



Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

DEBBIE CRANE/TNC

Conservancy Launches Climate Change Adaptation Project

Duke Energy Gives \$1 Million to Effort

Dennis Stewart has already seen rapid changes in coastal habitats. He is worried about what's to come. When he began his career over 27 years ago, he admired the dense pond pine pocosin that lined Highway 64 near Mann's Harbor. In those days the pocosin came well up to the canal bank along the highway. Today it has retreated. Now, when he drives by he sees sawgrass marsh and the occasional shrub.

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The Magazine of **The North Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy**

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mission statement

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

To date, the Conservancy and its members have been responsible for the protection of more than 117 million acres of land and 5,000 miles of river around the world. The Nature Conservancy works in all 50 states and more than 30 countries. While some Conservancy acquired areas are transferred to other conservation groups, both public and private, the Conservancy owns more than 1,400 preserves—the largest private system of nature sanctuaries in the world.

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director's note



The cover story in this newsletter marks a bit of a departure for The Nature Conservancy. We devote much of our efforts to buying and preserving land, which is often transferred into public ownership.

We are moving into a new arena. Duke Energy's million dollar gift is a big boost to our efforts to research the effects of climate change on the North Carolina coast.

We are protecting our investment. The Conservancy and our partners have preserved more than half a million acres on the Albemarle Peninsula and Outer Banks. Much of that area is in danger due to climate change and rising seas. Some models predict that as

many as a million acres in the region may be lost to rising sea level in a hundred years.

The area is studded with conservation crown jewels, including Lake Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge.

Our climate research project will take place at the Alligator refuge. I have to admit, the Alligator has a special place in my heart. When I worked with Congressman Walter B. Jones, Sr., I was involved in the early efforts to create the refuge. Its location, surrounded on three sides by water, was perfect for reintroduction of the red wolf, which had been declared extinct in the wild. Today, more than a hundred red wolves live on the refuge and that work has been replicated elsewhere.

What was a boon then – water on three sides – is now a problem. If you look at a map of the area today and impose projected sea level rise on that map, then the refuge disappears by the end of the 21st century.

We must do something to make this area more resilient to sea level rise. What we learn with this project can be used elsewhere in the country and the world.

Although the Duke Energy gift and a \$250,000 donation from Liz and Rob Pungello of Chapel Hill will get this research underway, we must raise additional dollars to fund the complete project. This is a high priority for the Conservancy. It is important for all of us who love North Carolina's coast and for those who depend on the coast for their livelihoods.

Sincerely,

Katherine,
Executive Director

Spring Break in the Sandhills: MICHIGAN STUDENTS PLANT LONGLEAF SEEDLINGS



(left) Alyssa Zeglen and Diane Nguyen ©DEBBIE CRANE/TNC (right) Ben Rance ©DEBBIE CRANE/TNC

If you had a choice of spending spring break doing backbreaking work in the North Carolina Sandhills or joining your peers at say, Fort Lauderdale, what would you choose? For the past few years, students from Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan have chosen the Sandhills, participating in the Alternative Spring Break program. For two weeks in March, the students planted 30,000 longleaf seedlings, helping to restore a Hoke County forest.

Sandhills' Steward Mike Norris says the students are great to work with. "They have lots of enthusiasm and energy," he explains.

Juniors Alyssa Zeglen and Diane Nguyen were Western Michigan's site leaders for the Sandhills project. Nguyen says planning for spring break began in September, with students applying to the program. Students pick their areas of interest. In addition to environmental work, students can also address poverty issues and disaster relief across the country.

Students aren't hanging out with their friends at alternative spring break. Zeglen says organizers deliberately place friends in different groups. "This breaks down cliques and helps to bring

you out of your comfort zone."

The idea is simple, says Nguyen. "It brings together people with the same ideals. You meet new people and have some fun."

None of the Western Michigan students knew each other prior to the North Carolina trip. But, by the end of the week they had gotten to know each other under tough conditions. Most of the students traveling to North Carolina during the first weekend in March expected sunny days. Instead, they arrived to snowfall and frozen pipes at the house where they were staying. Any student at the University is eligible for the program. Students pay \$225 to participate in the program.

The alternative spring break choice doesn't have to relate to their major. Zeglen is a pre-med major and Nguyen is a psychology major. Senior Ben Rance says the project does relate directly to his future. He graduates this spring with a degree in environmental studies and Spanish. After graduate work in Alaska, he plans to spend time in the Peace Corps in either Central or South America. "This is just what I love doing, being outside in a place like this," he explains. "You don't find places like this around Kalamazoo."

