



# Jocassee Journal

Information and News about the Jocassee Gorges



www.dnr.sc.gov

Fall/Winter 2018

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In the parking lot at Duke Energy's Bad Creek Hydro Project, the "Hemlock Rescue" crew from Appalachian Arborists prepares to hike in with the gear and supplies they'll need for a long day of treating hemlocks along the Whitewater River. (SCDNR photo by Greg Lucas)

## Jocassee hemlocks treated again with help from Duke Energy

Duke Energy-funded project  
helping to save Eastern hemlocks  
along Coon Branch Trail

By Greg Lucas

Will Blozan and his band of forestry warriors gather up their gear and begin pouring liquid insecticide in various jugs as they prepare to head into the forest and do battle with the hemlock woolly adelgid, which has decimated Eastern hemlock trees in the Southern Appalachians. Their mission today: to save the hemlocks that grow along the Whitewater River in northern Oconee County's Coon Branch Natural Area Trail.

Duke Energy is funding the hemlock treatment at Coon Branch today, just as it did in 2008 and in 2011. Without the treatments, most, if not all, of these hemlocks would have succumbed to the hemlock woolly adelgid.

Blozan and Jason Childs own a company called Appalachian Arborists, based in Asheville, which specializes in treating hemlocks to help them resist hemlock woolly adelgids. They, along with co-workers Jackie Failla and Stephen Elsen, will be treating the trees by soil injection with insecticides that are taken up by the trees' vascular systems, killing the adelgids.

Duke Energy has spent a total of about \$20,000 in the past decade to help keep the Eastern hemlocks alive along the Coon Branch Natural Area Trail. The Coon Branch Trail is a spur of the Foothills Trail ([www.foothillstrail.org](http://www.foothillstrail.org)), a 77-mile trail between Oconee and Table Rock state parks. Coon Branch Natural Area, accessed through Duke Energy's Bad Creek Hydro Project, is owned by Duke Energy and is part of the Jocassee Gorges lands that Duke Energy voluntarily

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Jackie Failla, of Appalachian Arborists of Asheville, N.C., treats the base of a hemlock tree at Coon Branch Natural Area along the Whitewater River. The insecticide applied in the ground will help Eastern hemlocks fight hemlock woolly adelgids. (SCDNR photo by Greg Lucas)

# Coon Branch hemlocks treated a third time

## Continued from page 1

placed under conservation easement.

After getting a safety briefing from Allan Boggs, Duke Energy's civil and regulatory supervisor, we head into the forest toward the Whitewater River and Coon Branch Natural Area. Also along for the adventure is Jessie Egan, a Clemson University student who is a wildlife intern for the summer with SCDNR. In addition to treating hemlocks, Will wants to see if a towering white pine that he measured seven years ago at 148 feet is still alive. Will is the president of the Native Tree Society and is a tree climber extraordinaire.

Will and Jackie traipse through thick underbrush to take a closer look at a massive leaning white pine tree. It's the tall one that Will climbed in 2011, and, unfortunately, it's now dead. Drought stress may have killed it, Will says, because he notes that white pines can live up to 450 years.

We walk to the end of the 1-mile trail. Here next to the Whitewater River is the skeleton of an enormous tree known locally as the De Soto Hemlock, so named because due to its 400-year age (confirmed by coring) it would have been alive during the travels of the famous Spanish explorer. Trying to save the De Soto Hemlock 10 years ago is what jump-started Duke Energy to fund treatments all along the Coon Branch Trail.

This is where the team will begin treating hemlocks, working its way along both sides of the trail back toward the foot bridge that leads to the main stem of the Foothills Trail. As they work, they are accompanied by the music of the Whitewater River; it

pours over rocky ledges, then gathers itself in quiet pools beneath rhododendron and the remaining hemlocks.

The athletic young Jackie moves quickly from hemlock to hemlock, delivering the insecticide imidacloprid in the ground around the trees with an injector that looks much like a larger-than-life syringe. The number of pumps from the injector around each tree is based on the tree's diameter—the bigger the tree, the more insecticide that is delivered to it. After the pumps of insecticide are delivered, Jackie sprays a blue mark on the back of the tree to show that it's been treated.

