

# FIELD NOTES

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*Field Notes is a midseason newsletter used by the LandTrust to update its contributors on the progress of projects, upcoming events, and news in the office.*

## Randolph County Property Protected

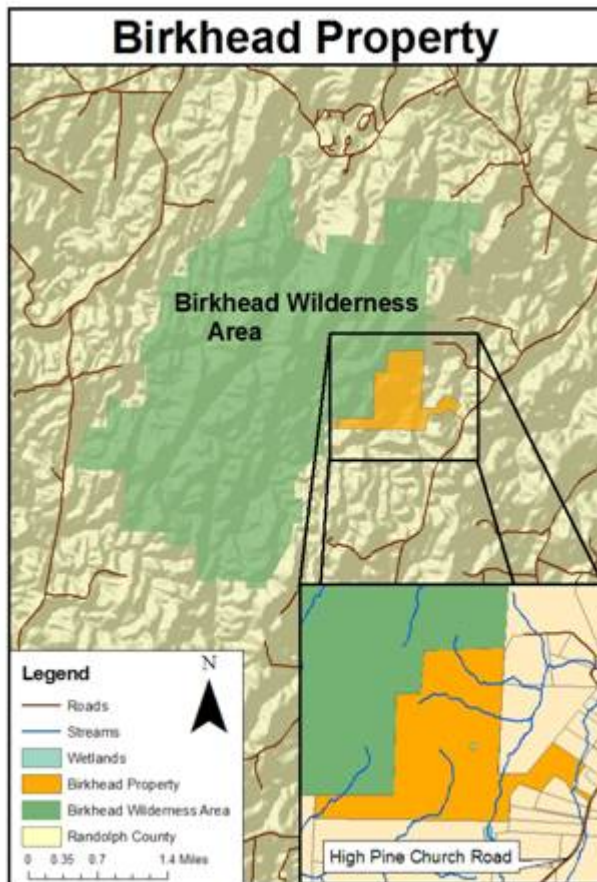
### Wilderness Area Gains Additional Protection

The LandTrust has always prided itself on working solely with willing landowners. These landowners come to us with a desire to see their land protected against future development. However, in the case of one expansive tract of pristine forestland in Randolph County, it was actually the developer, with bulldozers on site, who offered The LandTrust a last minute opportunity to purchase the highly threatened property. As illustrated by the map, this site was an exciting opportunity to protect 290 acres (affectionately called the “Birkhead Property”) of forests and streams adjacent to the Birkhead Wilderness Area.

Tucked away in southwestern Randolph County, the Birkhead Wilderness Area lies just beyond the horizon of the Piedmont’s major cities and highways. This obscurity has allowed the region to maintain its rural roots, which helps provide the perfect backdrop for the Birkheads. As the only designated Wilderness

Area within the Uwharrie National Forest, the Birkheads are free of motorized vehicles and other modern niceties. Its nearly 6,000 acres are intended to be a reprieve from traffic, cell phones and all the other headaches brought about by everyday life. Primitive hiking trails allow visitors to trek many miles, interrupted only by a squirrel scampering in the leaves or birds chattering in the forest canopy.

*Continued on page 4...*



## LandTrust Signs On To FERC Agreements

### Nearly 8,000 Acres to be Protected!

Over the last three years The LandTrust has represented regional conservation interests at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing meetings for both Alcoa and Progress Energy. Within the Yadkin-Pee Dee watershed Alcoa owns and operates four dams (High Rock, Tuckertown, Badin and Falls) while Progress is responsible for two (Lake Tillery and Blewett Falls). Once issued, the new licenses will govern all operations related to the dams for the next thirty to fifty years. Thus, this truly is a once in a generation opportunity for conservation voices to be heard.

The LandTrust has signed on to the Agreements In Principle (AIPs)

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# *Letter From The Board President*

## *Conserved Land: Open to the Public*

*By Dan R. Williams*



This fall The LandTrust for Central North Carolina celebrates two land protection projects that are, or soon will be, open to the general public. The 82-acre Dunn's Mountain Park, part of the Rowan County Parks & Recreation Department, opens to the public in November. Aside from trails and picnic facilities, this park features the most breathtaking views of the North Carolina Piedmont in Rowan County. On a clear day you can see the Uwharries, Pilot Mountain, and even Grandfather Mountain from atop the mountain's peak. The LandTrust purchased the property in 2001 and sold it to the county to be used as a park facility in 2005.

