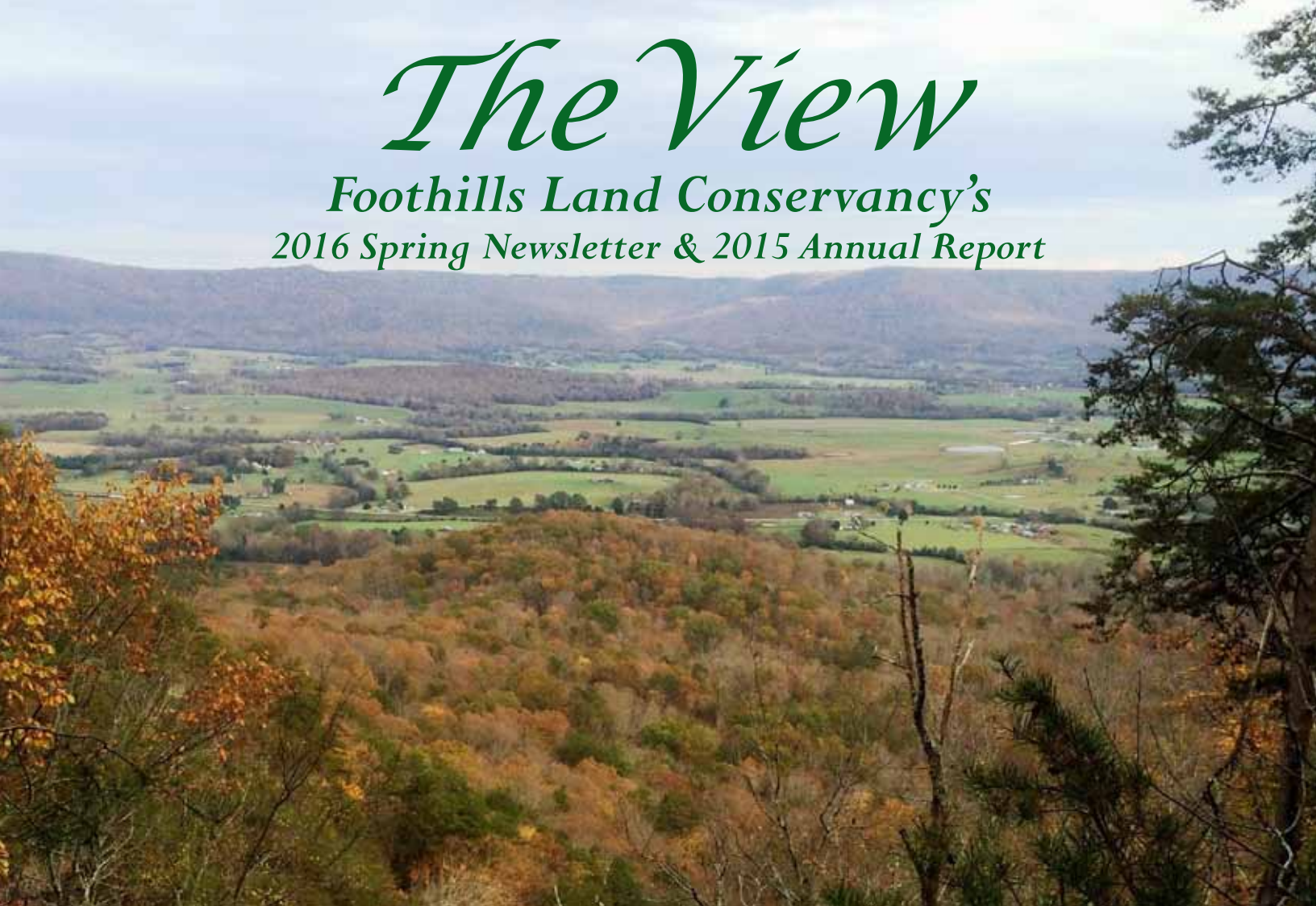


The View

*Foothills Land Conservancy's
2016 Spring Newsletter & 2015 Annual Report*



— Preserved TN properties in: Bledsoe Co. (top); Clay Co. (bottom right); and Knox Co. (bottom left)

The View

FLC's 2016 Spring Newsletter & 2015 Annual Report

A Letter from FLC's Board President

Dear Friends of the Foothills,

In 2015, Foothills Land Conservancy celebrated another banner year with a record 24 land preservation projects covering over 7,200 acres! To date, FLC now has a total of over 65,900 acres preserved – projects that span 28 Tennessee counties and 6 surrounding states. This cumulative number includes conservation easement partnerships, fee simple properties, land conveyance projects, and additional land projects that FLC was involved in since the organization's beginnings in 1985.