The hemlocks along the trail have a healthy green color. Will says the Coon Branch hemlocks look great overall, and he doesn't notice any significant difference from when they were treated seven years ago. Coincidentally, research has shown that the optimum time between hemlock treatments is about seven years, so the Coon Branch trees are right on schedule. 🌿

*(This story first appeared in South Carolina Natural Resources, a blog on the SCDNR website. To visit Coon Branch Natural Area, begin at the intersection of SC 130 and SC 11 (Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway), and head toward Whitewater Falls. After 10 miles, Bad Creek Hydro Project will be on the right, turn here onto Bad Creek Road. (If you travel into North Carolina, you have gone too far.) After 2.5 miles on Bad Creek Road, turn left into the Whitewater River Corridor/Foothills Trail parking lot, where you can leave your car. The physical address of Bad Creek Hydro Project is 151 Bad Creek Road, Salem, SC 29676.)*



# Headwaters State Forest opens in North Carolina

## Funding from U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program helps establish new 6,730-acre state forest in region

The Conservation Fund and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services recently held a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the opening of North Carolina's Headwaters State Forest.

Located near the border of South Carolina, this new 6,730-acre state forest was made possible with funding from the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program, through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), as well as state and private funding.

The celebration ceremony was held at Carolina Point Young Life Camp near Sassafras Mountain.

The protection of these 6,730 acres will help preserve and maintain water quality in the headwaters of the French Broad River, which flows 218 miles from Transylvania County into Tennessee and eventually into the Gulf of Mexico. Headwaters State Forest also provides expanded opportunities for public outdoor recreation, including hiking on a section of the storied Foothills Trail. Adjacent to more than 100,000 acres of existing conservation lands in both North Carolina and South Carolina, the area provides habitat for federally endangered plant species and other federal

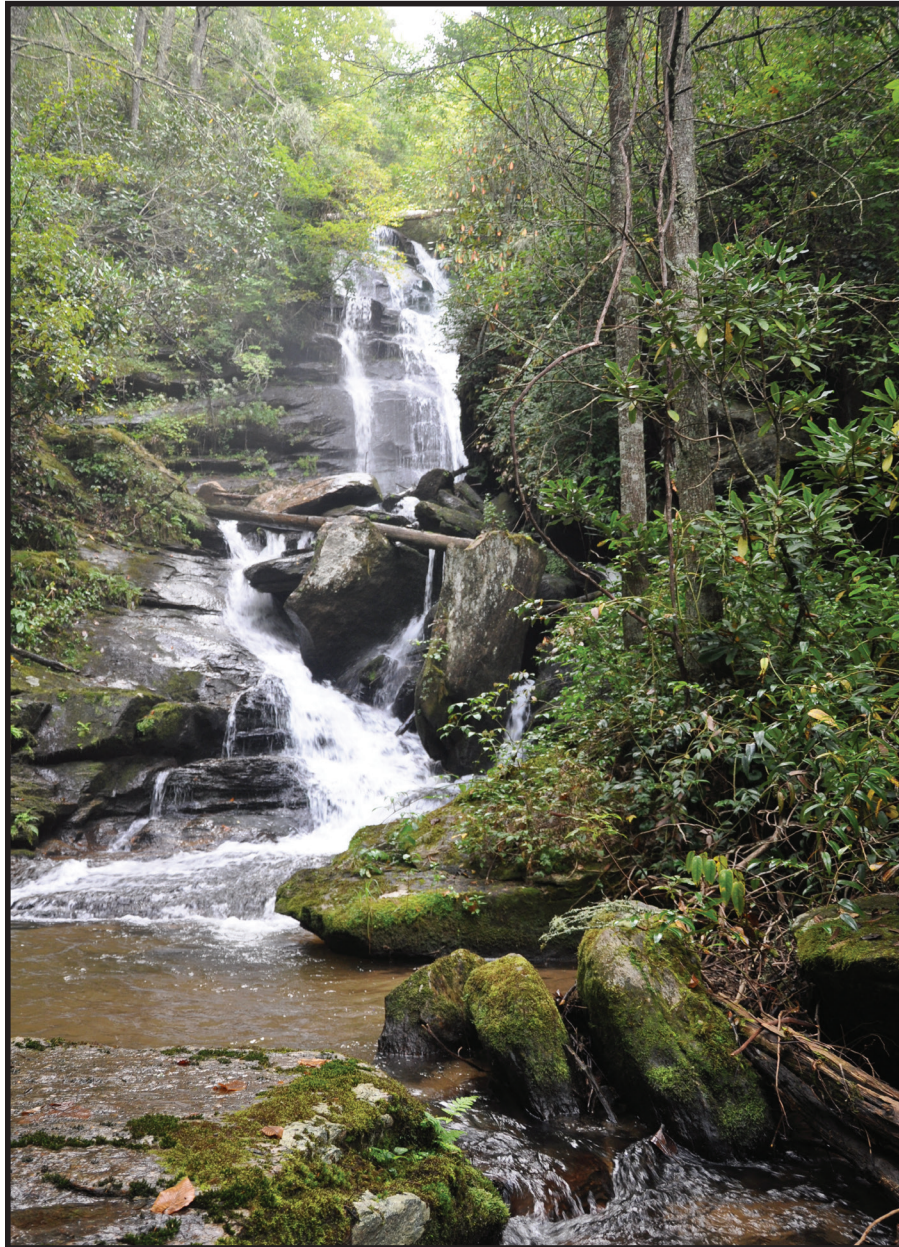
plant and animal species of concern. In addition, a portion of the forest will serve as working forestland, ensuring that timber revenue and jobs stay in North Carolina.

