In November 1796, Indian Agent Benjamin Hawkins is believed to have crossed Martin Creek while traveling west on the Cherokee Trading Path through Stecoe Village, which was located at the “Dividings” in present day Clayton, Georgia.

*Oil painting by Philip Juras*  www.philipjuras.com

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Director’s Page

Nicole Hayler

Friends, thank you very much for your ongoing support during last year’s hiatus in publishing the Chattooga Quarterly. Publication is hereby revived for 2015, and we have also finally entered the social networking scene by establishing Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram accounts. This new social media outreach is intended to work in unison with the Chattooga Quarterly by highlighting the Chattooga Conservancy’s work, and naturally it will be useful for posting events and opportunities for involvement in our programs, as well as for broadcasting alerts such as the need to submit comments on Forest Service plans and proposals for our public lands in the Chattooga River watershed. We’re redesigning our website too, and switching to a new platform that will facilitate our ability to post content quickly. Also, I am pleased to announce that these changes and additions have been spearheaded by two new staff members hailing from the “millennial generation” who have joined the Chattooga Conservancy’s work force: Kelly Cochran as administrative assistant, and Taylor Howard as environmental/land trust attorney and program associate; thus, we are well-positioned to invigorate our organization’s charge to protect, promote and restore the incredible Chattooga River watershed.

Because recent outreach was scant while much has been happening, I will use the remainder of this page as a mini update, and present a selective outline of some of the Chattooga Conservancy’s of ongoing program of work for 2015.

Monitoring the U. S. Forest Service

Seventy percent of the 190,000-acre Chattooga River watershed is national forest land, so oversight of Forest Service proposals is a constant. In the Georgia portion of the watershed, the Forest Service has just released a voluminous environmental assessment that aims to justify and permit a major timber harvesting, burning and road construction project in the Stekoa watershed, and describe a variety of management measures that could improve water quality. Importantly, when completed, the Stekoa WMP will outline of some elements of the Chattooga Conservancy’s work force: Kelly Cochran as administrative assistant, and Taylor Howard as environmental/land trust attorney and program associate; thus, we are well-positioned to invigorate our organization’s charge to protect, promote and restore the incredible Chattooga River watershed.

This spring we transplanted about 80 river cane culms into the native cane restoration site. Cooperation with the Andrew Pickens Ranger District and have just finished transplanting about 250 river cane culms into the Chattooga River watershed. We’re redesigning our website too, and switching to a new platform that will facilitate our ability to post content quickly. Also, I am pleased to announce that these changes and additions have been spearheaded by two new staff members hailing from the “millennial generation” who have joined the Chattooga Conservancy’s work force: Kelly Cochran as administrative assistant, and Taylor Howard as environmental/land trust attorney and program associate; thus, we are well-positioned to invigorate our organization’s charge to protect, promote and restore the incredible Chattooga River watershed.

Land Trust – Accreditation

The Chattooga Conservancy has operated a land trust since 2006, and currently holds conservation easements on 12 tracts located in northeastern Georgia, totaling altogether over 400 acres. The Land Trust Alliance, a national umbrella organization focused on land trust issues, is encouraging eligible land trusts to gain “accredited” status, which requires meeting national quality standards and practices that address the ethical and management measures identified in the WMP.

The Life of a Caddisfly

Laura Ann Garren

“The Life of a Caddisfly” is an excerpt from The Chattooga River: A Natural and Cultural History by Laura Ann Garren published in 2013 by The History Press.

Beneath the surface of the river, something wormlike, but segmented, darts through the water and disappears into a crack in a stone. Slowly, a head peers out and two sharp mandibles click together. Sensing that the coast is clear, the creature crawls out onto the surface of the rock. It’s about a half-inch long, bright green, and motled with brown; it looks like a bit of algae, the sort that beds in the bedrock. Three legs on each side of its upper body sport tiny claws, which allow it to move more securely over the rock face. What looks like a pair of grappling hooks from its posterior end. The adult caddisfly looks like a star of a science-fiction horror movie, something that would crawl into a person’s ear and wreak havoc. But this miniature monster is a caddisfly larva, not dangerous to anything but organic matter and perhaps other insect larvae. While not many people may know a caddisfly from a Cadbury crème egg, this insect has a very important role in the life of a river.