Over the past 6 years:

- FLC has expanded its organizational reach outside of Tennessee with land preservation projects in the 6 states of Alabama, Kentucky, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.
- FLC has more than doubled the amount of acreage preserved through conservation easement agreements within the past five years, compared to all the years prior to 2011.
- Worked to create a permanent foundation for our planned gifts that include land acquisition and stewardship programs, the Land Preservation Fund and other conservation projects.

All of these statistics highlight the Conservancy's amazing accomplishments and program expansion over the years and we would not be where we are today without the ongoing support of our Friends, regional community, and FLC's Board Members and staff. Please know that our door is always open to our Friends. We always welcome your ideas, feedback and resources to help us fulfill our mission of promoting, protecting and enhancing the lands of the Southern Appalachian region.

Thank you for being a valued
Friend of the Foothills!

Madge Cleveland
FLC Board President



www.foothillsland.org

373 Ellis Avenue • Maryville, TN 37804

865-681-8326 • info@foothillsland.org

Mission Statement - FLC is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and enhancing the lands and environment of the Southern Appalachian region and promoting the character of the land for the general public, now and in the future.

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Mark King, Vice-President

Jenny Hines, Treasurer

Mike Parish, Member at Large

Mark Jendrek, Non-Voting Recording Secretary

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Susanna Sutherland

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Many thanks from FLC's Board and staff to:
Charlie Barnett, Ernie Blankenship, Jay Clark, Jenny Freeman, Mark Jendrek, Matt Smith, and Mike Suttles

FLC STAFF

Bill Clabough, Executive Director

Meredith Clebsch, Land Director

Elise Eustace, Communication & Development Dir.

Tom Howe, Consulting Biologist

Letter from the Director

Hello Friends,

2015 was a big year for Foothills! FLC celebrated 30 years of service as a regional land trust and another successful conservation year with a record number of land projects implemented within a one year period - 24 land partnerships totaling 7,215 acres. These new projects span 5 states and 7 Tennessee counties! To date, FLC's cumulative land preservation efforts cover 65,900 acres encompassing the 7 states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and the recent additions of Alabama and Virginia. You can view descriptions and pictures of the 2015 projects beginning on page 4.

We also wanted to share with our Friends more exciting news! At the end of 2015, the US Congress and President passed legislation allowing the enhanced tax incentive for conservation easement donations to be permanent. This legislation applies retroactively to January 1, 2015. Congress has also reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund for three years and increased its funding from \$306 million last year to \$450 million this year. In addition, the legislature also made permanent the IRA Charitable Rollover. This allows taxpayers 70 1/2 years old or older to transfer up to \$100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to charity without first having to recognize the distribution as income.

FLC Board and staff are excited to announce that Tom Howe, a Consulting Biologist for Foothills, is now a full time member of the staff. Tom received his B.S. degree in Biology from Cornell University and has taken additional courses in botany/ecology at the University of TN, Knoxville. Birdwatching has been his avid hobby for over 50 years and he is currently the sitting president of the Knoxville Chapter of the TN Ornithological Society. Tom is a talented addition to the team and we are so glad to have him join us in a permanent capacity!

We wanted to tell you about a few changes that are underway at Foothills Land Conservancy. Although still in the initial planning stages, FLC is working with the organization's founding member, Gail Harris, to make her Blount County farm the headquarters for Foothills. Back in 2009 Gail placed an FLC conservation easement on approximately 300 acres, which is located in the city of Rockford. Foothills plans to use this working farm as both an office and an outdoor educational center. On another note, our 2016 Summer Celebration venue and date are still being worked out. Stay tuned and we will be sure to send you all the details.