Norris says student satisfaction is important to the project. "We try to make sure they have a good experience and go home feeling they did some good work."

Participants in past years have stayed in touch with Norris. At least two of them have gone into conservation work. Norris says the students make a real difference. "They are leaving a small legacy – a nice little lasting impression."

Rance agrees. "I don't think I'll be around in a hundred years, but I know I've made a difference."

Conservancy Launches Climate Change Adaptation



“Something has caused that change,” Stewart, Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge biologist, explains. “The best answer I can think of is rising sea level and salt water intrusion.”

Climate change threatens decades of conservation work on the Albemarle Peninsula and Outer Banks. The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other conservation partners have protected 540,000 acres in the region.

The Service has four refuges in the area – Alligator River, Pocosin Lakes, Swan Quarter and Mattamuskeet. The State of North Carolina also has substantial holdings.

“Conservation has been an integral part of northeastern North Carolina,” says Nature Conservancy Executive Director Katherine Skinner. “Together, we have made a huge investment there and every bit of that investment is threatened.”

Thanks to a \$1 million gift from Duke Energy, the Conservancy will begin a pilot climate change adaptation project at the Alligator River Refuge this spring.

“This is valuable work that will help all of coastal North Carolina and the country adapt fragile coastal areas to rising sea levels,” said Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers in announcing the gift. “This is the kind of groundbreaking research that helps us learn more about climate change and will make a positive difference in our future.”

The Conservancy’s climate change adaptation project will make the fragile shoreline more resilient to encroaching seas. Adaptation strategies include: planting species with a higher tolerance to salt water; restoring the hydrology to maintain freshwater wetlands as a buffer to rising sea levels and to limit saltwater intrusion; and building oyster reefs to absorb wave activity.

The area is bisected with drainage canals and ditches, which allow the wind/tide driven systems to jet brackish water much further into the interior than is natural. “Our first job is to look at the surface water drainage patterns, how they have been altered and what we can do to restore them,” says Rick Studenmund,

Conservancy conservation director.

The refuge is rich in flora and fauna. It is home to one of the country's healthiest black bear populations. The Service has successfully reintroduced the red wolf into the wild, and it is a renowned bird watching spot. All are threatened by climate change.

In May and June, huge numbers of Neotropical songbirds visit the refuge and a wide variety of birds can be found there year-round.

"Forested wetlands are transitioning into marsh," explains Stewart. "That means that those species like warblers and woodpeckers that are adapted to a forest type habitat are not as likely to survive in a marsh."

While the refuge is threatened by salt water intrusion, shoreline erosion is also accelerating. "In an ideal world, the transition of forest to marsh should equal the rate of erosion of the marsh on the shoreline, but we don't live in an ideal world – even the marsh-dwelling species are currently feeling and will continue to feel the pinch," says Stewart.

The project will also explore the land's role in carbon sequestration. "The peat deposits on the Albemarle Peninsula are some of the largest in the continental United States and are an important reservoir of carbon trapped in the soil," Studenmund explains. "We are going to figure out the impact of our conservation efforts both on protecting

existing carbon in the soil as well as sequestering new carbon through planting of trees and herbaceous materials."

Studenmund says that oyster reefs also play a role in carbon sequestration, because they are made of a form of carbon – calcium carbonate.

In addition to the Duke Energy gift, Liz and Rob Pungello of Chapel Hill gave \$250,000. The Conservancy hopes to raise another \$1.75 million to fund the project. Project Director Brian Boutin was hired this spring and the Conservancy is pulling together a scientific advisory committee. (See "Adaptation Project Director Hired" in this newsletter)

Stewart credits the "dogged determination" of the Conservancy for making the project

reality, particularly the work of former science director Sam Pearsall.

Lessons learned here will be used elsewhere on the North Carolina coast as well as other places in the country and around the world. Stewart says he is "excited and thrilled" about that prospect.

"It has been a long hard road. Now we can do something," he explains. "You have two choices – throw up your hands and say there is nothing I can do or you can say, gee, this is an unprecedented opportunity. My choice is the latter. Now we're going to do something that will help set the stage for future generations to work from and serve as a model for other agencies and organizations."



Great Egret at Lake Mattamuskeet
© DEBBIE CRANE/TNC

"This is valuable work that will help all of coastal North Carolina and the country adapt fragile coastal areas to rising sea levels,"

SAID DUKE ENERGY CEO JIM ROGERS



Brian Boutin

Brian Boutin is a self-described "water rat." He remembers many hours as a child playing at the beach or "helping" with his dad's master's thesis, digging in Delaware's coastal ditches and canals for fossil clams and scallops. "There was such a big draw to the ocean, more so than any other place I had seen," he explains.