The adult caddisfly is a delicate thing, with four lacey, membranous wings and a slender body that can range in color from silver to orange. They also brandish two whip-like antennae, sometimes twice as long as their bodies.

Ecologically, they are related to mayflies—described lyrically as “lifelong dancers of a day.” By poaching its prey and other insect larvae, they can range in color from silver to orange. They also brandish two whip-like antennae, sometimes twice as long as their bodies.

Many species of caddisflies construct and live inside of tubs built of bits of twigs, bark, shells or pebbles, which provide protection and camouflage for the soft-bodied larvae.

The importance of a universal classification system is illuminated when you realize how many species of insects exist on Earth: estimates range as high as 80 million, according to Dr. Terry Erwin of the Smithsonian Institute. According to Robert G. Footitt and Peter H. Adler, in their 2009 book, Insect Biodiversity: Science and Society, 1,004,898 species of insects exist, representing about two-thirds (58–67%) of all plant and animal species; possibly 10 quintillion (10^15) of 17 more zeros) individual insects are alive at a given time.

Like every other organism on Earth, the ultimate purpose of the caddisfly is to reproduce. The beginning, for a caddisfly, is...
The Life of a Caddisfly

an egg, which is encased with hundreds of others in “a sticky matrix, a sort of jelly ball,” Morse describes. Laid close to or in water, the eggs hatch in a couple of weeks; the resulting larva enter their new aquatic environment. Here they make a living, foraging around the streambed searching for food, including tiny bits of organic matter resting on the bottom of the stream, as well as algae, fungi, plant material, and other organisms, says Morse, fit it 66–something with glasses and a crew cut. Some even weave “little fishing nets they build in the water and use to catch food.” In addition, the larva acts as a sort of aquatic earthworm, chowing up dead sticks and leaves, breaking them down, and then depositing them via their excrement. As Morse puts it, “They are crucial in the transformation of organic nutrients from tiny particles into larger ones, and of larger ones to smaller ones.” Caddisfly larvae not only eat but also are eaten, by fish, other insects, spiders, crayfish, birds, bats, and other animals in the food chain.

Caddisflies have one of the most interesting habits. Some species of caddisfly larvae move freely in a stream, where they hide in cracks and chase insect prey. However, others creatively “build a little house they carry around, built of bits of sticks, sand, and even the houses of other species of caddisfly larvae” that contain the occupant, which then gets a piggyback ride. “They look like a little Medusa,” Morse chuckles. This ingenious adaptation provides physical protection and camouflage for the soft-bodied larva. In addition, they use these “little tubes” to assist respiration by drawing in a fresh supply of oxygenated water and pushing it out with rhythmic undulations of the body.

Some of these architecturally inclined caddisfly larvae fashion their little houses out of mussel shells or pebbles; Morse once saw one that had precisely and symmetrically applied tiny twigs of gradually decreasing lengths, on four sides, from top to bottom. The result, a tube of stacked squares, looked like a miniature, art-deco statue. When you see something this beautiful, you may be tempted to suspect that these insects actually think about and plan their designs. However, their behavior is “hardwired by genetics, including a range of possible adaptations of that behavior according to different environmental conditions,” explains Morse. Basically, they use whatever’s available to them, but sometimes with stunning results that rival any artist’s. In fact, jewelry maker Kathy Kyle considers the designs to be little masterpieces. She collects and raises caddisfly larvae, offering them materials not readily available on the bottom of a stream. Using opals, amethysts, turquoise, gold, and other precious gems and minerals, these artisans then work their arts of art. Kyle then rearranges each larva from its tube and returns it to the stream from which it was collected, using the empty vessel to create a one-of-a-kind piece of jewelry.

