



## NATION FORD LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

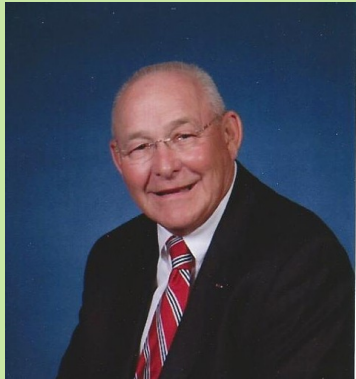
Spring 2021

Preserving the open spaces, natural beauty, and scenic heritage of

York County, South Carolina

[www.nationfordlandtrust.org](http://www.nationfordlandtrust.org)

### *In memory of Chairman Murray White, Jr.*



May 12, 1941 to February 16, 2021

Murray White, Jr., long time chairman of Nation Ford Land Trust passed away on February 16, 2021. All of York County owes a great debt of gratitude to Murray White for his service and outstanding contribution to the community. He provided leadership and vision of lasting impact with the co-founding of Nation Ford Land Trust to act as a conservator of green space. Additionally, he helped create the York County Forever Commission to serve as York County's conservation funding organization. The joint mission of the two organizations has been to promote and protect significant natural, cultural, historical, and environmental resources. Through Murray's vision, over 15,000 acres have been preserved in perpetuity either through conservation easements or purchase; to name a few: Kirsh Wildlife Management Area (600 acres), Worth Mountain (1,646 acres), Nanny's Mountain (Rev. War - 92 acres) and Riverbend Property (1,900 acres).

Murray was a 1959 graduate of Fort Mill High School and was a proud alumna of Presbyterian College where he received his BA in 1963. Upon graduation, he received a commission in the United States Army. After two years of active duty, Murray joined the South Carolina Army National Guard and retired thirty years later as a colonel. He was president of Springs Company Insurance Agency Division. He was elected to the York County Council and served for fourteen years, four of them as chairman.

On behalf of the NFLT board, we extend our sincere condolences to the White family.

## 2021 Sponsors



**David Anderson, Michael and Cheryl Hill, Will Close,  
Derick and Sally Close, Murray and Joyce White,  
Craig Craze, Dr. Douglas Hansen, Richard Marriott,  
Nation Ford Chemical, Kathy and Robert Pender**

## Mission

*To preserve the open spaces, natural beauty, and scenic heritage of the York County, South Carolina area.*

## Board

Bernard Ackerman — Chair  
Dr. Janice Chism — Vice Chair  
Dan Love — Treasurer  
Kathy Pender — Secretary  
Will Close  
Allison Love  
Patrick White  
Lee Whitley  
Jeanne Ferguson  
John Hiott  
Perry Johnston  
Jetter Pittman

## Staff

Steve Hamilton  
Executive Director  
[nationfordlandtrust@gmail.com](mailto:nationfordlandtrust@gmail.com)

Megan Mahoney  
Stewardship Assistant  
[mahoneynationfordland-trust@gmail.com](mailto:mahoneynationfordland-trust@gmail.com)

## Mailing Address

Post Office Box 1273  
Fort Mill, SC 29716  
[www.nationfordlandtrust.org](http://www.nationfordlandtrust.org)

## Office

242 Dairy Barn Lane (Epps House)  
Fort Mill, SC 29715  
Phone (803) 547-8140

The Nation Ford Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1989. The board of directors is a dedicated group of volunteers who support the land trust's mission and seek opportunities to further its land conservation efforts.

Acres presently protected by NFLT: 15,109 acres

# *The Hamrick's place a conservation easement on the historic Smith Ford Farm*

In December 2020, owners Joseph and Annie Laura Hamrick placed a conservation easement on their home site located at the western edge of York County, a mile north of Worth Mountain and almost four miles northwest of Hickory Grove. The 458-acres have been with the family since the 1950s, though its history dates back much further. "It's a very historical place here," said Annie Laura Hamrick. "Smith Ford on the Broad River is like Nation Ford to the Catawba. It had a lot of activity."

Smith Ford and the area surrounding the river is rich with historical features like the original Smith's Ford and the Native American fishing weir traps in the river. Native Americans used the ford as far back as 10,000 BC. The farmhouse was constructed in 1790, included in the YC Survey of Historic Architecture in 1992, and is National Register eligible. Smith Ford is actually a crossroad of American history as it was used by troops during the American Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Confederate troopers, detailed to Jefferson Davis after the fall of Richmond, Va., crossed at the ford during his retreat.