This significant conservation effort was made possible with public and private funding, including \$9.3 million in federal funding from the LWCF through the Forest Legacy Program; \$14.7 million in grants from the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust

Fund, and key support from Fred and Alice Stanback. LWCF is a bipartisan, federal program that uses a percentage of proceeds from offshore oil and gas royalties—not taxpayer dollars—to acquire critical lands and protect our country's best natural resources and recreational access for more than 50 years.

The nearly 6,730 acres of Headwaters State Forest will be managed by the N.C. Forest Service with help from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. The property will be a working forest with opportunities for low-impact recreation such as fishing, hiking and hunting as public game lands. Headwaters will also provide a platform for educating

landowners and others on the principles of good forest stewardship. ❁



Reese Place Falls is located on the eastern side of Headwaters State Forest, the new 6,730-acre state forest in North Carolina that was recently established. (Photo courtesy of N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission)



# Jocassee wildflower Oconee bell is subject of new book

Book tells story of renowned plant  
with poetry, photographs

Seneca poet and photographer Scottie Fredrickson has published a book titled, “The Oconee Bell Story.” Lavishly photographed and featuring a lovely and entertaining poem about the discovery of Oconee bells, a rare wildflower that is the hallmark of the Jocassee Gorges, it will make a perfect gift for the nature-lover on your gift list!

The wildflower is honored each spring in mid-March at Bell Fest, sponsored by the Friends of Jocassee at Devils Fork State Park in northern Oconee County.

The book is currently available in the Upstate at the Vintage Mart next to Ingles in West Union, the Booksmith in Seneca and The Mercantile in Pendleton. In addition to the poem about Andre Michaux’ first collection of Oconee bells (*Shortia galacifolia*) in the Jocassee Valley in 1787, “The Oconee Bell Story” also features sections on Oconee Bell Glossary, Oconee Bell Historical Figures and Oconee Bell Historical Timeline.

The plant that later became known as Oconee bell was first found by Michaux on his travels to the Carolinas, and a sample was sent back to an herbarium in Paris, France. Harvard botanist Asa Gray saw this specimen in 1839 while visiting Paris, and realizing that this plant was unknown and unnamed, he began a 40-year search for the living specimen. Along the way he named it for Dr. Charles Short, who died in 1863 having never seen the plant. ❁



The low-growing nature of Oconee bells makes them especially hard to photograph. Scottie Fredrickson’s new book, “The Oconee Bell Story,” includes many lovely photographs of the wildflower that is the hallmark of the Jocassee Gorges.