Left to their devices, the larva grow all year, capturing food to nourish their growing bodies. They pass through five “instars,” a poetic description of the developmental stage, in which they change as they grow and as they progress toward adulthood. If they avoid becoming someone else’s meal, the larva finally enter the pupal stage, where they dwell for about two or three weeks. When they emerge as adults, they couldn’t look more different from their aquatic selves: from sci-fi monsters to winged ephemera. After a brief spell upon the earth, they flutter off on their last adventure: to find a mate. After copulating, they slither right on the water or dive beneath it, perch on a rock alongside the river or dangle from an overhanging tree branch or bridge abutment. Their last act is to lay eggs, the promise of the next generation. The wheel of life keeps turning.

The caddisfly’s importance to the river cannot be overstated. If for some reason all of them disappeared, the river would die. “It would be a disaster,” says Morse. “The food chain would break down completely. The fish would die. It would stink,” and the same cause would also kill stoneflies, mayflies, and other aquatic species. However, a total caddisfly wipeout would never happen, Morse assures, because “different species are differentially sensitive to pollution and different kinds of pollution.” This realization has led to an elegant method of testing the health of a river using insects, and the unassuming caddisfly is an indicator species, as well as part of the food chain. Morse explains that caddisflies and other insects

The most common pollutant Morse has seen on the Chattooga is sediment. Sediments issue from roadwork, road crossings over the river, or “any kind of activity that removes vegetation and causes erosion.” What sediment does is fill the cracks and crevices, and among the rocks on the streambed, where insects like to hide to avoid fish.

“They have no place to live; the sediment destroys their habitat,” he says. Left to their devices, the larva grow all year, capturing food to nourish their growing bodies. They pass through five “instars,” a poetic description of the developmental stage, in which they change as they grow and as they progress toward adulthood. If they avoid becoming someone else’s meal, the larva finally enter the pupal stage, where they dwell for about two or three weeks. When they emerge as adults, they couldn’t look more different from their aquatic selves: from sci-fi monsters to winged ephemera. After a brief spell upon the earth, they flutter off on their last adventure: to find a mate. After copulating, they slither right on the water or dive beneath it, perch on a rock alongside the river or dangle from an overhanging tree branch or bridge abutment. Their last act is to lay eggs, the promise of the next generation. The wheel of life keeps turning.

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are scaled for tolerance from zero to ten, with zero equaling absolute aversion for a pollutant. A community is sampled and the species identified; if the sample contains a lot of species that possess zero tolerance for pollution, then the water is deemed pristine.

According to this criterion, says Morse, the Chattooga River, which has a high density and diversity of caddisflies, is “in pretty good shape, especially near the headwaters.” The most common pollutant Morse has seen on the Chattooga is sediment. Sediments issue from roadwork, road crossings over the river, or “any kind of activity that removes vegetation and causes erosion.” What sediment does is fill the cracks and crevices, and among the rocks on the streambed, where insects like to hide to avoid fish. “They have no place to live; the sediment becomes a pollutant that destroys their habitat,” he says.

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The Chattooga River has an EPT index of 60-65, meaning that 60-65 individual species of “bio-indicators” (mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies) are found in a water sample. The SC Department of Health & Environmental Control samples 800 sites, representing thousands of miles of streams, and the Chattooga River, heavily forested without much human encroachment, is the cleanest.

and caddisflies (with Latin names Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera, and Trichoptera, respectively). These insects offer a 24-hour, daily monitoring system that is more effective than simply sampling water, explains Glover. Insects stay put, while water flows, taking pollutants with it. In other words, insects demonstrate exposure to a pollutant after the effected water has washed downstream. As Morse puts it, “They also respond to the combined effects of all potentially important pollutants in a way that is impossible to measure in a chemical laboratory.”

