ed League, Bob Lindsey, Peter Litvinchuk, Howard McDonald, Dan Raber, Bill Sanislow, Skip Sheldon, Wayne Steinmetz and Mitch Trusedale. We would also like to extend special thanks to Bruce Bente, long time CMLC Hike Committee member and member of CMC who has also made great contributions to the Bearwallow trail.

Contact Julianne at [volunteer@carolinamountain.org](mailto:volunteer@carolinamountain.org) or 828-697-5777 ext. 207 to learn how to get involved with trail-building and maintaining activities with both Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy and Carolina Mountain Club.



## Hikers in the Florence Nature Preserve, take note!

Currently, the primary entry point for hikers into Florence Nature Preserve is about a half mile up Kelly Hill Road from U.S. 74 in Gerton. Due to homeowner concerns about traffic on this unpaved road, all hikers are now required to park in the gravel parking area at the base of Kelly Hill Road and then walk up the road to the trailhead. We have roped off the old

parking area and ask you to respect the wishes of these homeowners. The new parking area is clearly marked, next to what was Nita’s Grocery Store. We apologize for the inconvenience at the present time.

CMLC intends to create a new trailhead and access point for Florence Nature Preserve directly off of U.S. 74, pending the outcome of a Scenic Byways Grant. Hopefully more details will be available soon when our plans to make Florence Nature Preserve more accessible to the public are put into action!

# Give the Gift of Green for Now & Forever

CMLC addresses the most urgent conservation challenges at the largest scale within the Blue Ridge Escarpment. Our work is crucial to keep vital habitats and unique species from being lost forever.

But we can't achieve conservation victories without the support and involvement of those who share our passion for preserving our last great places.

Each October through December, Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy makes substantial strides to increase support and charitable, private donations. Carefully considering what to give to CMLC at the end of the year can help you to meet your personal financial priorities while significantly enhancing our ability to protect more land in our beautiful region.

Will you help us to meet our end of year goal? Ways to give include:

- Cash gifts mailed or sent in by December 31st qualify for tax deductibility for 2010.
- Give a personalized gift membership this holiday season. Your loved ones will adore receiving a gift that helps to protect and restore our region's most critical natural places.
- Non-cash assets such as real estate and retirement benefits can provide favorable tax savings, allowing you to give more at a lower personal cost.
- Gifts of stocks, bonds or mutual funds that have increased in value since you purchased them can result in even greater tax savings.
- Consider including CMLC in your will or personal estate plans.

We hope you will give the holiday gift of protected and saved land this year. Please contact Kristin Harkey, Director of Development for more information.

## WHY I GIVE:

"People in my circle have what they need. I prefer to give something beyond the material world that offers an opportunity for connection. By giving a CMLC gift membership, I support what I love, and invite others to join in to enjoy, protect, and celebrate the beautiful land we share."

DIANA RICHARDS CMLC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**DON'T FORGET! YOU CAN PURCHASE CMLC GEAR AND CLOTHING AT OUR CAFÉ PRESS WEBSITE: [www.cafepress.com/CMLC](http://www.cafepress.com/CMLC)**

# Bring a New Member to CMLC and Receive a \$20 Gift Card from Diamond Brand Outdoors!

As a valued member, we are proud to offer a special gift to any new member you bring to CMLC.

Our longstanding premiere business sponsor, Diamond Brand Outdoors, will award a \$20 gift card to you and the friend, relative or colleague that becomes a new supporter of our cause at the \$50 level.

Our membership has been steadily growing in the last two years and we are grateful for the continued generosity, yet we strive to be a true reflection of the pride and love residents have for these beautiful mountains.

## HELP US TO GROW OUR MEMBERSHIP AND ENJOY THE REWARDS!

Simply ask the new member to make a note of your name on either the remittance envelope or by contacting Aimee McGinley ([outreach@carolinamountain.org](mailto:outreach@carolinamountain.org) or 828-697-5777).



