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Blogwire

Blogwire is a compilation of local news and information gathered by area citizens and Xpress staff. The Blogwire news aggregator includes press releases, stories from other news outlets, opinion pieces and updates from area blogs

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Asheville Currency Project seeking unwanted items to sell at fundraiser

- David Forbes, posted in News
Comments: 2 Views: 192

The ribs & the crowd both sizzled at Tryon's BBQ fest

- Jeff Fobes, posted in Entertainment
Comments: 1 Views: 90

Asheville Tea Party to hold weekly social at Pack's Tavern

- Michael Muller, posted in Politics
Comments: 3 Views: 272

Local authority needed to clamp down on puppy mills

- Michael Muller, posted in Opinion
Comments: 2 Views: 185

NC state Senate passes broadband bill, a killer for cities

- Webmaster, posted in Opinion
Comments: 2 Views: 546

Rep. Shuler named to Wall

Land conservation's increasing role

Posted by [Margaret Williams](#) in [Environment](#) | 1 month, 2 weeks ago

Land for Tomorrow, a statewide land-conservation nonprofit, sent this press release about the increasing role of land conservation in the North Carolina economy:

Communities across the state that have been hard hit by manufacturing losses are using land conservation projects to increase tourism and retail sales, preserve family farms, and expand small businesses, according to Land for Tomorrow's annual Green Book, released April 29th.

The report, "Conservation = Economic Stimulus," is an annual compilation of county-by-county funding by North Carolina's four land and water conservation trust funds: the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Natural Heritage Trust Fund and Clean Water Management Trust Fund. North Carolina's conservation efforts through these funds produce, dollar for dollar, greater economic impact than many other types of government spending.

With communities seeing the benefits of conservation, these trust funds have record numbers of requests to fund local projects. The growing interest in conservation has created a huge gap between the number of quality projects and the amount of state funding available.

"Land conservation creates jobs in North Carolina, especially in regions that have been hardest hit by the economic downturn. That's why the governor and General Assembly should provide adequate funding in next year's budget for the state's conservation trust funds," said Reid Wilson, Executive Director of the Conservation Trust for North Carolina and Land for Tomorrow Executive Committee member.

Land for Tomorrow is urging the state's leaders to maintain the \$50 million already budgeted for the Clean Water Management Trust Fund in FY 2010-11 and to include \$2 million for the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. Both funds leverage millions of dollars each year from federal, local and private sources.

North Carolina state parks are generating more economic impact (more than \$400 million each year) and more visitors than ever, a direct result of major investments in parks over the past few decades. According to the Green Book, there were 59,061 acres of land in state parks in 1970. Today there are 210,376 acres.

Quality of life is often cited as one of the primary reasons companies move to the state. The North Carolina Department of

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Commerce, in its North Carolina Fact Book, highlights the state's many opportunities for outdoor activities.

"Our state's leaders have always recognized the benefits of conservation, and we can't fall behind now," said Katherine Skinner, Executive Director of the NC Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and Land for Tomorrow Executive Committee member. "It's more clear than ever that companies coming to North Carolina are citing our state's abundant natural beauty as a major factor in making their relocation decisions."

The military recognizes the economic benefits of conservation as well. Top military officials see that, by partnering with local land trusts and state agencies, critical land around military bases can be protected from encroachment while also preserving key wildlife habitats.

Conservation also boosts our state's economic development by protecting our most valuable resource - a clean water supply. An American Water Works Association study highlighted in the Green Book observed that, for every 10 percent increase in forest cover, drinking water treatment and chemical costs decrease approximately 20 percent.

ABOUT LAND FOR TOMORROW

Land for Tomorrow, a coalition of conservation, agriculture, business and local government organizations, is committed to preserving and protecting North Carolina's land, water and historic places. Its goal is to increase public awareness for the need to protect additional lands that are critical to economic well-being and quality of life in North Carolina. Land for Tomorrow seeks to help the state reach its declared goal of conserving a million acres, and ensure that critical land will be available to provide clean air and drinking water, strengthen our communities, promote job growth and enhance the quality of life for generations to come. For additional information about Land for Tomorrow, visit <http://www.landfortomorrow.org>.

[View the original link](#) (www.landfortomorrow.org)

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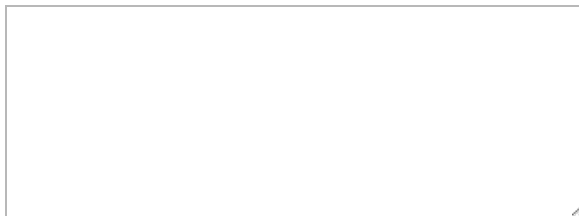
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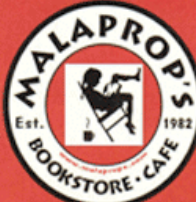


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