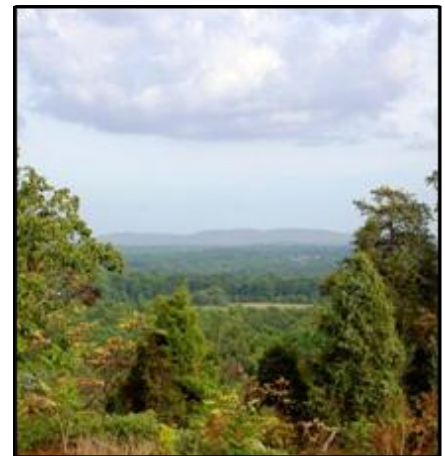
In October the LandTrust closed on the first portion of the

Kannapolis Gameland Tract. This will become one of the largest public gamelands in the North Carolina Piedmont. Although some details of the purchase are not yet finalized, plans call for this project to ultimately become a 2,843-acre conservation zone. This area will provide hunting and recreation opportunities to area sportsmen, protection of an ecologically significant natural area, cleaner water to the citizens of Kannapolis through buffer protection on Second Creek and several tributaries, preservation of working farmland, and research opportunities to the adjacent North Carolina State University agricultural research facility.

A third recent project, the Birkhead Property described on the cover page of this newsletter, may also have a public access component. Plans for this property include a possible transfer to the U.S. Forest Service, expanding the serene and primitive Birkhead Wilderness Area within the Uwharrie National Forest. The property may even serve as a trailhead to the Uwharrie National Recreation Trail.

One of the challenges facing the LandTrust for Central North Carolina, and land trusts in general, is educating the public about what we do. After all, much of the land protected by conservation easements is private. And many can't directly appreciate the public benefit created by the conservation of private land.

As a member of the LandTrust, you understand the important work our organization is doing to protect the natural resources, water quality, wildlife, and agrarian lifestyle in our part of the state. You recognize that conserved land, whether public or private, preserves and protects the unique character of the North Carolina Piedmont. This fall and early winter I hope you will take an afternoon to enjoy the views atop Dunn's Mountain, or visit one of the LandTrust's other public properties—including the Gold Hill Rail Trail, the Pisgah Covered Bridge, or the Eagle Point Nature Preserve. Take a friend or family member and talk to them about the important work of the LandTrust while you enjoy the beauty and splendor of nature. Conserved land, whether public or private, provides benefits to everyone, but there's no need to explain that. The view from the top of Dunn's Mountain should do the trick.



## ***Pension Protection Act Expands Conservation Easement Tax Benefits!***

Amidst all of the national press coverage of the President's signing of the Pension Protection Act, some of the provisions that pertain to the tax benefits associated with donated conservation easements received little attention. However, The LandTrust wants all of our friends to be aware of how valuable these new rules may be as well as the time frame for which they are available. In general the new legislation allows donors to:

- Deduct a larger percentage of their adjusted gross income – raised from 30% to 50%
- Deduct their entire adjusted gross income if they are “qualified farmers” – raised to 100%
- Extend the time period over which the deductions can be applied – from 6 to 16 years
- Benefit from these changes only if a donation is made in 2006 or 2007!

If you would like to learn more about how this new legislation may impact your land conservation decisions please contact our staff and/or a knowledgeable tax professional. As these new rules are likely to increase our project load, we ask that you plan accordingly and communicate your wishes to our staff as early as possible.

## ***FERC Article Continued...***

for both projects. By signing the AIP we have agreed to support the general terms of the new licenses being proposed. Over the next year we will work alongside the companies to more narrowly define the new license while continuing to advocate for conservation interests. The current licenses for all six dams are scheduled to expire on April 30, 2008.

While neither of the new licenses provide everything that The LandTrust would have wished for, we believe that the terms of both will create a tremendous boost for regional conservation efforts and therefore warrant our support.

### **Alcoa**

- Extended recreational season and improved water levels on High Rock Lake;
- 1,000 acre expansion of Morrow Mountain State Park;
- 2,500 acres along Tuckertown Reservoir to be sold to WRC for gamelands;
- 2,000 acres of valuable riparian habitat in the heart of our Two Rivers Project to be sold to The LandTrust or WRC;
- 80 acres to be donated to Rowan County to serve as a Lakeside Park;
- Expansion and creation of new park areas in Rowan, Davidson counties.