That's one of the reasons why Conservation Director Rick Studenmund describes Boutin as the "perfect" choice to lead the Climate Change Adaptation Project. "It was clear that Brian had the right skills. He is smart. He is energetic. He is ready to lead," Studenmund says.

Boutin translated that lifelong love of all things marine to a career path – earning a B.S. in Marine Biology from UNC-Wilmington and a Ph.D. in Marine Studies from the University of Delaware. Most recently, Boutin worked for the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries where he helped update the North Carolina Coastal Habitat Protection Plan, which included a section on how climate change will affect coastal fisheries habitat in the state. "I've been working on a lot of the same issues more in theory with coastal habitats," he says. "It is a wonderful opportunity to actually be able to put the theory into practice – to watch such a large-scale experiment progress; I just couldn't pass on that opportunity."

It is also a chance to do meaningful science in a place that he loves. Boutin, who was born in Delaware but moved to North Carolina in the fifth grade, fondly recalls Outer Banks vacations with his family.

Boutin says he looks forward to "getting out and getting my hands dirty." His first day of work was April 13. He is excited at the prospect of watching the progression of adaptation on the refuge. "If native plants and animals can't readily adapt to a rapidly rising sea level, a catastrophic loss of habitat and species may very well occur," he says. "Hopefully, we'll find that we are giving the environment a jumpstart to adapt as sea level rise begins to accelerate."

Boutin, his wife Amy and their daughter Natalie will live on the Outer Banks.

Returning Venus Flytraps to the



They are arguably southeast North Carolina's most famous residents. Carnivorous Venus flytraps only occur in the wild within a 90-mile radius of Wilmington. Despite their fame, or more likely because of it, poachers threaten the plants.

On a cold, sunny February day, Nature Conservancy volunteers returned hundreds of the poached plants to their rightful home in the Conservancy's Green Swamp Preserve.

For Wildlife Resources Commission Officer Lt. Matt Long, the homecoming was a return to the scene of the crime. Long apprehended the poachers. "You've got people going to great lengths to poach the flytraps," he explains. He describes the poachers as "serious" – wearing camouflage and knee pads and hiding in a ditch to evade officers.

The poachers cut the leaves off the plants, leaving only the tiny root bulb, making them

easy to transport. "You can hold 300 of them in the palm of your hand," Long says.

Poaching usually occurs at night. Long says the 17,424 acre preserve is a "difficult place to protect." Sometimes Commission officers "get lucky" and catch poachers. But, a look around the preserve shows scores of pockmarks where poachers removed Venus flytraps. Long says around a dozen people a year are caught and charged with poaching the plants. Most of those arrests take place at the Green Swamp preserve or nearby Boiling Spring Lakes. Poachers don't face stiff sentences, usually just a minimal fine. The court cost, which is often

levied against a poacher, is \$120.

Conservancy Steward Angie Carl was teaching a class in the Sandhills with staff from the North Carolina Botanical Garden when Randall and his team tagged the poachers. It was the middle of a drought, so the flytraps couldn't be replanted right away. Carl handed the plants off to the Botanical Garden's Andy Walker, who took them back to Chapel Hill for a greenhouse recovery.

According to the Botanical Garden's Assistant Director Johnny Randall this is one of several instances in the past few years where purloined flytraps have been nursed back to health at the garden. "Sometimes they have been apprehended after they have had the plants for a while," he explains. "One time someone was trying to ship them overseas and was caught at the airport. They were not in good shape."

Green Swamp



(left) Conservancy Trustee Henry Jordan and wife Dyeann replant poached Venus flytraps ©DEBBIE CRANE/TNC (middle) UNC Botanical Garden's Andy Walker demonstrates replanting ©DEBBIE CRANE/TNC (right) Venus flytrap ©TNC

Carl says poaching frustrates her. “I understand these are hard economic times, but these plants can be grown with tissue samples. I’m actually more frustrated by the people who purchase them.”

Long says poachers sell flytraps for around a quarter a piece. “I guess this can be a pretty lucrative business for someone who does it for a living,” he explains. One recently apprehended poacher bragged that he made his living poaching flytraps. Poachers also take pitcher plants, another carnivorous plant found in the nutrient-poor Green Swamp soil. Both carnivorous plants eat insects to supplement what they are getting through their roots.

