

TLC NEWS RELEASE
November 25, 2008

**Triangle Land Conservancy conserves three more Deep River tracts:
Three state conservation agencies fund purchase of 286 acres**

Working with the NC Division of Parks and Recreation and tapping funding from three state conservation trust funds, Triangle Land Conservancy recently completed three conservation purchases in the “Forks of the River” area of the Deep River to augment the White Pines Nature Preserve and the Deep River State Trail.

The three purchases conserve a total of 286 acres, including 238 acres on the Lee County side of the Deep River and 48 acres on the Chatham side. “Forks of the River” is the traditional name for the area around where the Deep and Rocky rivers come together, a few miles west of Moncure between the US 15-501 and US 1 crossings. Triangle Land Conservancy (TLC) has now led the conservation of 1,835 acres in this area.

At the heart of the area is TLC’s White Pines Nature Preserve in Chatham County, a natural area that is home to stands of white pine trees left behind after the last ice age 12,000 years ago.

These are the only stands of white pine found in the eastern Piedmont of North Carolina – 75 miles further east than their nearest kin in the Stokes County mountains near Hanging Rock State Park. Other species more commonly found in the mountains also thrive here, such as Catawba rhododendron, dutchman’s britches, witch alders, and the red-backed salamander. The presence of these species here makes this location a nationally significant natural area.

The white pine habitat here extends beyond the current boundaries of TLC’s preserve across the Deep River into Lee County. TLC is working to conserve as much of the white pine habitat as possible.

The Lee County tracts are both located within the White Pines Promontory nationally significant natural heritage site. All three tracts are part of the Deep and



White pine trees growing in the White Pines Promontory natural heritage site.

Rocky River Aquatic Habitat nationally significant natural heritage site that is home to three endangered species.

The Forks of the River area is also a key component of the Deep River State Trail, a new state park unit authorized by the General Assembly in 2007 to provide a conservation and recreation corridor through several counties.

The state parks system had already acquired 1,066 acres in this area and two of the TLC additions – the 192-acre Marks tract and 46-acre Cashion tract in Lee County – bring the total state ownership here to more than 1,300 acres.

TLC purchased 48 acres on the Deep River in Chatham from George Stone for \$289,000, with the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) providing TLC a grant of \$260,000 for the deal.

To complete the transaction on the seller's timeframe, TLC made the purchase with money from its Land Opportunity Fund, a pool of money that allows the organization to respond quickly when critical conservation lands become available. When it becomes available, the CWMTF grant will replenish the Land Opportunity Fund for future conservation purchases.

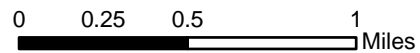
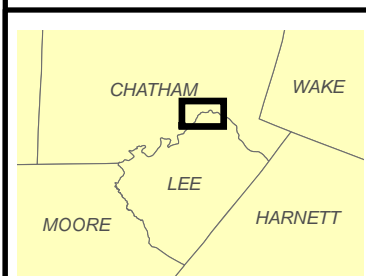
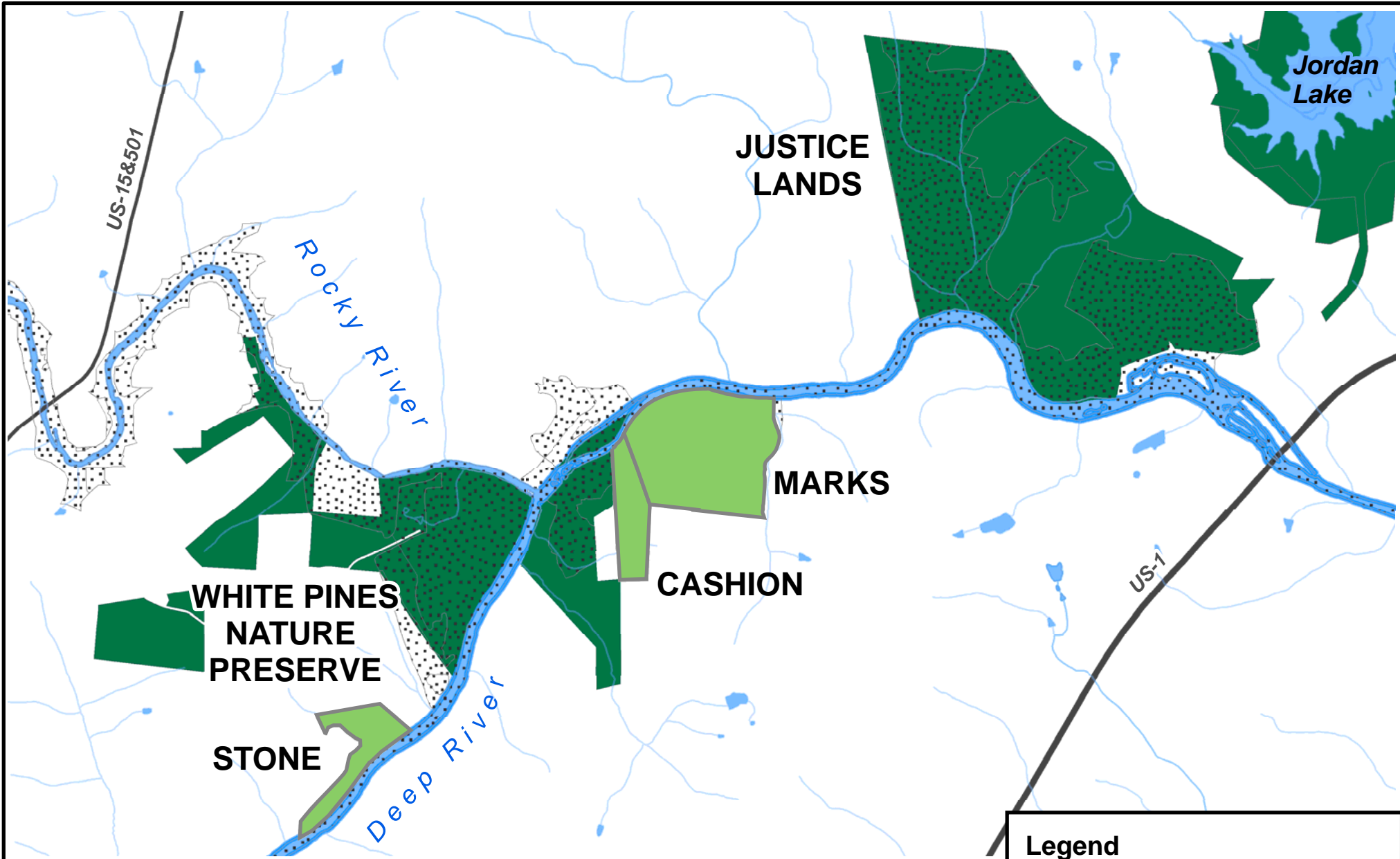
The Stone tract provides a significant water quality buffer on the Deep River, with more than six-tenths of a mile of river frontage. It also protects three-tenths of a mile on both sides of one tributary stream. Despite not being included in the White Pines Promontory natural heritage site, conservation of the Stone tract does protect one stand of white pine.