Scottie Fredrickson’s photographs and poetry are the highlights of her new book, “The Oconee Bell Story,” which is available at select Upstate bookstores. (Photos courtesy of Scottie Fredrickson)

*(Scottie Fredrickson’s family heritage in South Carolina goes back to the late 17th century when her family settled in Charleston in search of religious freedom. She has lived and traveled extensively in Europe. Scottie has taught languages at all school levels, including teacher recertification seminars primarily in the United States, but also in Central and South America. Previously she has self-published numerous language and culture resource books to aid in second language learning. In her devotion she has done mission work in the Caribbean and Central America. While her childhood home was Jacksonville, Fla., the Upstate of South Carolina has captured her heart. Here, church, family, and the outdoors make her life full of love and adventure.)*



# New Palmetto Trail passage opens in Jocassee Gorges

Duke Energy supports Eastatoe Passage and announces \$20,000 grant to Palmetto Conservation Corps

Palmetto Conservation Foundation (PCF) recently held a ribbon cutting to open its Eastatoe Passage, a new five-mile section of South Carolina's mountains-to-sea Palmetto Trail.

Eastatoe Passage provides public access for hiking, fishing, birdwatching and other outdoor recreation in the picturesque Eastatoe Creek watershed upstream from Duke Energy's Lake Keowee. The area is part of the Jocassee Gorges in northern Pickens County.

"Eastatoe Passage gives people access to a gorgeous protected wilderness," PCF Executive Director Natalie Britt said. The new trail connects Keowee-Toxaway State Park with the Dug Mountain Angler Access on Roy F. Jones Highway. The angler access trailhead is 1.3 miles north of Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway (SC Highway 11). The state park on SC 11 anchors the west end of the passage.

"Corporate philanthropy makes our work as a nonprofit possible, and private-public partnerships make projects like the Palmetto Trail possible," Britt said. Eastatoe Passage is the result of philanthropy and partnerships with Duke Energy, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Naturaland Trust, and the S.C. State Park Service. Passage construction was completed with major grants from Duke Energy's Water Resources Fund and the federal Recreational Trails Program administered by S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

Thanks to Duke Energy, Eastatoe Passage features the longest fiberglass pedestrian bridge on the 500-mile Palmetto Trail. A grant from the company's Water Resources Fund supported a 70-foot bridge across Eastatoe Creek and a 40-foot bridge across Little Eastatoe Creek. The fiberglass bridges will have longer

lifespans than wooden bridges because of the area's abundant rainfall, summer heat, humidity and insects, and winter freeze-thaw cycles.

Benchmark Trails of Greenville handled trail construction, with assistance from Palmetto


Conservation Trail coordinators, the Palmetto Conservation Corps, and volunteers.

At the Eastatoe Passage opening, Duke Energy's South Carolina State President Kodwo Ghartey-Tagoe announced a new \$20,000 grant of support for the Palmetto Conservation Corps. The grant will fund required training and certifications for Corps crews to work in public parks and forests in Oconee, Pickens, Greenville and Spartanburg counties. Trail work will focus on controlling water erosion, restoring wildlife habitats,

and removing non-native invasive species.

"Duke Energy has an abiding interest in inspiring young people to expand public land access through national service," Ghartey-Tagoe said, noting that the Duke Energy Foundation has "invested in the environment since the Foundation's inception."

The Corps is South Carolina's only trail-based AmeriCorps service and job-training program for young adults interested in careers in public land management, recreational trails, and environmental stewardship. PCF operates the Palmetto Conservation Corps program, which is in its third year.

The Palmetto Trail inspires active, healthy living as it showcases the state's diverse natural beauty, fascinating history, and rich cultural heritage. When finished, the Trail will stretch 500-miles across 14 counties from Walhalla in Oconee County to Awendaw in Charleston County. With the addition of Eastatoe Passage, PCF has completed 28 passages for a total of 380 miles. The Palmetto Trail is South Carolina's premier hiking and biking trail, and is built to protect wildlife habitats while providing public access for active, nonmotorized outdoor recreation. For more information, visit [www.palmettoconservation.org](http://www.palmettoconservation.org). 