Randall says the closer you buy Venus flytraps to southeastern North Carolina, the more

likely they are to be plants that were poached in the wild. Legal flytraps are available from a variety of sources including the Botanical Garden. “The Botanical Garden invented this concept – conservation through propagation – 30 years ago,” says Randall. “The idea is to reduce wild collection by buying only plants that are cultivated in the garden.” Other organizations also propagate flytraps legally. (See “Growing Legal Venus Flytraps in the Green Swamp’s Backyard” in this issue.)

In addition to flytraps, other plants are routinely poached in North Carolina. Conservancy volunteers also replanted poached pitcher plants in February. Some plants, such as ginseng and bloodroot, are treasured for alleged medicinal qualities. Log moss is a favorite for craft projects. Galax and Christmas ferns are

used in flower arranging. Trillium is prized for its beautiful flowers.

Randall says becoming an informed consumer is a first step toward solving the poaching problem. “When you come across plants like Venus flytraps or trillium, ask if it was nursery propagated. If it wasn’t, then don’t buy the plant.”

Another cause for suspicion is price. “If you see trillium for sale that’s less than \$15 it means that it has probably been collected in the wild,” Randall explains. “Dirt cheap prices are a red flag for plants that may have been collected in the wild.”

Later this spring, Southeast Coastal Plan Project Director Dan Ryan and Carl will visit

(continued on page 8)

GROWING Legal Venus Flytraps IN THE GREEN SWAMP'S BACKYARD

When Becky Westbrooks began teaching botany at Southeastern Community College almost 20 years ago, she was drawn to the Venus flytrap. She calls the carnivorous plant an “action plant” and understands why people are enthralled by them. But, she was pained to see that the plants were often poached in the wild.

Her solution? Build a state-of-the-art Venus flytrap propagation facility at the Whiteville college to create a supply of cloned Venus flytraps.

At first she operated in less than ideal circumstances. “I’ve always tinkered with micropropagation. We used to tissue culture in a closet off my office,” she explained. “I always said that one day if I ever got good grant money, we’ll have a cool lab – a state of the art lab.”

Thanks to funds from a variety of sources including the National Science Foundation, NCCCS BioNetwork and the Golden Leaf Foundation, which uses tobacco settlement money to improve communities in North Carolina’s tobacco belt, today she has that “cool” lab.

Students in the lab learn the art of micropropagation. In addition to Venus flytraps, they also culture lettuce, carrots, broccoli, day lilies and African violets. Soon they’ll be working on two other carnivorous plants – pitcher plants and sundews.

The original Venus flytrap stock came from a

biological supply house. Cells from one plant are used to create thousands of Venus flytraps in the lab. The cells are grown in test tubes filled with nutrient-rich agar, which looks like gelatin and is derived from seaweed.

The test tubes are put in a grow room on racks.

ready to burst with all these little babies.”

Students wash off the agar with distilled water, separate the tiny plants with forceps and plant them in potting soil. They are transferred to a step down room that provides the high humidity that the plants like at this stage. Two or three weeks later, they go in the greenhouse.

It is good experience for the students, most of who come from Columbus and other nearby counties. Many go on to manage greenhouses or work in plant conservation.

The college sells the mature Venus flytraps for five dollars a plant. The money goes back into sustaining the greenhouse operation. Local garden clubs have found out about the operation and buy plants. The N.C. Zoo bought plants from the college for its

North American display.

“The word is out,” says Westbrooks. “If we flood the market, maybe it won’t be lucrative for poachers.”



Venus flytraps in Southeastern Community College greenhouse ©TERESA LENGNER

Grow lights provide 16 hours of light and 8 hours of darkness as the cells become tiny roots and shoots. “At this point, our only enemies are bacteria and fungus,” Westbrooks explains. “One test tube will be just about



Student Brook Pritchett propagating Venus flytraps ©TERESA LENGNER

Returning Venus Flytraps to the Green Swamp (continued from page 7)

the replanted Venus flytraps. Ryan says the flytraps play a valuable role at the preserve. “They are an indicator species. Their presence lets us know that we are doing our job well. If they aren’t around, then we aren’t getting the fire to the area that we need to clean out the

midstory and get the sunlight to the preserve floor. They are just incredibly special – only occurring in our part of the world. You need to take a step back and enjoy their natural heritage in that perspective.”