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Glover has one collection site, on Highway 76, which is sampled every other month. The mission of SC DHEC is to carry out the mandate of the Clean Water Act of 1972, which requires the agency to “maintain and restore the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the waters of the nation,” says Glover. The Environmental Protection Agency, created in 1970, holds ultimate authority, but each state partners with this entity, and each other when necessary, to ensure that the laws are enforced. Little do most people know, the humble caddisfly plays an important role in this process. Who would guess that with all the high technology available, an insect is the go-to for water pollution?
The Lost Village of Stecoe

Ancient human culture, travel patterns and settlement locations were shaped to a large degree by topographic features. Mountain ranges, for example, were natural barriers to travel. It was necessary to cross these barriers at a point of least resistance, usually at a low point called a pass. Consequently, settlements were likely to hold at a convergence of trails where people congregated beneath a mountain pass. The Khyber Pass comes immediately to mind, where for centuries traders, adventurers and armies crossed the mountains at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border on the trade route between Central and East Asia. Armies often clashed at these natural points of ambush, and diverse cultures developed along the ancient passways, shaped by topographic features.

The Lower Cherokee Trading Path approached Stecoe Village from the east, crossing the Chattooga River and originating in Charleston, South Carolina. This trail ran to Keowee Town, a major trade outlet on a frontier fort called Fort Prince George, which was located near Seneca, South Carolina. The trail crossed the Chattooga at Earls Ford, and closely followed Warwoman Road to another old Indian village called “Tuchahreetchih” near the Tuckaluge Creek. Most scholars agree that from this old village, the trail followed Warwoman Creek to a place called Finny Creek or Martin Creek, just this side of Warwoman Creek. Then the old trail followed Martin Creek to its source at Court House Gap, just north of Pinnacle Mountain. There, the trail divided as it descended toward Stecoy Creek; one trail followed Martin Creek to its source at Court House Gap, just north of Pinnacle Mountain. The old village was described by early travelers as being across Stecoy Creek from the confluence of Saddle Gap Creek and Stekoa Creek.

The Middle Village Trail that crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains at Passover (Mountain City) originated at the intersection of the Lower Cherokee Trading Path and the Hiwassee Trail, which followed the west side of the old Tallulah Falls Railroad, then eventually became Georgia State Highway 441. This trail was an alternate route to the Cherokee Trading Path to Charleston. The right fork of the trail ran south to Fort Prince George, which was located near Seneca, South Carolina. This trail was an alternate route to the Cherokee trading path to Charleston. The right fork of the trail ran south to Fort Prince George, which was located near Seneca, South Carolina. This trail was an alternate route to the Cherokee Trading Path to Charleston.

Another connector trail between the Middle Village Trail and the Hiwassee Trail departed the Middle Village Trail at present Toccoa, Georgia, where the old village called Estatoe, and traveled through Keener Gap to connect with the Hiwassee Trail. This bypassed the Dividings as sort of a short cut.

The Lost Village of Stecoe

Another main trail entered Old Stecoe from the south along Old Highway 441, also known as South Main Street in Clayton. Traveling south from Clayton, this old trail crossed Scott Creek and followed about 1.5 miles further, where the trail forked. The right fork went to Tiger Mountain, and probably out Bridge Road and eventually to Nacoochee Village near present day Helen, Georgia. The other fork continued south past Tiger, following the west side of the old Tallulah Falls Railroad, then south to “Hunslin’s” state of Lakeshore, Ga. to Creek Old Ford on the Tallulah River at Lake Rabun. Once across the Tallulah River, the trail forked again. The left fork went southwest, across the Tugalo River below the confluence of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Tallulah River, and into South Carolina. This trail was an alternate route to the Cherokee trading path to Charleston. The right fork of the trail ran south to Charleston, S.C. followed by a road that would be called the Locust Stake Road, and eventually became Georgia State Highway 441.

The Native American trail system leading into the Dividings was much like a spider web spreading across the terrain. There were many secondary trails and connector trails. For example, The Hiwassee Trail also forked on the other side of the gap above the headwaters of Scott Creek. The left fork followed down many maps, Hahira southwest and leading to Nacoochee Village. The right fork went up Timpson Creek for about a mile, and then turned northwest across a gap to a tributary of Persimmon Creek called Racepath Creek. Here at the confluence of these two creeks, the trail crossed the Tallulah River to the Plum Orchard Trail, and eventually became Georgia State Highway 441.

