

NEWS

NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL LAND TRUST PROTECTS 1,000 ACRE FLOODPLAIN FOREST Salmon Creek Forest Project Aided by Enviva Forest Conservation Fund

U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Greenville, SC
For IMMEDIATE RELEASE (September 12, 2017)

Greenville, S.C. – Nearly 1,000 acres of cypress-gum swamp, bottomland hardwoods, tidal freshwater marsh, and upland mixed pine forest in Bertie County, North Carolina, is now permanently protected through a fee title acquisition negotiated by the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust, based in Wilmington. The property includes four miles of frontage on Salmon Creek and the Albemarle Sound. The property’s riparian forests are classified as ecologically significant by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. The project was completed with a grant from the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund and a loan from The Conservation Fund.

“This investment by the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund complements the State of North Carolina and the Coastal Land Trust efforts to support the Bertie County Board of Commissioners’ quest to provide a destination for ecotourism, a historical learning environment, and a vast recreational venue for residents and visitors alike,” said Bertie County Manager Scott Sauer. “This will enhance the County’s partnership with the public school system to provide students with field study and science-based, “out of the classroom,” experiences in their own community.”

The property, which is the subject of archaeological research by The First Colony Foundation and is referred to as “Site X,” hosts a variety of significant archaeological resources. Algonkian Indian artifacts have been found on the site. English artifacts attributable to the period and indicative of settlement by the Roanoke colonists have also been found, which some researchers say could be evidence that a group of survivors from The Lost Colony relocated to this area after leaving Roanoke Island in the late 1580s.

“Thanks to the Coastal Land Trust, The Conservation Fund, and the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund, this magnificent property will not only be protected, but will one day be open to the public to enjoy as a state natural area” said Carlton Owen, President and CEO of the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, which administers the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund.

Although the property is now protected, the Coastal Land Trust must still raise nearly \$5 million to repay a loan from The Conservation Fund used to purchase the property. Once the loan has been repaid, the Coastal Land Trust will transfer the property to the State’s Division of Parks and

Recreation for management as the Salmon Creek State Natural Area. Until that time, the land is subject to farm and hunt leases and is closed to the public.

Protecting this forest has other benefits. It is under an important Military Training Route for Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. This mission-essential route leads to the Dare County Range used by F-15E fighter crews. Keeping this forest undeveloped allows the Air Force to continue its vitally important testing and training mission.

“The Salmon Creek area stands out due to its unique archaeological resources, its rich cultural history, and its truly pristine ecosystems,” said Mike Murphy, director of N.C. State Parks. “We are so grateful that the Coastal Land Trust is protecting this land so that it can become a state natural area in Bertie County, a beautiful part of our state that is currently underserved by the North Carolina State Parks system.”

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund was launched in December of 2015. Through the first two years of this planned 10-year partnership, seven projects have been funded, committing \$1 million. When these projects are completed, an estimated 5,200 acres of sensitive wetland forest and other habitats will have been protected.

About the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund is a \$5 million, 10-year program established by Enviva Holdings, LP in December 2015 to permanently protect environmentally sensitive bottomland and wetland forests. Administered by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the Fund awards grants annually to nonprofit organizations and government agencies for conservation projects in North Carolina and Virginia.

For more information on the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund visit www.envivaforestfund.org.

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