



# Nation Ford News

The Newsletter of Nation Ford Land Trust

Spring 1995

## Team effort produces banner year!

With this issue of our newsletter, Nation Ford Land Trust announces that we have not only completed our most successful year, but that we have completed one of the most successful years ever conducted by a land trust in South Carolina. "Across every corner of this community," says President Murray White, "we have worked hard to identify conservation initiatives and to bring them about in a professional manner. We are excited about what we have and will accomplish."

According to those familiar with land trusts, the Nation Ford experience is consistent with new conservation organizations. "It generally takes two to three years for a new land

trust to earn credibility with the public to complete conservation deals," says Ken Driggers of the Palmetto Conservation Foundation. "It's normal to have a lapse between creation and success. I should add, though, that Nation Ford is now among a select group of conservation organizations in the southeast that can actually complete a deal. They are *the* conservation players in the Charlotte metropolitan area."

"We can attribute a good deal of our success to our board," says President White. "We have a wide range of talents on the 13-member board with each contributing in their own way. It's truly a team effort."



Tony Bebbler, planner with SCPRT, surveys part of the Carroll tract.

## A Foundation for Success

### NFLT's Recent Conservation Initiatives

- initiated the Catawba River Study, a blueprint for development on the River that will assist in long term conservation efforts;
- acquired the Carroll Tract, a splendid 297 acre property adjoining the Catawba River. Nation Ford intends to protect the River's scenic quality through a conservation easement and then resell the property for productive use;
- signed the first Catawba River easement with a private landowner. Hugh White, a long time riverfront property owner on the Fort Mill side, became the first in a hopefully long line of sensitive owners;
- assisted in the protection of a key 133-acre parcel adjacent to Kings Mountain National Battlefield;
- signed an option to purchase Hightower Hall Plantation which surrounds Historic Brattonsville and includes the site of the Battle of Hucks Defeat, an important Revolutionary War skirmish;
- acquired 15 acres of scenic property near Clover.

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# Catawba River Campaign

"It's good to see that this effort will actually be implemented," claims Barry Beasley of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Beasley led a year-long project to prepare a plan for balancing river protection with development from the Lake Wylie Dam to Landsford Canal State. Nation Ford encouraged York, Lancaster and Chester Counties to sponsor the study and participated in its completion.

Now Nation Ford, in conjunction with a variety of conservation interests, is leading a campaign to ensure the Catawba River study becomes a reality. Its efforts are meeting with stunning success as, slowly, protection is becoming the central idea in river issues.

The Catawba River Campaign's primary initiative is to institute a system of scenic buffering and improved access to the River. The River Study called

for scenic easements on both sides of 30-mile River Project Corridor.

The signature project of the Catawba Campaign is the purchase of the "Carroll Property." Nation Ford has entered into a contract to purchase this 297-acre parcel from Wake Forest University. The Trust intends to protect the riverfront through a conservation easement and then resell the property for a productive use. "We want to show," says Nation Ford Director Gene Bodycott, "that the Catawba River can have both conservation and development. We are going to lead by example."

An aggressive fundraising campaign by the Trust has been successful in securing the initial funding to execute the contract. "We are confident, says Will Close, Catawba River Campaign Director, that the Carroll property will be protected."

# Annual Meeting A Success

Dr. Wayne Beam was the featured speaker at the Nation Ford Land Trust Annual meeting on May 10th. A native of Chester, Dr. Beam is Director of the S.C. Office of Coastal Resources and author of the landmark Beachfront Management Act. His presentation on "Preserving South Carolina's Coast" was well received by the 50 members in attendance at York Technical College.

Nation Ford's By-laws call for an annual meeting of the membership to discuss the status of the organization. The Trust seized on the opportunity to report on its successful year.

## Catawba Campaign Sponsors



Hugh White © The Herald 1994

Nation Ford has received three major commitments to begin the Catawba River buffer concept. The Catawba Indian Nation surpassed everyone's dreams by agreeing to institute a 1,000-foot buffer on their riverfront property. "We respect this

property at Waterford Park.

"We have been most excited", says Will Close, "by the decision of Hugh White to sign a conservation easement protecting the River on his property. "Hugh is the first individual landowner to agree and we think he is the best

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River," says Tribal Administrator Wanda Warren. "We want to see it protected." The City of Rock Hill has also agreed to institute a buffer on its

example of landowners doing the right thing." Mr. White's property contains parts of the original Nation Ford and Nation Ford Road, making it among the most historically significant areas in the Southeastern United States.