**The OLLI at Clemson University Jocassee Gorges class prepares to hike on the new Eastatoe Passage of the Palmetto Trail, which gives hikers and anglers great new access to Eastatoe Creek. (SCDNR photo by Greg Lucas)**



# Carolina Point Young Life Camp br

## Week at Young Life Camp described as ‘the best week of your life!’

At the bottom of Sassafras Mountain, right off of Glady Fork on the North Carolina side of Jocassee Gorges lies Carolina Point, a Young Life camp for high school students. Young Life is an international non-profit organization with the mission of “introducing adolescents to Jesus Christ and helping them grow in their faith.” Carolina Point is one of many Young Life camps across America.

The vision of a Young Life camp is to have volunteer leaders, within in the Young Life ministry, bring their high school friends to an unfamiliar place, and get them out of their comfort zone so they can experience new things and hear the Gospel in a distraction-free environment, while having the most fun they have ever had.

A week at Young Life camp is endorsed as “the best week of your life,” and they truly believe it can be the best week of kids’ lives! Young Life camps are designed with this experience in mind and are not like your typical summer camp. Their cabins are fully enclosed, air-conditioned rooms with comfortable beds. There is a pool, lake, game room, dining hall, store, and a snack bar. Carolina Point is a year-round camp that specializes in Young Life camping during the summer season. The many activities offered to kids includes a state-of-the-art zip-line over the mountains, swimming, paddle boarding, a go-kart course, archery tag, sand volleyball, crafts, mountain biking, and hiking. Young



Carolina Point, a Young Life camp for high school students, as



Among the many high-adventure activities at Carolina Point is a state-of-the-art zip-line over the mountains.

Life camp’s main event is “club,” a meeting where are entertained with songs and skits and the gospel message is presented.

Young Life camping is a show-stopping schedule of events designed to surprise and engage kids at every level. If you take a walk around camp in the summer you can often hear a leader telling one of their friends, “I told you it would be the best week of your life!”

As a large-scale non-profit facility, Carolina Point couldn’t function without the hundreds of volunteers, of all ages, who come in the summer and help make the magic happen. These volunteers are often already a part of Young Life’s outreach ministry where they live. They come and give

*“Young Life camping  
schedule of events des  
and engage young pe*



# Bringing together the Gospel, adventure



seen at night. (Photos courtesy of Carolina Point)

away a month of their lives to serve the campers and create the memories and experiences that most of them remember from when they attended a Young Life camp.

During the non-summer months, Carolina Point hosts reservations for not only Young Life groups, but also other non-profits and church groups. Booking

*g is a show-stopping  
igned to surprise  
people at every level.'*

a weekend or mid-week reservation at Carolina Point is often done over a year in advance due to high demand.

While Young Life has been around since 1941, Carolina Point is a fairly new camp and has just completed its sixth summer. Jim Anthony, a major developer in South Carolina, acquired the land originally for housing development. He decided instead that he wanted to make it into a

camp, using all the profits he had made off of his property sales. A friend referred him to Young Life camping to see how it could be done. He visited an existing Young Life camp, caught the vision, and decided to give the land to Young Life. In 2001, the 350 acres of land were donated to Young Life, and Anthony started to build the first building: Carolina Point's dining hall. The sudden economic downturn put progress on hold for a number of years. Between 2008 and 2012, the dining hall and waste water plant slowly developed. In 2012, Carolina Point received a large anonymous donation, which allowed it to officially begin moving forward. With more donors coming alongside the first generous donation, Carolina Point finished the dining hall and built two dorms.

In 2013, Carolina Point opened for its first summer camp with just those two dorms and a dining hall, which doubled as a meeting space and store. Since then, Young Life has been developing and expanding camp every year, adding facilities, rides, and housing. Capacity, originally at just 200 campers, is now more than 400.

With final funding complete, plans for the last components of development are underway, and Carolina Point continues to grow as they serve the ministry and community they are a part of.

For more information on Young Life and Carolina Point, visit <https://carolinapoint.younglife.org/Pages/default.aspx>. ❁



The vision of a Young Life camp is to bring high school students to an unfamiliar place, and get them out of their comfort zone, so they can experience new things and hear the Gospel in a distraction-free environment, while having the most fun they have ever had.



