



Nation Ford News

The Newsletter of Nation Ford Land Trust

December, 2002

Telephone (803) 547-8140 • Fax (803) 547-2853 • Email: NFLT@Comporium.net

Nation Ford Greenway Update

Hopefully most of you are aware of the Nation Ford Greenway. Back in November of 2001, the Nation Ford Land Trust signed a memorandum of understanding with York, Lancaster, and Mecklenburg Counties, the Catawba Valley Land Trust, Catawba Lands Conservancy, and the Trust for Public Land. The M.O.U. stated that we would all work together to protect and restore the Sugar Creek watershed. Out of this, Karl Froelich (Trust for Public Land) and Jeff Updike formed a task force to look into the protection of Sugar Creek on the South Carolina end. As the task force progressed, it was agreed that the best way to accomplish this was to create a Greenway with a trail system along the creek banks. The next phase added the Catawba River to the vision and then the northern part that connects Baxter Village to the Anne Springs Close Greenway. This encompasses a 31-mile trail.

In meetings with groups in Rock Hill and York, a need was shown for some sort of bridge over the Catawba in order to connect with the city of Rock Hill's trails. This makes it a very exciting project that not only will help protect the watershed but also create a unique recreational opportunity.

A poll was conducted in Fort Mill and Rock Hill to determine if the public is sufficiently behind this vision. The results show there was a 2 to 1 majority in favor of creating the vision.

Karl and Jeff are now working with landowners to secure easements along the proposed path and looking at different funding mechanisms.

If you would like more information about this project, please call Jeff Updike at the Nation Ford Land Trust office, 803-547-8140.

Carl Gullick Speaks at Annual Meeting

Our 2002 Annual Meeting was held in October at the McCelvey Center in York. The crowd braved the cold, rainy evening to hear Carl Gullick of Voices and Choices speak about the drought and how our water resources affect our current and future lifestyles. If anyone wants to help plan next year's annual meeting, please notify Jeff Updike at the Land Trust office.

New Digs!

*Carl Gullick
Executive Director, Voices & Choices*

Exciting news came to the Land Trust in November. After several years of study and negotiations, the York County Regional Chamber of Commerce signed a lease agreement with Comporium on the historic Fite house located at 210 Tom Hall Street, next door to Comporium's Fort Mill office. Nation Ford Land Trust will be sub-leasing office space from the Chamber effective February 1, 2003. We may need some good strong backs to help with the move!

From the Chairman

This has been another great year for NFLT:

... We have obtained new easements and have several significant easements pending. This activity should only increase as land owners become better aware of what a great financial planning tool this is.

... We continue to work closely with York County Forever. We recently purchased property adjacent to Nanny's Mountain which may well provide public access to the mountain from Liberty Hill Road.

... With our partner, The Trust for Public Land, plans are being developed for the Nation Ford Greenway on Sugar Creek and the Catawba River. The real significance of this is a joint effort with Mecklenburg, York, and Lancaster Counties to improve the water quality of Sugar Creek.

Murray White

... Jeff Updike is finishing up his first year as our executive director and is having a positive impact on our operations. We are most fortunate to have Jeff on board.

... The Palmetto Conservation Foundation continues to be our strong partner. Ken Driggers is truly a friend to NFLT and York County as he works tirelessly to address conservation issues in our community.

As a result of our exploding growth we will need to redouble our efforts in 2003 as we strive to be a significant growth management tool in York County.

Land Use Plan Update

In the Spring of 2002, the York County Council appointed Jeff Updike to serve on the York County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The committee has gone to the public twice to get input on the vision for the future. The first time was to solicit strengths and weaknesses the county currently has and then what opportunities and threats the county will face in the future. The second time was to see if the citizens agree with the new vision statement. Once the vision statement is completed, work will commence on the actual plan.