### **Progress Energy**

- 2,000 acres of riverine properties donated to WRC;
- Increased downstream flow to support fish and mussel populations in the Pee Dee River;
- Protection of Nationally Significant Natural Heritage Sites;
- Creation of a public fishing area on Lake Tillery in Stanly County.

## Birkhead Article Continued...

The rolling Uwharrie Mountain landscape houses a wealth of farms and forests. These rural conditions combine to create some of North Carolina's cleanest and most aquatically significant streams. Near the top of the list is the West Fork of the Little River, a recipient of the Nationally Significant Aquatic Habitat designation due to the presence of six species of rare freshwater mussel. The Birkhead



Property houses over 9,000 feet of Little River tributaries that originate either on the site or within the Birkhead

Wilderness Area. Had these small streams been carved up by roads, culverts and houses, the negative impact on downstream water quality would have been drastic.

Additionally, the Birkhead Property is home to many plants and animals that rely upon mature hardwood forests for their survival. Plants like jacks-in-the-pulpit, cinnamon and royal ferns, and wild blueberries welcome the shady, moist environment. The same conditions are also conducive to habitat for the four-toed salamander, a rare amphibian found in North



Carolina. Other species like this box turtle have also found a home on the property.



The LandTrust would like to thank the Conservation Trust for North Carolina for providing the necessary financing for this project. Without their involvement, we would not be able to celebrate this tremendous conservation achievement. Thanks to CTNC's assistance, we can now take pride in the fact that 290 acres that were to be paved over by year's end are now helping to maintain the peaceful serenity of the Birkhead Wilderness Area.

## "Be Still and Know" - Guest Article by Adele Goodman

When I was little, I remember my grandfather standing totally still outside and staring for what seemed like hours. I'd whisper to my sister, "What's he lookin' at?" I didn't understand then, but now I do, because I catch myself doing the same thing. My grandfather was appreciating creation and God's gifts – from the lush tobacco fields under heavenly blue skies to his beautiful garden and the woods he loved so much.

I'm sure people wonder what I'm staring at when I perch at the edge of a field or lay in the grass. From their perspective, I'm not doing much but from my view, OH MY! I see the most glorious sunsets in fiery orange, red and blue... owls hunting at dusk...droves of

birds so thick you can hear their wings fluttering and feel the soft breeze left in their wake. It truly is the greatest show on earth! These achingly beautiful scenes that make

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*When I asked what to include in this piece, the following words came to me, not in a gentle way but in a loud plea, "PROTECT AND RESPECT."*

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us pause for a moment and stare in wonder are God's connections; His special way of making us be still for a change as He gently nudges us and whispers, "hey, remember me?"

What a magnificent Creator we have who provides such beautiful scenes for our pleasure and resources to meet our every need. But not only

does God provide for us, His works also speak to us. From the hymn *This is my Father's World*, Maltbie Babcock was inspired to write these words after hiking above farms, orchards and lakes: "This is my Father's world: he shines in all that's fair; in the rustling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me everywhere." As these words describe, God does speak to us everywhere, not only from His written Word but also from the word that is written in nature. Nature glorifies and connects us to God. Martin Luther King reiterated this sentiment by saying, "God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but also in trees and in the flowers and stars." We

*Continued on page 5...*

## *Kannapolis Project's Phase I Closes!*

After several years of facilitation, The LandTrust is very excited to announce the first phase of the Kannapolis Project has closed. On October 10, 2006, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) acquired 1,100 acres of the 2,843 acres from the City of Kannapolis. The LandTrust or WRC will acquire the property in five phases that will culminate in a total of 2,843 acres protected. The N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund, the N.C. Natural Heritage Program, the Cannon Foundation, and The LandTrust provided funding for this first leg of the project.

As you likely recall, The LandTrust became involved after the sale of two nearby, smaller properties owned by the City. Public outcry over the potential sale of this larger tract led to a diverse group seeking protection for this center-

piece of western Rowan County's agricultural landscape. After a series of negotiations and public meetings, a deal was struck that would allow The LandTrust to acquire the property and protect it against otherwise imminent development.