Lastly, all of us at FLC wanted to take a moment to say thank you to our Friends of the Foothills - your support in 2015 and over the years has assisted us with our expansion of our land preservation programs across Tennessee and the Southern Appalachian region. We look forward to 2016 being another amazing year for land conservation and a great year for our Friends.

- Bill Clabough, FLC Executive Director

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(Left to Right) FLC Board Member, Billy Minser, Penrose Farm Owner & FLC Conservation Easement Donor, Christine 'Teenie' Hayworth, and FLC Exec. Dir., Bill Clabough

2015 Land Protection Projects

Foothills Land Conservancy celebrated another successful conservation year with the completion of a record number of land projects within a one year period - 24 land partnerships totaling 7,215 acres. These new projects span 5 states and cover 7 Tennessee counties! To date, FLC's cumulative land preservation efforts now cover 65,900 acres within the 7 states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and recent additions of Alabama and Virginia. FLC's 2015 projects now involve two new Tennessee counties – Clay and Humphreys.

East Tennessee Land Partnerships

Blount County, Tennessee (68.19 acres)

Located close to the Foothills Parkway in the Top of the World Community, this property consists of three tracts and offers outstanding views of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP). There are a few creeks on the property with one, known as Flat Creek UT, listed as a high quality stream within the GSMNP just 100-200 feet upstream from the property. The property provides a better quality wildlife habitat to the GSMNP. For example, there is potential habitat for the Indiana Myotis (bat), which is federally endangered, and known to exist nearby. Foothills Land Conservancy has eight other conservation easements totaling 2,359 acres between one to ten miles from this Property on Chilhowee Mountain and fourteen other easements, totaling close to 2,047 acres, located near the Ridgeline.



Knox County, Tennessee (59.45 acres)

A landowner who has worked previously with FLC on two other preserved tracts, totaling 365 acres in the Bull Run Valley area of Knox County, decided to place an additional two tracts in conservation easement with Foothills in 2015. One tract is 37 acres and is adjacent to Bull Run Creek and the other nearby tract is 22.45 acres. Both tracts consist of agricultural fields with no buildings to be permitted on either tract. Evidence of wildlife found on the property included deer, gray squirrel, eastern chipmunk and turkey. Dragonflies, damselflies, skippers and other butterflies, including migrating Monarchs, were observed utilizing the property. A variety of birds were heard or seen, including warblers and thrushes in the woodlands and sparrows and hawks in the open lands. The most unique habitat found on the property was a limestone bluff stretching across the tract's southern boundary. It was found to support several uncommon limestone-loving ferns including walking fern, spleenwort, and purple cliffbrake.



Images: (top) - Views of the GSMNP from the Top of the World Community in Blount Co.; (middle) Field with Ironweed (sp. *Vernonia altissima*), in Knox County; and (bottom) Limestone bluffs stretch along a recently preserved tract in Knox Co.



Knox County, Tennessee (15 acres)

Located in the community of Powell, just outside of Knoxville, this property consists mainly of flood plains but also provides ample frontage along a scenic road. The Property is essentially an island of habitat amid an urban setting, and therefore is an oasis for wildlife. The mature trees and shrubs offer plentiful seasonal food, cavities, nesting sites and cover for most urban wildlife and for migratory and resident birds. The creek, which offers a year-round source of water, is potentially an important resource for wildlife including fish, waterfowl, amphibians, and aquatic arthropods. There was abundant white-tailed deer sign and some beaver sign observed on the property during an FLC inventory of the flora and fauna.

The intent of the land owners is to turn the easement over to the Legacy Parks Foundation so that it can be converted to public low-impact recreational use complete with walking trails providing one link in the Knoxville area greenways.

Greene County, Tennessee (15.17 acres)

A tract in Greene County, belonging to the non-profit group, Rural Resources, has been preserved through a conservation easement agreement with FLC. The property was formerly owned by the Childress family, who established the organization in



response to the rapid loss of farmland they observed, desiring that their four-generation farm and others be preserved. Rural Resources is dedicated to the education and training of youth in environmentally sound farming practices and teaching them how to run a farm or food related business. The organization plans to continue utilizing the property in a manner that allows for sustainable agricultural practices and supports educating the community about an agrarian way of life. There is a creek located on the tract with the Nolichucky River close by. The property is made up of approximately 90% agricultural fields and pastures, and 10% of riparian fringe along the creek. The land also supports grassland birds that are increasingly under pressure to survive due to diminishing habitat, including the Eastern Meadowlark, which has been seen on site, and the Northern Bobwhite, which breeds on the property. It also serves as the wintering grounds for field-loving birds such as the White-crowned Sparrow, which is uncommon in Tennessee. The riparian corridor also provides cover for migrating birds seasonally.