There was also a connector trail that came from South Carolina across the Chattooga River at Rogue’s Ford, where Highway 76 crosses the Chattooga River today. The trail closely followed present day Highway 76 to another old village called “Chicherohe,” and went then through a gap near Rainy Mountain to connect with the Cherokee Trading Path on Warwoman Creek (Henry Mouzon’s Map, 1777). Another connector trail between the Middle Village Trail and the Hiwassee Trail departed the Middle Village Trail at present Dillard, Georgia, near another old village called Estatoe, and traveled through Khyber Pass immediately to mind, where for centuries travelers, adventurers and armies crossed the mountains at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border on the trade route between Central and East Asia. Armies often clashed at these natural points of ambush, and diverse cultures developed along the ancient passways, shaped by topographic features.

The terrain becomes steep and restricted. From here, there were two possibilities to cross the ridge into the Stekoa Creek watershed. One would have to climb the steep narrow cove called...
The Lost Village of Stecoe

Traveling downstream, Hawkins would have reached the Dividings near the center of Clayton. Hawkins, who was headed to the Creek nation, took the west fork across Scott Creek, passing through the old village of Stecoe.

Even though we may not know exactly where the old village stood, we can only imagine how important it was in the lives of Native Americans. There was undoubtedly much interaction of a very diverse mix of travelers at Stecoe Village, including peoples from different Indian villages and tribes. Mobilian traders who brought shells, chert, seeds and copper, and even Jane Scott-Irish traders, who were the first white men to migrate into Indian country. These white traders would be harbingers of things to come: smallpox, war and famine. This place, that must have been so stimulated by cultural and economic exchange, would pay the price for living near a geo-political crossroads. The village was probably devastated by smallpox in one of the first epidemics to sweep through the Cherokee nation in the early 1700s. Later, three large British and American armies would march through the old abandoned village. Stecoe Village was also located on the border between Cherokee and Creek Indian territories. The Creeks probably took advantage of Cherokee people, whose populations were greatly reduced by the smallpox epidemics. The coule de gras for Stecoe Village could have been the constant raids by the Creeks during this period. By the time the three European armies of Montgomery, Grant and Williamson passed through their way to destroy what was left of the Cherokee, Stecoe Village had long been abandoned.

There is no trace of the old village today. The Georgia Gold Rush of the early 1800s resulted in the Cherokee Removal and the “Trail of Tears.” The land of the north Georgia mountains was surveyed and offered to settlers in the Georgia Lottery. The old village was soon plowed under. Then, as the City of Clayton became established, the building of the Tallulah Falls Railroad and Highway 441 obliterated what was left of the old Indian village.

The Lost Village of Stecoe

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The Chatooga Conservancy is currently collaborating with the City of Clayton to establish a greenway through town on Highway 441; another group wants more industry. Nonetheless, one thing is clear: as in the old days, most of the traffic on Highway 441 through Clayton consists of people on their way to somewhere else. Stecoe Village was destroyed as a result of its geographic location. If history repeats itself, the future of the City of Clayton will ultimately depend on how the community adapts to Clayton’s strategic location at the convergence of multiple human migratory corridors that often bring destruction as well as economic growth. Yet, much of the surrounding area has been protected as national forest land. The Chatooga National Wild and Scenic River is one of the longest free-flowing rivers in the eastern United States. Black Rock State Park is one of the most beautiful parks in Georgia. Rabun County was one of the most biologically rich places on Earth. The answer to revitalizing Clayton may be to develop quality destination sites in keeping with our rich cultural and natural heritage, rather than becoming a way-station on the path to somewhere else.

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Figure 1: This sketch appeared in the Journal of an Expedition to South Carolina (1761) by Christopher French, who described it as an Indian “mark” either threatening or indicating they had a prisoner.