# Colin O'Brady completes 50 American highpoints in record time

Endurance athlete sets new record, including Sassafras Mountain, in 21 days, 9 hours, 48 minutes

By Mike Baur

Colin O'Brady is one of those people you meet and are stunned to learn of his accomplishments. That's because he is a very warm, friendly, but totally unassuming, guy, who could just as easily be your neighbor that you meet on the trail. But Colin's accomplishments are far from unassuming and ordinary. In fact, in 2018 he set the record for the fastest time to summit the 50 high points in the USA. And he was at Sassafras Mountain on his way to that record on a hot morning this past July 2.

I met Colin earlier this year at a business conference in Montana, where he was the guest speaker to a group of technology and finance professionals. I was not sure what he could tell us but his is nothing short of amazing. Colin is an ultra-athlete, who has broken multiple world records, including one where he summited the tallest peak on each of the seven continents, including Mt. Everest. As he finished his talk (and we all felt the need to go exercise), Colin shared his plans to summit the 50 high points and establish a new record time. He was very confident that the record of 41 days would be handily shattered...well it was... he beat it by 20 days!

Colin started his record accomplishment in Alaska when he had to summit Denali (amazing!). Once he reached the summit, the clock to climb all 50 began, leading him across all 50 states. Colin encouraged people to meet him at the high points as he traveled across the country. Engaging with the community at a grassroots level seems very important to Colin.

As a resident of Simpsonville, a lifelong South Carolina park user, and the CEO of ScanSource, a global technology provider based in Greenville, I asked our marketing and PR team to help Colin when he was scheduled to visit South Carolina. As it turned out, his team was not aware that the summit of Sassafras was closed for the construction of the new observation platform. Our team contacted Greg Lucas and Mark Hall to ask how Colin could gain access to the summit so he could accomplish this record. We were delighted to have



**CAPTION:** Colin O'Brady (center, with 50 HP banner) walked to the top of Sassafras Mountain, South Carolina's highest point, during his record-breaking effort to climb the highpoints of all 50 states.

everyone at SCDNR jump through hoops to make the day happen successfully.

We had planned for a couple of different days for their arrival at Sassafras, as the schedule was tenuous based on Colin's progress across the country. On June 30, it became pretty clear that July 2 was the day, so we got everyone ready. My wife Laura and I had never been to Sassafras and were excited to be able to take time that day and join the event. We got our trail running gear ready to go, as we thought this would be a fun trail to run to the summit. We were all set for a fun run to meet Colin on the trail or maybe run a few feet with this super-fast runner and climber.

As we followed our GPS to the mountain from Simpsonville, and crossed Highway 11, we started to wonder where exactly we would meet Colin. We followed the signs to Sassafras and headed up a winding road to a parking lot and a construction site. Little did we know, the run we had planned was actually a short walk (500 feet) to the summit! We had been tracking Colin's progress and knew he was on the way from Georgia and due to arrive in a few minutes. We met a few other people waiting for Colin in the parking lot, including Greg Lucas with SCDNR. Greg told us he had been there since morning clearing bushes to make a path to the summit. And did I mention it was a hot July day and Greg was in his full working gear, with jacket, pants and a fire rake?! Thank you, Greg, for your hard work that morning! We also had the opportunity to meet Heyward Douglass and enjoyed talking with him about the Foothills Trail and all the opportunities for volunteers to help out this year. We plan to do that in the fall!

Colin and his team arrived shortly after 2 p.m. and we all met and discussed his trip. Then it was time

**Continued on page 9**



# Traditional Arts, Music Camp held at Holly Springs

Natural history lessons interspersed with Appalachian culture

By Jessie Egan

Traditional Arts and Music (TAM) Camp, a week-long summer camp sponsored by the Young Appalachian Musicians (YAM) program, was held at the Holly Springs Center this past summer.

This camp provides rising third- through ninth-grade students an opportunity to learn about traditional Appalachian culture. Students attended a variety of activities including traditional cooking, clogging and square dancing, nature, and traditional arts and crafts.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) was invited to lead the nature activities two days out of the week. Water quality was the first topic taught using an Enviroscope, an interactive display designed to demonstrate how a watershed functions, and students went to a nearby creek to observe macroinvertebrates to tell the quality of the creek.