The entire property drains into Second Creek, which further downstream is listed for possible inclusion on EPA's 303(d) list of impaired streams. The LandTrust is hopeful that improved buffers along miles of streams traversing the property will positively impact the downstream water quality enough to avoid its listing. The City of Kannapolis has also retained a water intake near the northeast corner of the property that serves its citizen's water needs. A leading reason for the City's agreement to sell the land to a conservation entity was the understanding that the quality of waters available at this



site would be maintained or improved.

Local farmers who have relied on this land for years to support their operations will continue to tend the land. Their crops of corn, soybeans, wheat and other grains will provide food and habitat for the abundant wildlife. As a result of The LandTrust's involvement, the farmers, sportsmen, and wildlife of this area can continue their pursuits well into the future.

### *Guest Article Continued...*

know God through the scriptures but we understand Him even more when surrounded by His creation. Think of how many times Jesus used nature in his parables and how much he seemed to prefer being outside. He was tempted in the wilderness, prayed in a garden, preached from a mountaintop...it's no wonder so many people admit to feeling closest to God when they are outside, surrounded by His creation.

It's impossible for me to talk about nature or the environment separately from God because to me, they are one and the same. This is His handiwork and His world; His precious gift to us and we are responsible for it, no matter

if our name is on the deed or not. We must stop thinking of earth as a commodity that belongs to us but instead as a community to which WE belong. We have an obligation to protect our green spaces and natural resources no matter how difficult the battle can be. And it is a battle, one that is raging right now in our region and the toughest fight we have faced yet as conservationists. We are an intelligent lot, much wiser than most about how the world works and we know that a desire to profit from the land usually wins over a desire to protect it. But a healthy world and healthy communities do not consist of sprawl and concrete alone. When I asked what to include in this piece, the following words came to me, not

*\*If you would like to submit a guest article to express your personal opinions on land conservation issues, please contact us at [landtrust@landtrustcnc.org](mailto:landtrust@landtrustcnc.org).*

in a gentle way but in a loud plea, PROTECT AND RESPECT.

God has provided this abundant world for us to use for our own enrichment. If we respect and protect this gift above all costs, isn't that all He asks of us as stewards? By protecting land for future generations, we show the highest appreciation and respect for what we have been blessed with.

One of my favorite Bible verses is Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I am." This is what my grandfather was doing and what I now find myself doing. We are still and watching...and in the beauty, we can see Him...in all His glorious perfection.

## Recent Outings

### Stargazing in Stanly County

On Saturday August 12<sup>th</sup>, the skies were anything but clear. But even light showers that morning couldn't stop several undaunted LandTrust supporters who optimistically donned their hiking boots and met up at Morrow Mountain State Park for an easy three mile hike up to the Falls Dam. LandTrust board member and former director Jeff Michael led the hike and vividly depicted the history of the area. As the group arrived at their campsite, the sun broke through the clouds and landed on the Michael Farmhouse. One by one tents rose across the backyard and more and more people arrived – 23 in all. The group had a huge spread of chips, dips, and desserts of all kinds as leaders tried their best to cook enough burgers and hotdogs to sustain the hearty hunger of young boys. As the sun slowly sank over the horizon, the stars came out and shined. One by one meteors zipped through the sky and quotes like “Wow, did you see that one?!” followed by “Whoa!” and the ever famous “I still haven't seen any!” could be heard across the lawn. As the fire burned out and the last of the s'mores were consumed, the group slowly retired to their tents while the spectacle continued through the night.



### Creepy Crawly Hike

They're creepy and they're kooky, mysterious and spooky, they're all together ooky...no not The Addams Family... Herpetiles! What may you ask is a herpetile? The 35 people that came out to the Catawba College Ecological Preserve on the morning of Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup> sure found out. Herpetology is the branch of ecology dealing with reptiles and amphibians, as amateur herpetologist Jill Varkes explained. Jill is a junior in the environmental program at Catawba whose passion is these creepy crawlies. The group got to see several different species of salamanders, as well as some frogs (most of which were too sleek to be caught), and three different species of turtles. Unfortunately (or thankfully, depending on who you ask) we were not able to spot any snakes during our exploration. We did however find a whole brood of salamander eggs as well as a leech, which was almost immediately sentenced to death by some of the boys on the grounds of being a blood-sucking parasite. But after a brief ecology lesson on how each organism, even parasites, have an important role in the ecosystem, the youngsters looked at the leech in a different light and returned it to its home. As the group emerged from their expedition in the Preserve, some were wet, most were muddy, but all were smiling and asking when and where the next adventure would be.

