



PHOTO: TPL



Volunteers Barry Smith and Reba Miller build trails on Stringer's Ridge.

Open space in the heart of urban North Chattanooga!

In collaboration with The Trust for Public Land, the City of Chattanooga, and the City of Red Bank, the Tennessee River Gorge Trust has recently helped protect 102 acres on Stringer's Ridge that will be open to the community by fall of 2013. This property will provide nearly seven miles of hiking and biking trails that have been built through the Southern Off-Road Biking Association's (SORBA) leadership. Volunteers have been actively engaged in this project for more than a year and will continue to work even after the trails are open. For more details or to volunteer, please visit facebook.com/stringersridge



Chattanooga Gas employees volunteer each year.

Tyner Middle Academy students experience nature during a spring field trip.



PHOTO: KEVIN LIVINGOOD

HEALTHY SPACE, HEALTHY SPECIES

by Hannah Shadrick, Office Manager

When Tennessee River Gorge Trust Executive Director Rick Huffines leads field trips, he starts each with the same question: "What makes up a healthy habitat?" Hands shoot up. "Food! Water! Shelter!" The kids are on it, easily identifying the first three elements.

Rick continues, "Now, who shares a bedroom with a brother or sister?"

This question may seem out of left field, but it actually points to the most important, yet most forgotten, element of a healthy habitat: space.

The kids answer his question by sharing tales of scuffles with siblings over Barbies and Legos. These tales, trivial as they sound, actually illustrate the human species' negotiations with space.

Those scuffles and disagreements arise, in large part, due to a lack of space and a lack of resources (Barbies and Legos in this case). In adult life, we are still constantly making these same kinds of spatial negotiations: deciding how to deal with unruly neighbors;

how to interact with cubicle mates at work; whether or not to actually pick up that litter at the end of the street. Once you begin to pinpoint the Legos, i.e. shared resources, of adult life, you begin to realize that every moment of your life uses some kind of shared

resource (think air and water). The quality and quantity of these shared resources is determined by the quantity and quality of our space. Conservation groups like the Tennessee River Gorge Trust protect and manage the shared space of the community. In leaving

large tracts of land undeveloped and untouched, we allow water and air to go through natural filtration systems and to come to us - as a community - clean. As humans, we take so much from the land around us. By respecting natural lands, we are taking care of them so that they, in

turn, can take care of us. Beyond offering us the clean, shared water and air that sustain our lives, natural lands such as the ones the Trust protects also offer us the opportunity to restore ourselves before jumping into the frustrations of everyday

life. Without space, without solitude, without the peace of nature, we fight over the Legos of adult life. Open, accessible space, such as Stringer's Ridge, Pot Point, and Raccoon Mountain, gives us the ability to reenergize and refocus, so that we can continue our lives with patience

and understanding for others. What's more, nature shows us what a healthy, mutually beneficial relationship can look like. Trees breathe out, we breathe in. What if you lived with that focus? Appreciating the resources others are offering you while enriching the community through your own talents? By keeping our lands whole, we are keeping ourselves whole.

At the Trust, we recognize that no species - humans included - can be healthy without healthy space. EO Wilson, Harvard professor and naturalist writer, speaks to this in his book *Bio-philosophy* when he writes, "The crucial first step to survival in all organisms is habitat selection. If you get

to the right place, everything else is likely to be easier." In Chattanooga, we've already chosen the right place. The Tennessee River Gorge Trust needs your help to ensure that Chattanooga continues to be the right place, namely, a healthy habitat supporting a healthy species.

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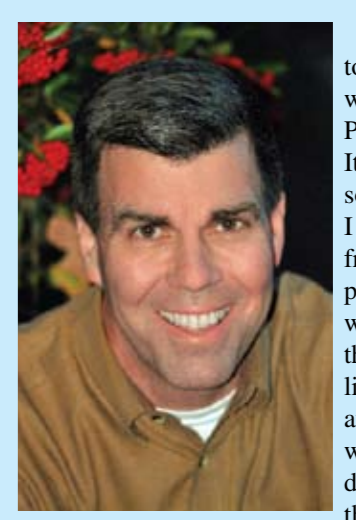
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My Why: A Note from New Executive Director Rick Huffines



I took my son back to show him the place where it all began for me. Problem was, it was gone. It's hard to explain to someone, "This is where I built myself as a person from the inside out. This place is the foundation of who I am today," when all they see is a subdivision lining the bluff with home after home. The trees were gone. The foot trails didn't exist. The sight of the development actually began to confuse my memory. The trip left my son puzzled as to why this place would have led me to spend my life preserving land.