Wildlife identification was the second topic taught using wildlife artifacts and live animals. Students learned about the habitat, behaviors, and importance of wildlife species native to South Carolina and the proper ways to



The Traditional Arts and Music Camp, a week-long summer camp sponsored by the Young Appalachian Musicians program, was held at the Holly Springs Center this past summer. This camp provides rising third- through ninth-grade students an opportunity to learn about traditional Appalachian culture.

interact with wildlife. SCDNR brought live snakes and an alligator for the students to hold and interact with; this was the highlight of the activity!

At the end of the week the students participated in a talent show for family, friends, and the community to show off the traditional Appalachian musical skills they learned throughout the week. Many of these students will return next year to further expand on the skills and knowledge they obtained this year. 🌿

*(Jessie Egan of Seneca, a Clemson University senior majoring in environmental and natural resources, interned with SCDNR during Summer 2018 and was the "Nature Girl" during the Traditional Arts and Music Camp at Holly Springs Center.)*

## Sassafras part of epic 50-state effort



Colin O'Brady (left) talks with Heyward Douglass, executive director of the Foothills Trail Conservancy, at the top of Sassafras Mountain, South Carolina's highest point.

**Continued from page 8**

to follow Greg and Colin as he made his way to the summit. We worked our way around the construction site and gathered at the summit marker to join Colin in photos and videos of the Sassafras high point! Colin was so excited, full of energy and fun to hang out with. He listened closely as Heyward and Greg told him about the history of South Carolina and this special place on Sassafras. As the breeze started blowing and the sun was shining, we all had a great day celebrating our special place on Sassafras Mountain and being a small part of a monumental record-breaking experience. 🌿

*(Mike Baur is CEO of ScanSource, a global technology provider based in Greenville. To read more about Colin O'Brady's Highpoint record-setter, visit <https://www.colinobradys.com/50hp/>.)*





Jocassee wild hogs are shown inside the hog trap, just before the remotely activated trap door was shut. (SCDNR photo)

# Controlling feral swine is a daunting task

Reproduction rate of wild pigs makes them hard to battle

By Mark Hall

Feral swine populations have quadrupled in the United States in recent decades, and they cause tremendous impacts to farmer's crops as well as wildlife, especially in the Southeast. Control options are limited, and the age-old methods of trapping and/or hunting and shooting are still the most reliable tools available. The Jocassee Gorges staff works diligently to reduce feral sine numbers during key time periods.

Wildlife technician tasks include road and trail maintenance, wildlife opening and dove field management, equipment repairs, controlled burning, hemlock protection and a host of other jobs related to soil and water quality. They trap feral swine as well, and it is a time-consuming process. The time periods for trapping on Jocassee are limited. Corn is the common bait used, but corn cannot be used during hunting seasons for deer, turkey or bear on WMAs. Late spring is the optimum trapping period. Techs create bait stations and monitor bait with trail cameras. When the hogs start using the bait, they move in with cumbersome trap pens, capture and euthanize as many hogs as possible. Black bears relish corn, so they often disrupt the process and cause bait sites to be abandoned.

In 2018, Clemson Forestry intern Lane Whitmire assisted with the lion's share of the baiting and trapping activity. A total of 27 wild hogs were dispatched, primarily in the area east of US Highway 178, where hiker complaints related to wild hogs have escalated in recent years.

Berries, acorns, wild grapes, invertebrates (worms, beetles, grubs, etc.) are choice foods that are aggressively consumed by hogs when deer, bear, grouse, turkey and other wildlife are seeking the same food items. Hogs affect water quality by rooting the areas along sensitive trout streams. They are simply bad news when it comes to competition with wildlife and represent a big monkey wrench in the ecological food chain. Feral pig sows can reproduce every three months, three weeks and three days. Few large mammals can match that gestation period.

The Jocassee staff will continue to reduce feral swine numbers. During hunting seasons, technicians often trap hogs on the lands of adjacent, private landowners. However, wild pigs ignore corn bait once acorns and muscadines appear in the fall and winter. Hog hunting seasons have been expanded to allow hunters to take as many feral pigs as possible. For now, feral swine are here to stay, but the numbers can be regulated to some degree, and every little bit seems to help. ❁

*(Mark Hall, a certified forester and wildlife biologist, is land manager of SCDNR's Jocassee Gorges.)*





This poster of the Prescribed Fire Training Exchange, called TREX, was used to promote the two-week training, based at Table Rock Wesleyan Camp north of Pickens.