Image - (top left) - FLC Consulting Biologist, Tom Howe, stands next to a shellbark hickory tree during a preliminary site visit. FLC staff gather information about a property's natural features, wildlife habitat, and many other observations prior to a formal preservation agreement. (middle) A green house and garden assist with student learning experiences at the recently preserved property owned by Rural Resources. (bottom) A creek flows through the Rural Resource property, providing for a variety of wildlife habitat.

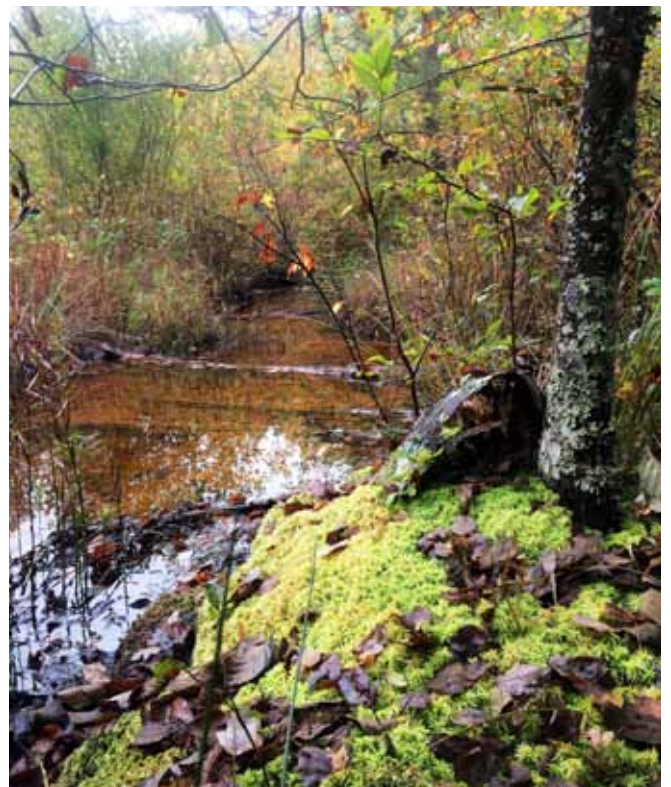
Middle Tennessee Land Partnerships

Van Buren County, Tennessee – (4 FLC Conservation Easements totaling 2513 acres)

In late 2015, a total of four Van Buren properties with acreage totaling over 2,500 acres were placed into conservation easement partnerships with Foothills. This year's land projects in Van Buren contribute towards 4,000 contiguous acres now being preserved through FLC's conservation easements, along with a few thousand additional acres located close by.

All four tracts are in close proximity to each other with some containing reclaimed mine sites. The Rocky River flows through three of the sites and three are also located next to the historic Trail of Tears. Portions of these lands have been timbered and there are open fields with native vegetation, including warm season grasses, as well as oak hickory forests and riparian forests, found on these properties.

A number of popular and ecologically important natural areas are located within ten miles of these properties, including Savage Gulf Class II Natural-Scientific State Natural Area, South Cumberland State Park, and Fall Creek Falls State Park.



Photos of Preserved Properties in Van Buren County, Tennessee

Top Left) - Swamp forest; (*Top Right*) - An abundance of Cinnamon Fern can be found on more than one of the properties. (*Bottom Left*) - FLC Exec. Director, Bill Clabough, treks across just one of the many streams, creeks and tributaries within the 4,000+ acre stretch of preserved property in Van Buren County. (*Bottom Right*) - Image of a swamp with Sphagnum Moss, also known as peat moss.