A few years back, when my son was 19, I took him to my childhood home to show him why I do the conservation work I do. I grew up in middle Tennessee living the life of Huckleberry Finn. I spent the better part of the late 60s and 70s roaming barefoot for miles along the Cumberland River with my best friend Stanley. We fished, hunted, explored, dreamed, camped, swam, and pretended. We floated the river on logs, learned our limits, and solved our problems on our own. The time I spent in that place was the foundation that led me to a career in conservation spanning the past 27 years.

The reality is that I can't fix what has already been done, but we can all work together to keep some of these places untouched, unharmed, and sacred in order to serve as places where the next generation can build themselves. That is why I do what I do and that is why I have joined the Tennessee River Gorge Trust. Let's work together to help Chattanooga grow responsibly, protecting lands as we go. We need your help to make that happen. These lands can't protect themselves. We can.

MOUNTAINS CAN'T PROTECT THEMSELVES. YOU CAN.

Who will carry this mission forward? YOU, our community members, your children, and your children's children. We can all help. This is a mission that does not stop with one generation. We must continually educate our community about the importance of nature, open space, plant and animal habitat, clean water, and clean air. We must instill in the next generation our responsibility in conserving these precious resources.

You can support the ongoing efforts of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust by donating through our membership program. Beginning with a minimum donation of \$25, you can become a member of the

Trust. In return for this donation, you will receive the Trust's newsletters, invitations to events such as hikes, educational activities and the Trust's annual "Another Gorgeous Evening." More importantly,

you will receive the satisfaction of knowing that your donation is an investment in preserving the Gorge. Forever. To join the Trust, please visit www.trgt.org or return the form below.

You can also volunteer. Just visit www.trgt.org to sign up.

Thank you for giving a gift that will keep on giving for generations to come!

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF GIVING:

Member: \$25 - \$99 Benefactor: \$750 - \$1,249 Charter: \$2,500 - \$4,999

Friend: \$100 - \$249 Protector: \$1,250 - \$1,749 Chestnut Society: \$5,000 - \$9,999

Patron: \$250 - \$749 Sustainer: \$1,750 - \$2,499 Eagle Society: \$10,000 & up

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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Please make checks payable to: Tennessee River Gorge Trust
535 Chestnut Street, Suite 214
Chattanooga, TN 37402