Jeff Updike

Welcome

Nation Ford Land Trust is proud to announce that Houston O. "Buddy" Motz, Jr. joined our Board of Directors back in the summer. Buddy is currently the chair of a County Commission overseeing health and environmental issues. The Land Trust also is proud to announce that David Anderson has joined our Technical Committee as a water quality expert. David is retired from Duke Energy. A big welcome to both!

Litter Clean-Up Day

The next scheduled litter clean-up date for our Adopt-A-Highway project is Saturday, January 18. We will meet at the Peach Stand on Highway 21 bypass at 10:00 am. Remember to bring your own gloves.

Lily and Eagle Prints Available

We still have some of the Spider Lily prints and the Catawba River Bald Eagle prints for sale at \$100 each. Contact Jeff Updike at 803-547-8140.

*A very special "Thank You" to
Franklin Printers
in Pineville for sponsoring our newsletter!*

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Jeff Updike



Mission Statement

The Nation Ford Land Trust is dedicated to the preservation of open spaces, natural beauty, and the scenic heritage of the York County area. Preserving these qualities will ensure that as our home grows, it retains the qualities that have made it a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family.

A Smart Investment Tip: Conserve Land

At a time when Wall Street offers disappointing returns, land conservation remains one of America's smartest investments. It attracts jobs, enhances property values, and saves billions in government costs.

Today, the best jobs go where the top talent wants to live, and that is in places of natural beauty. Communities that conserve land make an investment in future economic development.

Property next to conservation lands skyrockets in value, with homes selling for 10-20 percent more than comparable homes without access to parks. A survey by the American Association of Homebuilders concluded that new home buyers want trails and natural areas above any other amenity. Frederick Law Olmsted demonstrated this with Central Park, which was built in the late 1800s for \$14 million and returns \$5.4 million in additional annual value.

Saving land from development is often the best way to reduce government spending and avoid increases in property taxes. Many jurisdictions believe that they will make money from the property taxes on new subdivisions, ignoring the true cost of schools, roads, police, water, and storm water management. Studies show that it costs between \$1.04 and \$2 for every dollar of tax revenue to provide services to a typical subdivision. So current taxpayers end up subsidizing outsiders who bring increased traffic, crowded schools, and the loss of the community's individual culture.

It is also cheaper to protect clean water at its source than to build expensive water treatment facilities. New York City, for example, saved \$5 billion in construction costs by purchasing conservation lands around its reservoirs in the Catskill Mountains.

Despite the many documented economic benefits of conservation, each day we are losing 8.6 square miles of America's finest lands to development. At this pace, most of the special places in America will be gone within 20 years. We live in a democracy, but most people simply do not believe that they have a choice about the sprawl that is eroding both our communities and our countryside.

Yet there is reason for hope. America's 1,200-plus nonprofit land trusts have protected more than 6.2 million acres throughout the country. Land Trusts are non-adversarial, charitable organizations that help private landowners protect their land, and they are working for the day when every child in America will grow up within 10 minutes of a protected park, trail, farm, or natural area.

To accomplish this vision, the Land Trust Alliance is working with Congress to improve tax incentives and funding for private landowners, especially farmers and ranchers, who voluntarily protect their land from development. Voters across the country have shown their strong support for conservation by committing more than \$20 billion in tax revenues since 1998 to protect parks and open space.

You can take an important step for your community: Offer your leadership, political support, and charitable gifts to a Land Trust. Better yet, consider donating a conservation easement on your land. It is an investment in the future that offers attractive tax benefits and the satisfaction that the land you love will be protected forever.

Article by
Rand Wentworth, President
Land Trust Alliance

Partner 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 possible for you and your family. We promise in return that we will continue to work towards conservation in an effective, business-like manner.

Yes, I want to join or renew my membership with Nation Ford Land Trust. Please accept my 2003 membership at this level:

\$25 Individual \$50 Family \$100 Business \$250 Patron \$500 Corporate

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

Name _____ Telephone (____) _____

Address _____

Please mail to: Nation Ford Land Trust, P. O. Box 431, 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.

You CAN make a difference!

Nation Ford Land Trust
Post Office Box 431
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