## Yes! I want to help save our Carolina mountains!

New Member  Renewal  Contribution

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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\$35  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I want to learn more about how I can support Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy. Please send more information about:

Volunteering  Conservation Easements  Land Donations  Bequests  Life Estates  In-Kind Contributions

**Thank you for your saving the places you love!**

Please return this form and payment to: PO Box 2822 | Hendersonville NC 28793 or fax to (828) 697-2602

## Donate online! [carolinamountain.org](http://carolinamountain.org)

Enclosed is my check payable to **CMLC**

Please bill my credit card



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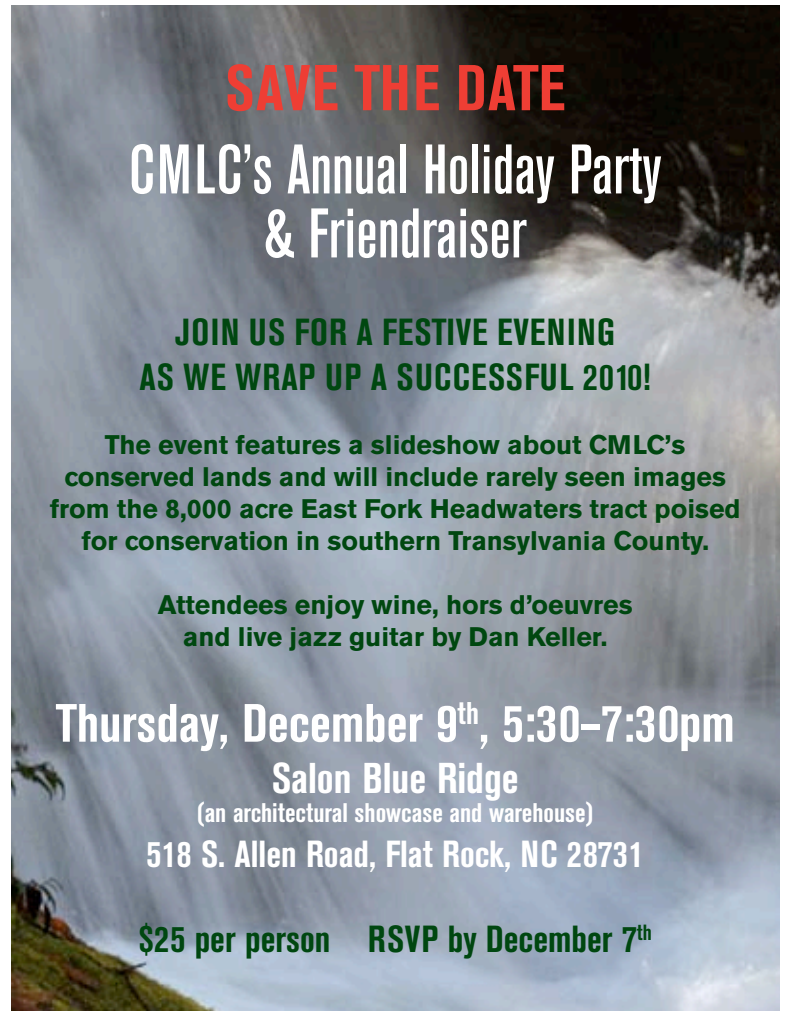


Carolina Mountain Land  
Conservancy's second annual  
**Run for the Hills 5K**

Sunday May 1st, 2011

Fletcher Community Park

Stay tuned to [carolinamountain.org](http://carolinamountain.org) as more  
details become available



**SAVE THE DATE**

**CMLC's Annual Holiday Party  
& Fundraiser**

**JOIN US FOR A FESTIVE EVENING  
AS WE WRAP UP A SUCCESSFUL 2010!**

The event features a slideshow about CMLC's  
conserved lands and will include rarely seen images  
from the 8,000 acre East Fork Headwaters tract poised  
for conservation in southern Transylvania County.

Attendees enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres  
and live jazz guitar by Dan Keller.

**Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 5:30–7:30pm**

**Salon Blue Ridge**

(an architectural showcase and warehouse)

518 S. Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 28731

**\$25 per person    RSVP by December 7<sup>th</sup>**