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Watershed Update

Forest Service Proposes Massive Project in the Warwoman Watershed

The Chattooga River Ranger District based in the Georgia portion of the Chattooga watershed recently released a lengthy draft environmental assessment (draft EA) for the Forest Service’s Upper Warwoman Project, which proposes “treatments” on about 11,424 acres of our national forest land in the Warwoman Creek watershed. The draft EA documents that implementing the project would result in a hefty net loss to taxpayers of $505,373 (12-year total); Details of the proposal include: 1,180 acres of timber harvesting; 10,121 acres of burning (5,406 acres of which would occur during the growing season); construction of 5 stream crossings; 11 miles of road building; road building into a portion of the Windy Gap Roadless Area (a roadless area that was illegally excluded from protection during the last Chattahoochee Forest Plan revision); and, the Warwoman project would occur where over 75% of the project area is located on steep and/or very steep slopes.

The Chattooga Conservancy submitted comments on the draft EA; that were critical of the scope and intensity of the agency’s proposal. In sum, our comments urged the Forest Service to protect the Windy Gap Roadless Area; restore connected patches of native old growth trees across the landscape; incorporate the use of of increased timber harvesting (known as the “suitable timber base”). Because the Chattooga’s headwaters are in the Nantahala-NagCHE National Forest (NPF), we are concerned about the overall health of mother commercial logging, and the resulting habitat fragmentation, road construction, and erosion and sedimentation that could occur from new land disturbing activities within the Chattooga headwaters. As part of the ongoing forest plan revision process, the Forest Service is required to inventory and evaluate all lands within the NPF that are suitable for potential wilderness designation, and as such, remain subject to the possibility of being included within the suitable timber base.

The Chattooga Conservancy has recently expanded our monitoring and oversight of Forest Service activities to include the extensive revision of the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest (NPNF) Land and Resource Management Plan. The outcome of the plan revision will govern the management of this national forest for the next 10 years, and indications are that the Forest Service is gearing up to propose an increase in the total acreage that is deemed suitable for timber harvesting (known as the “suitable timber base”). Because the Chattooga’s headwaters are in the Nantahala National Forest (NPF), we are concerned about over the next 4 years of sustained funding efforts and thousands of hours of work to restore the ecological values of the property while constructing amenities for public use.

The Chattooga Conservancy, which also operates a land trust program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive program of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent conservation organizations that meet national quality standards and practices, which comply with national quality standards and practices, which it must undergo an accreditation process when applying for accreditation. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: fax: 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on the Chattooga Conservancy’s application will be most useful if received before June 1, 2015.

Battle Over the Upper Chattooga Continues

Last August, the Andrew Pickens Ranger District of the Forest Service released an environmental assessment (EA) that proposed to designate 6 new “boater access” trails throughout the Chattooga River’s upper reaches. Because we believe that this proposal contains several legal and analytical infirmities, we submitted comments in opposition of the proposal and will continue to advocate for more reasoned and informed decision-making on the behalf of the Forest Service. Specifically, the Forest Service’s proposal is based on an analysis prepared back in 2012, that addresses the potential environmental impacts from the designation of new 5 boater access trails in the headwaters. Yet in the most recent proposal, 6 boater access trails have been proposed, meaning that the sixth trail has not been analyzed for its impacts. Additionally, we believe that several environmental statutes including the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Wilderness Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, have been violated due to serious flaws in the Forest Service’s analyses. Our greatest concern is that if the new trails are designated as proposed, the sense of rugged isolation and solitude that has defined the Chattooga’s headwaters will be lost and thus irrevocably damaged. (The Chattooga River is already classified as a Wild and Scenic River, and is one of the most outstandingly remarkable values will occur. We will continue to work for designating boater access trails in a manner that is procedurally and analytically sound. With public support, there is a good chance of achieving these goals.

Surprisingly, the Terrapin Mountain and Overflow Creek areas, both located within the Chattooga’s headwaters, were not inventoried and evaluated as suitable for potential wilderness designation, and as such, remain subject to the possibility of being included within the suitable timber base.