Bledsoe County, TN – (748.98 acres)

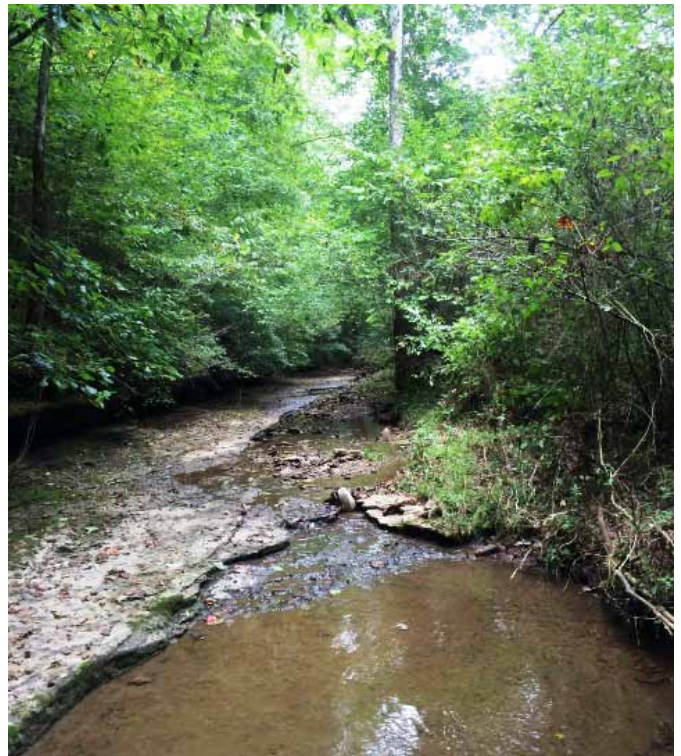
Located southwest of Pikeville, this property looks out from scenic rock bluffs across Sequatchie Valley to Walden Ridge. The property contains mature hardwood forest, creeks, and a man-made pond. Evidence of wildlife on the property during the site visit was plentiful with deer, turkey, and raccoon tracks being most evident. The site also includes healthy population of Carolina Jessamine, which is rare in Tennessee. Just adjacent to the property, an additional 1,300 acres has been placed into an easement with another conservation group.

Clay County, TN – (1184.9 acres)

This pretty property is located in the Eastern Highland Rim close to Gainesboro, Tennessee. It's within the watersheds of Cordell Hull and the Cumberland River. The whole tract is wooded with the exception of the floodplain lying behind a small flood control dam. The property contains limestone ledges, dry ridges, and mesic slope wildflower areas which has seen little disturbance.

Humphreys County, TN - (1009 acres)

This property is traversed by tributaries of the Duck River, which, at 284 miles long, is the longest river located entirely in the state of Tennessee. Roughly 80% of the property is in mature hardwoods. This forest, along with diverse native understory and field edges, offers excellent year-round foraging opportunities for most wildlife native to the region by providing abundant plant resources such as nuts, berries, pollen and nectar, as well as insects. Evidence of wildlife on the Property during the site visit was plentiful with deer, turkey, fox squirrel and cottontail rabbit being most often observed.



(clockwise) - View looking out into Sequatchie Valley in Bledsoe Co.; image of creek bed and rock ledges in Clay Co.; and a Handsome Clubtail sighting at the newly preserved property in Humphreys Co.

Multistate Land Partnerships

Cherokee County, Alabama – (57 acres)

Located near the town of Cedar Bluff, this former plantation consists of semi-cleared fields which include native prairie species and also includes a marsh. The property is located on Weiss Lake, which is part of a blueway waterway, and there are several protected areas nearby. The combination of open fields, meadows, and oak groves with approximately 4,500 feet of edge habitat bordering the woodlands is excellent for many birds. These edges are made up primarily of a diverse mix of native forbs, shrubs, woody sprouts and saplings, which tend to support an equally diverse insect population. Among the bird species sighted were Eastern Bluebirds, Eastern Meadowlarks, 4 species of woodpeckers, and Field, Song and Swamp Sparrows.



Cherokee County, AL

Calhoun County, Alabama – (119.93 acres)

This wooded property rises three to four hundred feet above the city of Oxford, Alabama, providing scenic views of the valley to the south and Coldwater Mountain to the north. The tract surrounds a development and includes long leaf pines with relatively mature forests, a water source, and diverse plant species.