Or pay by credit card: Visa MasterCard Discover

NAME ON CARD _____

CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

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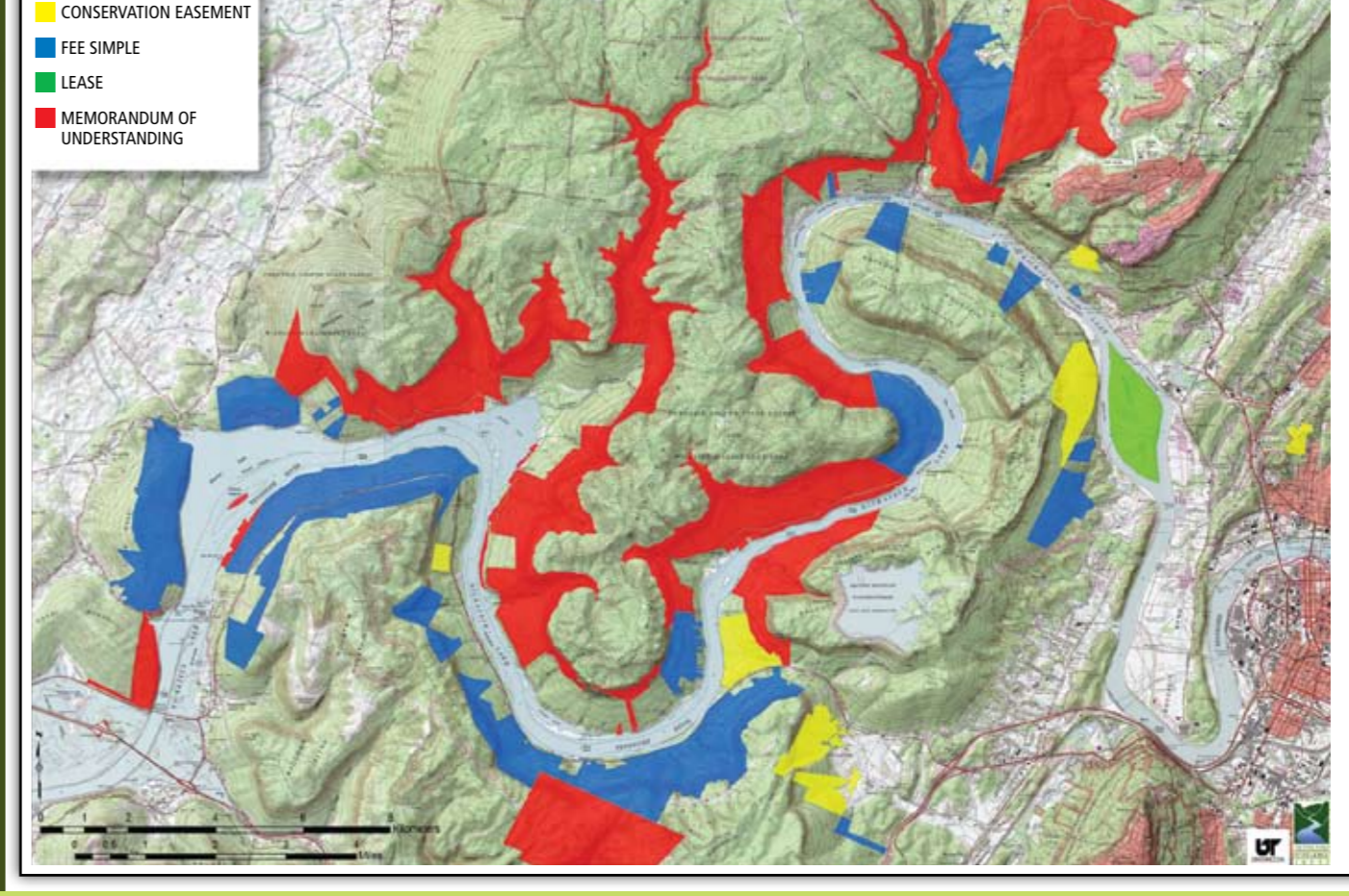
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WHAT IS THE GORGE?

The Tennessee River Gorge consists of 27,000 acres carved through the Cumberland Mountains by 27 miles of the Tennessee River. It is the only large river canyon in the US bordering a mid-size city (Chattanooga) and it is the fourth largest river canyon east of the Mississippi. The Gorge begins approximately 5 miles downstream from downtown Chattanooga (across from Williams Island) and continues 27 river miles to Hales Bar Dam Marina near Nickajack Lake. The Gorge is home to over a thousand varieties of flora and fauna, including such rare and endangered species as Bald Eagles and Large Flowering Skullcap, respectively. What's more, dozens of archaeological sites in the Gorge bear evidence of human presence there for at least 10,000 years.

Protected Lands of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust



This is worth saving!

- CONSERVATION EASEMENT**
A legal agreement between the land owner and the Trust, restricting future activities to protect conservation values.
- FEE SIMPLE**
Full, unconditional ownership with right to use or sell during the owner's lifetime, then pass on to heirs.
- LEASE**
A contract to convey real estate, equipment or facilities for a specified term and specified rent.
- MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**
An agreement to cooperate toward certain goals. Less binding than more formal agreements.

EXPLORE THE GORGE!

Trail resources are available on our website at www.trgt.org

OUR MISSION:

The mission of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust is to enrich our community by the conservation of the Tennessee River Gorge through land protection, education and the promotion of good land stewardship.

TENNESSEE RIVER GORGE TRUST



PHOTO: KEVIN LIVINGOOD



PHOTO: KEVIN LIVINGOOD

History and future of the TENNESSEE RIVER GORGE TRUST

The Tennessee River Gorge Trust is the perfect example of what can happen when a small group of thoughtful citizens comes together to create positive change in their community. The Trust was founded in 1981 — later incorporated in 1986 — as the result of a dinner party at Adele Hampton's home. Chattanooga-area citizens gathered around her coffee table to discuss the worrisome development of the mountains bordering Chattanooga. Right there in the Hampton's living room, Chattanoogaans decided these mountains were worth protecting. Since then, the cooperation of local landowners,

TVA, the State of Tennessee and the community citizens of Hamilton and Marion Counties has led the Trust to protect more than 17,000 of the 27,000 acres in the Gorge. But we're far from finished. As an up-and-coming city, Chattanooga is at a critical point in its history with more incoming businesses, jobs, and investments than ever before. At the Trust, we recognize that growth equals development. And development — if not done considerably — can threaten natural lands. The health of our lands is directly tied to the health of our city. Land preservation cannot be an afterthought. It must be a priority.

