

Bluff Mountain Case



Opportunity

The 2136-acre Bluff Mountain Preserve is home to over 400 species of plants, 25 of them endangered, rare or threatened. The Nature Conservancy established the preserve in Ashe County in 1977 and manages it today. In 2007, The Conservancy identified 59 acres for inclusion in the preserve. But the land was part of a 114-acre parcel put on the market by a single seller who was unwilling to divide the property. When the parcel became available for sale, The Nature Conservancy did not have the time or financial resources needed to buy it. They contacted Unique Places and asked us to purchase property.

Unique Places' expertise

Unique Places developed a buy-and-hold strategy to protect the land from development. It included a May 2007 purchase of the 114-acre parcel and a formal agreement giving The Nature Conservancy a fixed amount of time to buy 59 acres. Unique Places created a detailed land-use plan to put in place should The Conservancy terminate the agreement.

Unique Places then led a second evaluation of the land's conservation values and determined that the remaining 55 acres are critical to bog turtle habitat and water quality in the North Fork of the New River as well. Unique Places is working with the High Country Conservancy, a land trust located in Boone, N.C., and The Nature Conservancy to place the remaining acres under protection.

Conservation Benefits

- 114 acres of land rich with biodiversity protected from development
- 59 acres added to the Bluff Mountain Preserve through a bargain sale to The Nature Conservancy.
- The land includes tributaries to the North Fork of the New River and habitat for the globally threatened Bog Turtle.
- Strong potential for the remaining 55 acres, which include several additional tributaries to the North Fork of the New River, to be placed under permanent protection.

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