In the meantime, Lt. Matt Long and his fellow

officers will be on the lookout for poachers who want to take away that natural heritage. And, Johnny Randall and the staff at the NC Botanical Garden will continue to propagate the plants to provide a legal source for people who want flytraps in their own gardens.

Panthertown Valley: A Playground for All Ages

THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES BY STAFFERS ABOUT THEIR FAVORITE HIKES. DAVID RAY IS THE NC CHAPTER'S MOUNTAINS PROGRAM DIRECTOR.

By David Ray

Jackson & Transylvania Counties

The Nature Conservancy purchased the 6,295-acre Panthertown tract for \$8 million from Duke Power in 1989. It is now part of Nantahala National Forest.

Panthertown is a great visit for families with small children. My wife Christine and I took our daughter Esther there on one of her first backpacking trips when she was just four years old.

I like to enter on the west side of the valley at Salt Rock Gap. As you walk down an old jeep road, small signs tell you the names and traditional uses of many of the plants you see. Soon you arrive at Salt Rock, where you can take a moment to consider the wonder of geologic time. From this spot, you see the granitic domes of Blackrock, Little Green, and Big Green Mountains, looming high above the valley floor. This view inspired Professor Dan Pittillo of Western Carolina University to liken Panthertown to what Yosemite will resemble after millions more years of weathering. It's been known ever since as "the Yosemite of the East."

Next, it's time to take the kids to visit Granny. Granny Burrell Falls, that is. This playful stretch of Panthertown Creek lies about half an hour below Salt Rock. The main falls are a 12-foot-tall rounded slick rock with a small pool below. The shallow water continues 150 feet or so down a broad, gently-sloping fan of bedrock, finally gathering in a larger pool below. A large sandy beach lies on the other side of the pool. There's something here for everyone—catch and release trout fishing in the pools for the older set, shallow wading for toddlers, and swimming and basking in the sun for everyone.

You can spend the day here. If you have a few extra hours, you've got a lot of options within a very small radius. Hike east over gentle terrain to the valley's most scenic cascade, Schoolhouse Falls, stopping on the way to see the spot where Greenland and Panthertown creeks join to form the Tuckasegee River. Take a peek at the largest swamp forest complex in the southern Appalachians. Or, climb several hundred feet to the top of Big or Little Green Mountain, where you'll see gnarled table mountain pines clinging to the thin soils of the rock face. Their newer cones are tightly closed as they await the next fire, which causes them to open and release their seeds.

Whether I'm looking for family play time, sport, ecological study, or just peaceful relaxation, Panthertown Valley is one of my favorite spots in western North Carolina.

If you go: A good map is an absolute must for navigating the poorly-marked trail system. Slickrock Expeditions sells an excellent trail map of Panthertown Valley called *A Guide's Guide to Panthertown Valley*. For ordering information, visit Slickrock Expeditions web site: www.slickrockexpeditions.com.



David Ray in Panthertown

DIRECTIONS: Approximately two miles east of Cashiers on US 64, turn left (north) on Cedar Creek Road (SR 1120). Continue on Cedar Creek Road 2.2 miles. Bear right (northeast) on Breedlove Road (SR 1121). Continue 3.4 miles on SR 1121 to a flat parking area at a gap where the National Forest boundary begins. The access road from the gap makes an excellent foot travel path. No motor vehicles are allowed beyond this point.

Conservation in Tough Economic

MOTHER EARTH CAN'T WAIT

Former **Palau President Tommy Remengesau, Jr.** says he is thankful for the support of North Carolina's Nature Conservancy, but he is fearful that environmental gains may be lost during bad economic times. He made his remarks at the Conservancy's **Oceans and Coasts** party in late March. Remengesau recently finished two terms as the Pacific Island nation's president.

Palau ©JEZ O-HARE

"The environment is our economy," Remengesau told the group. "We can no longer play off our environment against our economy."

Palau and the North Carolina Chapter have a history of working together, dating back to 1994 when Conservancy Executive Director Katherine Skinner spent several months there working to ensure that the country's environment was not impaired by construction of a major road. Since that time, other Conservancy staffers have worked in Palau. Associate Director Fred Annand drafted a conservation plan for the large island of Babeldaob, and Philanthropy Director Jim McDuffie consulted on development of the Palau International Coral Reef Center.

Remengesau is a leading conservation voice in the Pacific. In 2005, he issued the Micronesia Challenge, which is a regional environmental initiative aimed at conserving 30 percent of the area's near shore coastal waters and 20 percent of its terrestrial resources by 2020. The Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands signed on to the Challenge. The Challenge area covers five percent of the Pacific. The Challenge will protect 10 percent of the world's coral reefs and 462 coral species or 58 percent of all coral species. The Challenge has been replicated elsewhere including Granada, which has committed to conserving a quarter of its marine and land

resources by 2020.