Calhoun County, AL

Burke County, Georgia – (611.5 acres)

This property consists of two tracts and has an existing cabin, an agricultural field and a swamp. A portion of the uplands was once the site of a timbering operation and has since been turned into wildlife habitat.



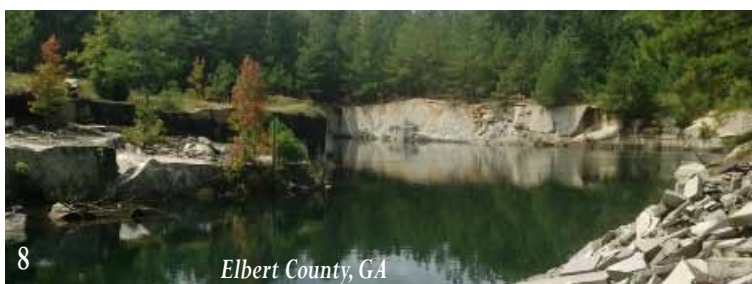
Burke County, GA

Carroll County & Haralson County, Georgia – (170.62 acres)

Located in the city limits of Bremen and within two GA counties, this property surrounds a golf course that was recently being considered for residential development. The easement protects narrow bands of forests that border on open areas, including golf course fairways and roadsides. The property will not have any homes built on it under the FLC CE agreement.

Elbert County, Georgia – (155.3 acres)

This property was once the site of granite extraction and there is a granite quarry facility located just outside the easement boundary. Granite rock piles that benefit wildlife are situated at different places along the property. The property has some woods but mostly consists of early successional forest.





Jefferson County, GA

Jefferson County, Georgia - (280.9 acres - 2 tracts)

These two adjacent properties are located near Augusta, GA. One tract is 141.1 acres and the other is 139.8 acres. There are wildlife fields, creeks, wetlands, and forests located on both tracts. The land owner plans to use the land for a family hunting preserve and for agriculture and forestry.



Chatham County, NC

Chatham County, North Carolina – (233.2 acres - 2 tracts)

Two adjacent tracts located in Chatham County, NC, are now preserved through an FLC conservation easement. One tract is 84.8 acres and the other is 148.4 acres. A valuable type of shale, called Carolina Slate, can be found on both tracts. Under FLC's CE, the shale will never be mined. Both sites offer woodland, pastures, creeks and formerly farmed and timbered areas.

Cherokee County, North Carolina – (264.27 acres)

This property is located near the town of Murphy, NC, and looks into Tennessee, lying almost at the state line. The preserved land is close to the Nantahala National Forest, and is located in a triangle of recreation areas, including Blue Ridge, Georgia, Ducktown/Copperhill, Tennessee, and Murphy, North Carolina.



Cherokee County, NC

Sampson County, North Carolina – (883.55 acres - two tracts)

Two adjacent tracts, located in Sampson County, NC, are now preserved with FLC Conservation Easements. One tract is 326.58 acres and the other is a little larger at 556.97 acres. Located south of Raleigh, both are owned by the same landowner and farmed for sod. The land has been in the family for 6 generations. While there are ponds on the property, the primary land use for the property is designated as agriculture/farming.



Sampson County, NC

Scott County, Virginia – (1,277.64 acres)

Located northwest of Kingsport, TN this property is surrounded by the Jefferson National Forest. This forested site consists of mature hardwood forests, clear streams, steep slopes, and areas of earlier strip mining. Rock outcrops and boulders are scattered throughout the tract. Several locations provide views either into the Cumberland Mountains or out to the valley, and the property itself is also included in the local viewshed.



Scott County, VA

Become a Friend of the Foothills!

Thanks to the ongoing and generous support of our Friends, FLC continues to expand our land conservation programs throughout the diverse and beautiful Southern Appalachian region. Foothills gladly accepts any and all donations - no gift is too small!

To become a member or to renew your annual contribution please utilize the envelope in this newsletter or visit the 'Donate Now' link at www.foothillsland.org.

Foothills is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and does not receive any financial support from federal, state, or local government. FLC relies on individual and corporate contributions to sustain our organization, land acquisition, and stewardship programs.