TLC assisted the state parks system in acquiring 192 acres on the Deep River in Lee County from members of the Marks family for \$1.25 million. The NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund provided \$670,000. The NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and the NC Natural Heritage Trust Fund each contributed \$289,000.

The Marks tract provides a significant water quality buffer on the Deep River with three-quarters of a mile of river frontage, and it protects more than two-and-half miles of tributary streams. A large portion of this tract is part of the White Pines Promontory natural heritage site.





The White Pines Promontory natural heritage site in Lee County (right side of photo, ascending from river), viewed from TLC's White Pines Preserve.



Chatham and Lee
Counties

Deep River Conservation Projects

Legend

-  2008 TLC Deep River Projects
-  Previous TLC Conservation Projects
-  Significant Natural Heritage Area
-  Streams
-  Regional Roads

TLC also assisted the state parks system in acquiring 46 acres on the Deep River in Lee County from members of the Cashion and McClearen families for \$370,000. The NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund provided \$244,000. The NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund contributed \$66,000 and the NC Natural Heritage Trust Fund contributed \$60,000.

The Cashion tract is significant for the same reasons as the others—for protection of the White Pine Promontory natural heritage site and the Deep and Rocky River Aquatic Habitat. Beyond that, the Cashion tract provides a crucial link between an earlier conservation acquisition and the Marks tract.

In 2006 with the help of TLC, the state parks system acquired 122 acres with more than six-tenths of a mile of Deep River frontage just upstream of the Marks tract. The Cashion link provides a continuous protected corridor on the Deep in Lee County of almost one-and-a-half miles and a contiguous land assemblage of 360 acres.

The stream buffers provided by the three new acquisitions will help to maintain the water quality of the Deep River—for the benefit of the endangered species that live in this area, for the benefit of fishermen and paddlers, and for the benefit of the people of Lee County which draws its drinking water from the Cape Fear River just a few miles below this area.

Some conservation definitions

Stream frontage: The greatest threat to water quality in our region comes from sediment and other pollutants running off the land into our streams. Maintaining vegetated buffers on streams helps keep sediment and other pollutants out of streams. By conserving land with frontage on streams, Triangle Land Conservancy ensures that vegetated stream buffers are maintained.

Connectivity: Many of our native plant and animal communities require large, contiguous territories to maintain the vitality and viability of their populations. As human activities reduce the size of natural areas and isolate them from one another, populations of native species become isolated and their natural movements, dispersal patterns and gene flows are disrupted. By connecting protected tracts, Triangle Land Conservancy helps to maintain the vitality and viability of our native plant and animal communities.

Like previous acquisitions in this area for the Deep River State Trail, the Cashion and Marks tracts are not yet being managed for recreation purposes. With its local government and conservation partners, the state parks system will soon begin a master planning process for this new and unique park unit that could ultimately stretch more than 60 miles from southwest Guilford County to the confluence with the Haw River (where the Cape Fear River begins) near Moncure.

Deep River State Trail will likely begin as a canoe/paddle trail, tying in existing access points. Lands owned by TLC (including White Pines Nature Preserve), the lands owned by the state parks system in the Forks of the River area, and lands owned by the NC Department of Cultural Resources (Endor Iron Furnace and House in the Horseshoe State Historic Site) could become the first public access areas.

Triangle Land Conservancy is a private, nonprofit group that conserves important open space—stream corridors, forests, wildlife habitat, farmland and natural areas—to help keep our region a healthy and vibrant place to live and work. TLC's 80 protected sites in Wake, Durham, Orange, Chatham, Johnston, and Lee counties encompass more than 11,000 acres, including four nature preserves open to visitors year-round. TLC is primarily funded by individual contributions and memberships, plus grants from foundations, state government and corporations.

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