The North Carolina Chapter was an early leader in international efforts to finance the Micronesia Challenge, contributing \$250,000. "We are proud and honored to be on the receiving end of your One Conservancy efforts," Remengesau said in accepting a giant ceremonial check.

Remengesau describes Palau as "one the most beautiful and pristine island settings in the world."

"I thank God that I was born there and that my original sense of normal is considered to be paradise by other people in the world," he said. "But, Palau is not the world's only paradise. In



Tommy Remengesau ©KAREN TAM

fact, to most of us, our home is our own paradise. It doesn't require that one live in an actual paradise to be concerned with the state of our world's environment."

Remengesau is proud of other environmental initiatives undertaken during his tenure as president, including Congressional passage of a \$20 visitor's fee designed to generate \$1.6 million annually for management of the country's Protected Natural Area. "I believe this will be the first such self-funded network in the developing world," he noted. He is also working on development of the Micronesia Center for a Sustainable Future.

Remengesau worries that the current worldwide economic downturn will delay conservation efforts. "Organizations such as The Nature Conservancy are funded through generous donations from sources that have been hit hard by the current crisis, at both the private and public levels. It would be very nice to say that we can just wait until our wallets are once again full, but our Mother Earth has been waiting far too long already for us to recall that she, too, is a partner in our future," he exhorted the crowd. "We must maintain the course and work to stem the tide of both economic and environmental implosion. Together, we can and we will make a difference for our children."

FINANCIAL INFORMATION about The Nature Conservancy may be obtained by contacting us at 4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100, Arlington, VA 22203; (703) 841-5300, or as stated below: **FLORIDA** – A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. CH- 694; **Georgia** – The following information will be made available upon request: (A) A full and fair description of the charitable program for which the solicitation campaign is being carried out and, if different, a full and fair description of the programs and activities of the charitable organization on whose behalf the solicitation is being carried out; (B) A financial statement or summary which shall be consistent with the financial statement required to be filed with the Secretary of State pursuant to Code Section 43-17-5; **Maryland** – documents and information submitted under the Maryland Solicitations Act are also available, for the cost of postage and copies from the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401; **Michigan**: MICS-6446; **Mississippi** – The official registration and financial information of The Nature Conservancy may be obtained from the Mississippi Secretary of State's office by calling 1-888-236-6167. Registration by the Secretary of State does not imply endorsement; **NEW JERSEY**: INFORMATION FILED WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CONCERNING THIS CHARITABLE SOLICITATION AND THE PERCENTAGE OF CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHARITY DURING THE LAST REPORTING PERIOD THAT WERE DEDICATED TO THE CHARITABLE PURPOSE MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY CALLING 973-504-6215 AND IS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET AT www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/charity/chardir.htm. REGISTRATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT; **New York** – Upon request, a copy of the latest annual report can be obtained from the organization or from the Office of the Attorney General by writing to the Charities Bureau at 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271; **North Carolina** – **Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.** **Pennsylvania** – The official registration and financial information of The Nature Conservancy may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement; **Virginia** – Financial statements are available from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, PO Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218; **Washington** – The notice of solicitation as required by the Charitable Solicitation Act is on file at Charities Division, Office of the Secretary of State, State of Washington, Olympia, WA 98504-0422, 1-800-332-4483; **West Virginia** – Residents may obtain a summary from: Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration with any of these states does not imply endorsement.

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the future is bright

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MEET THE CHALLENGE:

Help The Nature Conservancy During Tough Economic Times

We need your gift now more than ever. An anonymous donor has issued a \$100,000 challenge grant to help us continue our conservation work across North Carolina. This donor will match your contribution dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000, doubling the conservation impact of your gift. This challenge grant expires June 30, 2009. Please make your contribution today and help TNC continue its valuable work.

To donate, call 919-403-8558, extension 1008.

COME HIKE BLUFF MOUNTAIN

The Nature Conservancy is offering special hikes at its Ashe County Bluff Mountain preserve. This preserve – featuring over 400 plant species, a rare Carolina hemlock forest and an Appalachian fen – provides an unusual hiking experience in Western North Carolina.

The hikes, scheduled for June 6, August 8 and October 7 at 2 p.m., cost \$10 per person. Call Doug Munroe at (336) 385-6507 to register.