NC Forest Plan Revision is Underway

The Chattooga Conservancy has recently expanded our monitoring and oversight of Forest Service activities to include the extensive revision of the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest (NPNF) Land and Resource Management Plan. The outcome of the plan revision will govern the management of this national forest for the next 10 years, and indications are that the Forest Service is gearing up to propose an increase in the total acreage that is deemed suitable for timber harvesting (known as the “suitable timber base”). Because the Chattooga’s headwaters are in the Nantahala National Forest (NPF), we are concerned about over the next 4 years of sustained funding efforts and thousands of hours of work to restore the ecological values of the property while constructing amenities for public use.

The Chattooga Conservancy, which also operates a land trust program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive program of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent conservation organizations that meet national quality standards and practices, which it must undergo an accreditation process when applying for accreditation. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: fax: 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on the Chattooga Conservancy’s application will be most useful if received before June 1, 2015.

Two More Cell Tower Victories

After halting construction of an unsightly cell tower on Wolf Mountain adjacent to the Chattooga Wild & Scenic River Corridor, the Chattooga Conservancy was involved in defeating two more visually intrusive cell tower projects in the Chattooga River watershed during 2014. The first victory was the result of another contest Verizon’s application by SCI Towers to obtain a permit for constructing a 195-foot cell tower near the Thrifts Ferry Road in SC, in close proximity to the Chattooga Wild & Scenic River Corridor. With support from private property owners near the proposed site, we challenged the application on the basis that SCI withdrew it from consideration by the Oconee County Board of Zoning Appeals. The next victory involved an application by Verizon to build a 120-foot cell tower on Whiteside Mountain, located at the top of the Chattooga River watershed in Jackson County, NC. In this instance, the Chattooga Conservancy worked with affected landowners to contest Verizon’s application, because the presence of a cell tower at Whiteside Mountain would have an unacceptable negative effect on the natural and cultural heritage of Whiteside Mountain and the unique view of the Chattooga River watershed seen from atop of Whiteside Mountain’s peak, a heavily used destination site and one of the most iconic mountains in the Southern Appalachians. In response to this opposition, Verizon withdrew their application- for the time being, at least...

Watershed Update

Stekoa Creek Park - Opening This Spring

Plans are to officially open Stekoa Creek Park this spring. The 5-acre park is located on Highway 441 North in Clayton, GA, and includes a beautiful section of Stekoa Creek. The park project has been a huge endeavor for the Chattooga Conservancy, which has fought for over 4 years of sustained fundraising efforts and thousands of hours of work to restore the ecological values of the property while constructing amenities for public use.

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Rick Cobb

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In Memory Of
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In Honor Of
Buck Cobb

Thank You
George E. Crouch Foundation
Dave Mason
Mountain Ivy Garden Club
Fred & Alice Stanback
Dick & Challis Surles
Mike Stockton & Chattooga Whitewater Shop
for your special contribution to the Stekoa Creek Park project

THANK YOU VERY MUCH to everyone who recently contributed to the Chattooga Conservancy. Your generous donations will help us continue to work on the important conservation issues facing the Chattooga River watershed area.

Members’ Pages

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Lebanon Baptist Church
Bob & Jean Louis
Pendleton Area Saddle Club

In Honor Of
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George & Donna Patterson
Pendleton Area Saddle Club
Dorothy Peter
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Alvin Burruss

Chattooga Quarterly
Chattooga Quarterly
Mission:

To protect, promote and restore the natural ecological integrity of the Chattooga River watershed ecosystems; to ensure the viability of native species in harmony with the need for a healthy human environment; and, to educate and empower communities to practice good stewardship on public and private lands.

Goals:

Monitor the U.S. Forest Service’s management of public forest lands in the watershed, and work cooperatively to develop a sound ecosystem initiative for the watershed

Promote public choice based on credible scientific information

Protect remaining old growth and roadless areas

Promote public land acquisition by the Forest Service in the watershed

Educate the public

Promote sustainable communities

Promote conservation by honoring cultural heritage