"I encourage all our supporters to stay tuned," says Mr. Close. "We hope to announce more buffer agreements in the coming months. I think as more landowners understand we are seeking a balance, they will be eager to participate."



*Murray White*

## From the Chairman

# Partner up with Nation Ford

What a year indeed! I can speak for everyone in saying that Nation Ford Land Trust is proud and a bit overwhelmed in what we have accomplished over the past 12 months. From our calculations, we have protected close to \$2 million worth of York County's most special property. What fun it has been!

Nation Ford Land Trust got its start in Fort Mill in 1990. At that time, we focused just on Fort Mill Township. But the countywide pressure from development soon convinced us that the time was ripe for a conservation group stretched across York County. Each year we have taken a step towards countywide focus, and we are proud to claim today that Nation Ford

Land Trust is a force for preserving special resources from Kings Mountain National Military Park to Landsford Canal State Park, from downtown Rock Hill to Smyrna. And, of course, we continue our interest in the Fort Mill Township.

As we reflect on the past year, the Directors of Nation Ford want to thank you, our members, for making this success possible. A land trust like Nation Ford is a partnership between the directors who run the day-to-day operations, and the hundreds of members whose support provide the foundation for success. Everyone's contribution is a crucial step towards the big goal of preserving those parts of York County that are simply too precious to lose.

Nation Ford wants to broaden its

focus and stretch its influence. Our success to-date has resulted from the hard work of talented volunteers. But this year, we want to hire a part-time staff director to coordinate the work of volunteers and allow us to achieve even more for York County.

We need your help. Help us build a membership that can support the work we do. Partner up with Nation Ford by becoming a member at the highest membership level your family can afford. Rejoin if you already are a member. Convince a friend they belong in the Nation Ford family. Volunteer to help.

Nation Ford is doing good work for York County. We preserve land without being controversial or anti-growth. We can do more, but we need your help.

## Protecting Kings Mountain Nation Ford and the Conservation Fund

Kings Mountain National Military Battlefield and the adjoining Kings Mountain State park are major resources for upstate South Carolina. They afford protection for the site of the first major defeat for the British in the South during the Revolutionary War. Secondly, the vast expanse of the parks, almost 10,000 acres in both facilities, provide a major component of protected open space in the Charlotte area.

Conservationists were caught by surprise when owners of a key parcel of property overlooking the park moved for condominium develop-

ment. Kings Mountain had always been a distance from the rush towards development and the prospect of having luxury condominiums overlooking this sacred ground pushed Nation Ford towards action.

The property was bought from the Peller Family by the Conservation Fund, a leading national conservation organization in Virginia. The Fund is well known in the area for the assistance it provided in establishing the Close Greenway. The property has been transferred to Nation Ford Land Trust until such time as it can be included in the State Park system. The

transaction was conducted under a severe time constraint as, for tax-related reasons, it had to be completed during the Christmas holidays.

"A coalition of actors made this nationally significant project successful," say Murray White. Lindsay Pettus, Lancaster real estate agent and Katawba Valley Land Trust President conducted the negotiations for the property. Nation Ford board member and Fort Mill attorney Barry Mack was able to close the transaction under difficult circumstances. And, of course, the Conservation Fund provided the necessary funding to make it a reality.

# Partner up with Nation Ford Land Trust

Nation Ford Land Trust is a partnership among those citizens interested in preserving the natural and cultural integrity of York and its surrounding counties. To accomplish the types of projects described in this newsletter, we need the support of people like you who want to ensure that we pass on the good things about this community to our children.

Take a moment to join Nation Ford Land Trust at the highest membership level you and your family can afford. We promise in return that we will continue to work towards conservation in an effective, business-like manner.

*Yes*, I want to join Nation Ford Land Trust. Please accept my membership at this level

\$25 individual       \$50 family       \$100 business

I want to help conservation in York County. Please let me know I can become involved.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to **Nation Ford Land Trust**, P.O. Box 432, Fort Mill, SC 29716.

*Nation Ford Land Trust is recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions to Nation Ford Land Trust are deductible to the extent allowable by law.*

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