Friends - Annual Membership Program

FLC's Friends have the satisfaction of helping widen our reach towards the protection and preservation of our region's cherished mountains, rural landscapes and working farms. Visit FLC's website to donate online and learn about our partnerships programs with the Combined Federal Program, Amazon Smiles, and Kroger's Community Rewards Program. FLC's Friends can give annually, quarterly or monthly. Benefits include:

- Thank you letter
- Acknowledgement in FLC's Spring Newsletter / Annual Report
- Invitation to all events
- Request FLC staff to speak at your local functions.

Major Gifts - FLC's Conservation Circle

As a Friend of the Foothills, we hope you will consider joining our major gifts program, either as an individual or as a business partner. Donors that give annually at \$1,000+ will be included as a member of our Conservation Circle. In addition to the Friend benefits listed in our Friends of the Foothills description, donors will also receive:

- Tickets to FLC's annual Summer Celebration
- Name inclusion on the Celebration invitation and day-of-event banner
- Recognition in August eNews & Celebration Webpage
- Personal invitations and access to all FLC events
- Request a private tour at one of our preserved properties

Legacy Circle - Planned Giving

Planned gifts provide the Conservancy with a permanent foundation for conservation projects including land acquisition and stewardship programs. Donations can be designated as restricted or unrestricted and FLC can work with your financial advisor to facilitate any giving method you choose. For those whose passion lies in passing on their love of the land to future generations, we hope you will consider supporting FLC through these options:

- Naming FLC as a beneficiary in a will, trust, insurance policy, or retirement plan
- Appreciated assets, securities, or land parcels
- Donating land to FLC for the purpose of retaining its agricultural or natural features

Please contact the Foothills office at (865) 681-8326 if there are other ways you prefer to support the organization.

A special thank you to FLC's 2015 Celebration Sponsors and Host Committee!

Details about FLC's 2016 Celebration will be announced in the coming weeks.

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FOR 2016 SPONSORSHIP OR HOST INFO:

Please contact Elise Eustace at 865-681-8326.

Photo courtesy of Doug Mills.

A very special thank you to our Friends of the Foothills for all of your contributions, time, and talents in 2015!

Arranged alphabetically by an individual's last name or the business's first name.

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BEQUESTS TO FLC

Estate of Charles E. Klabunde

A portion of the bequested funds have been placed into FLC's Land Preservation Fund.

John Logan Rose, III (Jack Rose)

Please see the opposite page for a tribute to Jack Rose.

CELEBRATION VOLUNTEERS

Susan & Paul Campbell; Glenda Estridge; Jody Frye; Amy & Tom Howe; Jeff Hubbard; Janet Lee McKnight; Teresa Pepin; Karen Petrey; Kim Starling; Glenna Strissel; Morgan Strissel

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In Remembrance of...

John Logan Rose, III (Jack Rose)



John Logan Rose, III, (Jack Rose) was a long-time Foothills supporter, volunteer and local conservationist who passed away in July of 2015. On behalf of FLC's Board and staff, we would like to offer our condolences to Jack's wife, Sara Rose, and to all of his family and friends. We would also like to gratefully acknowledge Jack for his time, talents and passion to Foothills.

In August of 2015, FLC announced the creation of a new fund, called The Land Preservation Fund, assisting us with future land protection and acquisition projects. FLC's Board agreed to match, dollar for dollar, current and future donations in Jack's memory, to this fund. To date, the total is close to \$17,500. These donations and their matching funds, along with a few other contributions from our Friends, including a portion of the bequest from the late Charlie Klabunde, has placed the fund's total close to \$109,000. All of us at Foothills would like to express our gratitude for these contributions - assisting in a great start for an important fund.

Below are a list of family & friends who made a contribution 'In Memory Of' John Logan, Rose III:

Peter Acly & Ellen Robinson
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Call FLC's Office

To request a presentation for your
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(865-681-8326)

SAVE THE DATE!

June 4th, 2016

Land Trust day

Mast General Store - Knoxville

FLC staff will be on hand to visit with store
patrons. A portion of store proceeds will go
to FLC's conservation programs that day!



Image of FLC preserved property in Blount County courtesy of Mark Lewis.