## Prescribed Fire Training Exchange held in Jocassee

TREX training coincided with second anniversary of Pinnacle Mountain Fire  
By Kristen Austin

Smoke was seen in the air in October and November in the mountains of South Carolina and portions of North Carolina. Not from wildfires, but rather from prescribed burning, also called controlled burning.

A two-week Prescribed Fire Training Exchange, called TREX, was held Oct. 29 to Nov. 9 for more than 50 wildland fire professionals from around the country, and two other countries (Spain and Costa Rica), to train, share knowledge, and apply good fire to our forests.

TREX was based at Table Rock Wesleyan Camp north of Pickens and adjacent to Table Rock State Park. Controlled burns took place on conservation lands within 1.5-hour radius of the Wesleyan Camp, including Jocassee Gorges lands. More than 5,600 acres, within 43 different burn units, on 10 different agency partner lands were available and ready to burn during this training event if the right weather conditions permit.

This Prescribed Fire Training Exchange coincided with the second anniversary of the Pinnacle Mountain Wildfire in 2016, the largest recorded wildfire in the history of Upstate South Carolina, where more than 10,000 acres burned north of SC Highway 11 in Pickens County. The purpose for using controlled burning is to reduce fuels, which

in turn lessens negative impacts of future wildfires while also enhancing wildlife habitat.

The Nature Conservancy sponsored this event in conjunction with multiple partner agencies through an effort called the Fire Learning Network. The Fire Learning Network (FLN) engages dozens of multi-agencies, community-based projects to accelerate the restoration of forests that depend on fire to sustain native plant and animal communities. By restoring this balance, the ecological, economic and social values of the landscapes can be maintained, and the threat of catastrophic wildfire can be reduced. Collaborative planning, implementation, adaptive management and the sharing of lessons learned are at the core of the FLN.

A new publication is available to learn more about bringing fire back to the mountains and how this benefits wildlife: "Considerations for Wildlife and Fire in the Southern Blue Ridge." More information about ordering this publication can found at: <http://www.sbrfln.com/wildlife-fire-effects-handouts.html>. For more information about the Southern Blue Ridge TREX, visit <https://apfire.wixsite.com/sbtrex2018>.

*(Kristen Austin is the Upstate Conservation Director at The Nature Conservancy in Greenville. The Fire Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.)*





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For information on subscribing

to the Jocassee Journal contact:

Greg Lucas, DNR

311 Natural Resources Drive

Clemson, SC 29631-3253

Phone: (864) 380-5201

e-mail: LucasG@dnr.sc.gov

website:

[www.dnr.sc.gov/managed/wild/jocassee/index.htm](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/managed/wild/jocassee/index.htm)

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# Small earthquake measured in Lake Jocassee area

U.S. Geological Survey: Only one  
person reported minor earthquake

By Dr. Bill Clendenin

Although the Charleston area is given the most attention, earthquakes can occur anywhere in South Carolina. On June 18, a M2.2 earthquake occurred along the east shore of Lake Jocassee.

This magnitude of an earthquake generally is noticed only by a few people; and according to the U.S. Geological Survey, only one person reported feeling the earthquake. The earthquake occurred at 5:59 pm on that Monday, and had a focal depth of 0.1 km.



One of the fault zones that may lead to earthquakes in the Jocassee region is shown here in the eroded bank of Bearcamp Creek, in the Horsepature River arm of Lake Jocassee. (SCDNR photo by Bill Clendenin)

According to the South Carolina Geological Survey, the June 18 earthquake was the third small earthquake in the Lake Jocassee area since Aug. 8, 2017. The epicenter

of that M1.7 earthquake was immediately southwest of the June 18 earthquake along Devils Fork Road in Devils Fork State Park. The second in this series was a M1.9 earthquake that occurred Oct. 2, 2017, immediately east-northeast of the June 18 earthquake along Cane Creek Road in Jocassee Gorges.

(Dr. Bill Clendenin is the State Geologist. For additional information on South Carolina earthquakes, updates and locations can be found on the South Carolina Geological Survey web page: <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/geology/index.htm>.)