## Recent Events

### RiverDance Biggest and Best Yet!

On Saturday, July 29, over 400 guests dined and danced to support the Two Rivers Preserve project. Co-chairs Meredith Reamer and Sue and John Spear led a stellar committee and transformed the historic Salisbury Station into a night of tropical splendor. The color scheme was sea glass and sand, and with the tables covered with gossamer overlays, fresh flowers and shells, the look was enchanting. The elegant buffet dinner was catered by *The Right Touch Catering*, and the soft dinner jazz and later dance music provided by *Flashback*.

Other committee members included Meredith and Andy Abramson, Rosemary and Bryce Beard, Cindee and Chip Bridges, Suzanne and John Casey, Kay and Raymond Coltrain, Judy and Tom Currin, Frances and Larry Edwards, Nan and Danny Fisher, Kelly and Ben Goodman, Lori and Charlie Graeber, Shari and Bill Graham, Barbara and Rivers Lawther, Mary Lou Lipscomb, Ann and Bill McCanless, Susan and Edward Norvell, Marcia and Ed Parrott, Gwen and Terry Pendleton, Marjorie and Chance Reynolds, Annette and Hap Roberts, Jody and Clint Robins, Katie Setzer, Betsy and Lee Snow, Julie and Bob Steele, Diana and Andy Storey, Annie and C.D. Taylor, Paula and Bill Troxler, and Gwen and Bill Webb.

Over \$50,000 was raised, which will be used for ongoing land protection along the Yadkin and South Yadkin Rivers.

### Many thanks to our wonderful sponsors!

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#### In Kind Donations:

Cheerwine Bottling Company  
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Guests enjoy dancing to the music of "Flashback."



Old friends Amanda Gibson, Mary Alice Boyd, Lori Redding, and Kendal Cline catch up at RiverDance.



## Upcoming Outings



### *Uwharrie River Canoe Trip - October 28, 2006*

The fall leaf color change will be at its peak, the mosquitoes will be gone, and The LandTrust invites you to come explore the tranquil Uwharrie River with us. We will paddle past thousands of acres of National Forest and LandTrust protected property as the forest puts on a spectacular display of yellows, oranges, and reds. This trip will fill up quick so RSVP early and pack your camera, binoculars, and an extra dry set of clothes as we venture into one of the most beautiful parts of Piedmont North Carolina!

### *4th Annual Salisbury Greenway Tree Lighting - November 27, 2006*

Come one and all and celebrate the holiday season with The LandTrust! Join us at 5:00 at the Overton School entrance to the Salisbury Greenway as local school children decorate trees with handmade natural ornaments. Enjoy refreshments as we sing carols and watch the sun set over Catawba College's permanently protected Ecological Preserve.

### *Uwharrie Hike - December 9, 2006*

Come out and work off some of those holiday cookies as we hike part of the Uwharrie and Dutchman's Creek Trails in the Uwharrie National Forest. Less than an hour and a half from Salisbury, Charlotte, the Triad, and the Triangle, the Uwharries are a great escape to nature and offer some breathtaking views. This hike will be strenuous—we will be hiking 9 miles over mountainous terrain. So bring plenty of water, wear layers, pack a lunch and lace up your hiking boots for this wintertime hike through the Uwharrie Mountains.

### *LandTrust Office Open House - January 18, 2007*

Come on down to 215 Depot Street in Salisbury and join the LandTrust for light hors d'oeuvres and drinks as we host an open house at our office. Meet the staff, check out our office, and hear about some of the great projects we are working on thanks to your generous support.

### *Nature Excursion - April 2007*

Join us this spring for a nature excursion that truly does have something for everyone! Mark Lewis, herpetologist for the NC Zoo, and his wife, Jane, an expert birder, will assist the LandTrust with an all encompassing nature extravaganza. From snakes and lizards to birds and plants, if you have an interest in the creatures of the outdoors, this is the event for you! Look for details, including time and location, in our upcoming LandMark and on our newly redesigned website ([www.landtrustcnc.org/calendar\\_events.asp](http://www.landtrustcnc.org/calendar_events.asp)).