Additionally, the property is located within a mile of the more than 1,600-acre county-owned Worth Mountain property run by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Funding for the project was provided by the S.C. Conservation Bank, York County Forever and Nation Ford Land Trust to complete the bargain sale of the easement.



Clockwise from top left: The Smith Ford. The original front of the house. Owners Joseph and Annie Laura Hamrick in front of additions to the house made over the years.



## ***Murray White Preserve Dedication Ceremony***

On Wednesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, a dedication ceremony took place honoring Former York County Chairman Murray White by naming a large tract of land the Murray White Preserve, located on Vernsdale Road in Rock Hill, SC.

In Dec. 2018, Nation Ford Land Trust received the 158-acre property as a gift from Greenway Waste Solutions (Griffin Brothers, Cornelius, NC) with the intent to place the property into a conservation easement with Catawba Lands Conservancy (CLC).

The Nation Ford Land Trust board decided to name the property the Murray White Preserve after the founding member and long-time chairman of the land trust. Bernie Ackerman, Chairman of NFLT, said, "Murray was the catalyst that brought the original board members together to form the Nation Ford Land Trust." Anne Springs Close, referring to his conservation efforts, said, "Murray has been at this a long time."

The intent of the preserve is to make it an income-producing property for the land trust that entails a forestry plan with timber harvesting, a hunt club lease, and a compost facility of 10-20 acres to be used for the City of Rock Hill's yard waste and operated by Greenway Waste Solutions with NFLT leasing the land to Greenway. Steve Hamilton, Executive Director of NFLT, said, "This way, future NFLT boards will have a consistent income stream and occasionally a large bonus of funds from the timber harvesting operation."



Murray White with Anne Springs Close

## ***Rocky Farm, LLC places an easement and helps protect an area***

In December 2020, landowners Cassandra and Chad McGowan, Jones Andrews, and Doug Kale combined their resources and placed a 186-acre tract on Hope Road in Fairfield County into a conservation easement, calling it the Rocky Farm. The property is adjacent to a proposed Vulcan Material 909-acre mining site that they wanted to offset with conservation easement. The land is currently used for hunting and loblolly pine production. There is a dam on the property with a pond with an area of approximately two acres.

L-R Bernie Ackerman, Jones Anderson, Doug Kale, Chad McGowen



The wildlife found on the property would be that of a typical piedmont woodland ecosystem. The property is bordered by three different creeks, two of which that still run water during the dry season. The property provides habitat for white tail deer, turkey vultures, grey squirrels, raccoons, bobcats, rat snakes, copperhead snakes, and various amphibians and insects. The hills and creeks found on the property possess a variety of tree species: white oak, loblolly pine, yellow poplar, hickory, maple, pawpaw, walnut and beech.

NFLT is pleased that the Rocky Farm group chose to partner with NFLT to preserve this beautiful piece of property.



PO Box 1273  
Fort Mill, SC 29716



## ***2020 Annual Meeting held at the Murray White Preserve***

The NFLT 2020 annual meeting was held in conjunction with the Murray White Dedication ceremony. Bernie Ackerman began with opening comments and a review of the previous year's accomplishments. At the time of the meeting, NFLT had added 4,424 acres in conservation easements. These included the county's Riverbend project (1,700-acres), the Stuck Family 2020 project (2,700-acres), and the Patrick Property near Nanny's Mtn. (24 – acres). The meeting continued with the dedication ceremony and the passing of the resolution naming the property in honor of Murray White. Board members are in the photo.

## ***Nation Ford Land Trust Membership***

The Nation Ford Land Trust depends on its members to help further its mission to enhance the quality of life in the York County area by preserving its open spaces, natural beauty, and scenic heritage. We continue to look for opportunities to partner with the York County Forever Commission on conservation easements, as well as land purchases that provide public access. We are also working with landowners on a variety of conservation projects on private lands, including easements. Your membership will be used to protect land with significant conservation value through projects such as these.

The protection of open space with significant conservation and public value is crucial as our region faces unprecedented growth. Recent studies indicate that if growth continues at the current rate in the southeast, urban sprawl will engulf thousands of acres of forest and agricultural lands from Raleigh, North Carolina to Atlanta, Georgia within the next 50 years. Charlotte and its surrounding counties, including York County, are directly in this path. To donate to the Nation Ford Land Trust or to become a member, please visit our website at [www.nationfordlandtrust.org](http://www.nationfordlandtrust.org).