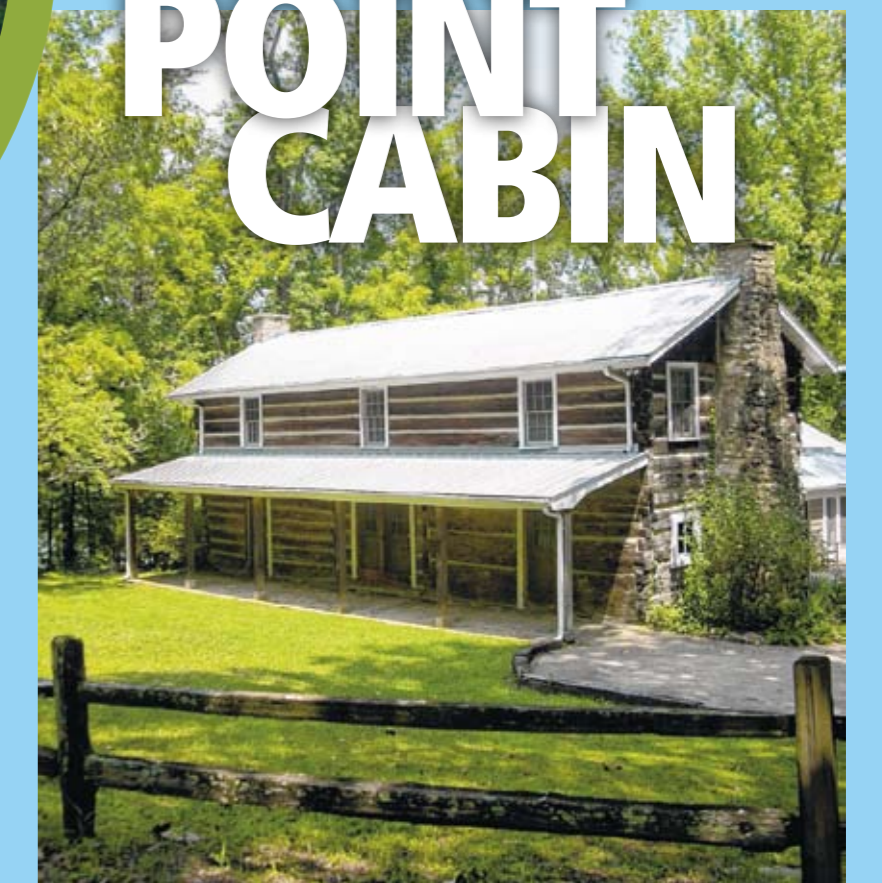
This is where the Tennessee River Gorge Trust comes in. We are working everyday to ensure that local citizens understand the value of land protection in hopes that they will choose to live their lives with that knowledge at the forefront. Whether you are a school teacher, an architect, a land developer, or a stay-at-home mom, everyday you are interacting with the natural world if only by breathing clean air and drinking clean water. We will only continue to have these healthy shared resources if we decide to protect our lands as a community. The Tennessee River Gorge Trust is responsible for keep-

ing the conversation around land preservation relevant and alive. We are rising to meet the challenge of a growing Chattanooga by engaging with the community through new media efforts, through local partnerships with schools, universities, foundations and fellow land trusts, and finally through a new emphasis on citizen science (watch for upcoming events!). We want to ensure that Chattanoogaans and our local neighbors are regularly reminded of the value that natural lands have in each of our lives. In a 1968 speech made in New

Delhi to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Baba Dioum wisely stated, "In the end we will conserve only what we love. We love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught." At the Trust, we will continue to teach and educate the city on the value of our natural lands. It is then up to Chattanooga-area citizens to rise up from their seats around the metaphorical coffee table and take action to conserve the mountains and river that we love. Forever.



POT POINT CABIN



Naturally, it's perfect... The Pot Point Cabin is nestled in the heart of the Tennessee River Gorge. It's the perfect spot for corporate retreats, family reunions, small weddings, and more. Only 20 minutes from downtown, this cozy venue feels like a million miles away. Daytime rentals begin at \$350.

Visit www.trgt.org for more information.

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Who is the TENNESSEE RIVER GORGE TRUST



Rick Huffines
Executive Director



Sarah Quattrochi
Outreach and Development Director



Hannah Shadrick
Office Manager

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