#### *More Fun Spring Activities Coming Up:*

Environmental Education Event - February 2007

Nature Hike - March 2007

Birding Canoe Trip - May 2007

## *Your Gifts Support Our Conservation Work*

Your donations will allow us to continue "Saving the Places You Love" in the Piedmont Region. The following are new or renewing members from **June 15, 2006** through **September 1, 2006**. Every effort has been made to ensure that these names are correct. Should there be an error, or if you have questions or comments, please contact us at 704.647.0302.

### *Heartland 100 (Golden Oak)* *\$5,000 and up*

Mr. and Mrs. William Marc Graham  
Ms. Amy Grissom and Mr. David I. Cohen  
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### *Special Stewardship Gifts*

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### *In-kind Donations*

Walser Technology Group  
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## *Leave a Legacy*

This fall, The Land Trust for Central NC embarks on a new campaign to help our friends understand the multitude of ways in which they can help us accomplish our goal of protecting our wonderful natural and cultural treasures FOREVER!

As many landowners identify their land as an integral connection with a proud family history or a lifetime of hard work, land trusts are uniquely situated to ensure that their story can be shared with future generations. Similarly, many individuals who appreciate nature's wonder and the work of our organization to preserve some of the best lands in our region do not have natural lands to protect. We are hoping that through continual education, we can appeal to

our friends to consider involving us in their planned gifts.

In particular, gifts of land or conservation easements through a will can ensure a perpetual legacy for the owners of special lands. This is particularly compelling for those without children who wonder how their lands will be cared for after they are gone. Similarly, gifts of stock or even residential or commercial property that can be resold by The Land Trust can help support other important conservation projects in our region like the Birkhead or Kannapolis projects highlighted in this newsletter.

For the next 14 months, we intend to let owners of Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) know that if

you are over age 70 ½, you can for the first time ever make contributions of tax deferred and appreciated assets up to \$100,000 *without triggering federal income tax liability!*

Through mailings and future articles, we will be telling the story over the next year of how land trust supporters can, and already have, taken advantage of planned giving opportunities to leave a perpetual legacy of beautiful landscapes in the southern Piedmont of NC. We hope that you will consider including us in your estate plan, and sharing this message with others who might benefit from knowing how supporting us with a planned gift can honor their lands or family history perpetually.

## *Easy Ways to Increase Your Financial Contribution!*

Here are two simple ways for you to increase your giving to The LandTrust without it being a financial burden:

1. Make a pledge for the year and send monthly or quarterly checks. For those with computerized checking, a check would automatically be sent to The LandTrust.
2. Make a pledge for the year and have The LandTrust process a monthly charge on your credit card.

This table shows how small the monthly or quarterly amount would be for each of the largest giving categories:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>
Heartland 100 (\$1000)	\$84	\$250
Benefactor (\$500)	\$42	\$125
Patron (\$250)	\$21	\$63
Sustaining (\$100)	\$9	\$25

If you would like to make a pledge, please contact Barbara Lawther at 704.647.0302. As always, thank you for your support of The LandTrust for Central North Carolina! None of our work would be possible without the generosity of folks like you.

## *Meet the New Guy!*

The LandTrust is pleased to announce that Andrew Waters has joined the staff as the new Operations Director. In his new role, Andrew will help administer day-to-day office activities while also helping out the land protection staff. His expertise will help increase our efficiency and ability to better serve our constituents.

We're very pleased to add someone of Andrew's caliber to our staff. He comes to us from the Catawba Lands Conservancy in Charlotte where he worked as their Land Protection Director. His business experiences are bolstered by an MBA he received from UNC Greensboro.

In his spare time, Andrew enjoys fly-fishing, canoeing, creative writing, and spending time with his wife, Anne, and two-year-old son, Eli.



# RiverDance 2006



Several RiverDance Committee members take a moment to enjoy their hard work and success as they pose for a photo opportunity. Pictured from left to right are: Kelly Goodman, Katie Setzer, Sue Spear, Barbara Lawther, Mary Lou Lipscomb, Julie Steele, and Meredith Abramson. Thanks to all committee members and donors for making this the best RiverDance yet!



Participants brave the dreary weather in search of rare plants during a LandTrust led hike at the first annual Uwharrie Mountain Festival.

## THE LANDTRUST FOR CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA

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.

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