

KVLT Executive Director Retires December 31

Dr. Barry Beasley, Executive Director of the Katawba Valley Land Trust since December 2010, retired at the end of 2017. Barry led the organization through a period of growth, expanded land protection activities, and improved management capabilities.



Barry Beasley
by Bill Stokes

for land protection along the river and its tributaries.

After retiring from SC DNR, Barry offered to become leader of the land trust. The first Executive Director, Dr. Austin Jenkins, had left to accept a teaching position at USC-Sumter.

“We were very fortunate indeed when Barry agreed to become our director,” stated Mark Grier, President of the land trust. “Finding a leader with the experience and skills that Barry possesses was quite a coup for our small land trust.”

Barry brought a wealth of capabilities to the position. He has a wide network of contacts and friends that has helped KVLT in its work with state and federal agencies and other conservation organizations and allowed Barry to create a popular series of lectures of outstanding speakers. His skills as a group facilitator and leader, his knowledge of land conservation techniques, his strong organizational skills, and his ability to clearly state and share our message with the public have been invaluable to the continued growth and development of the land trust.


As Katawba Valley Land Trust celebrates its 25th anniversary, we are indeed grateful that Barry Beasley has provided exceptional leadership over the past seven years.



Cane Creek
Barry Beasley

A native of North Carolina, Beasley has a degree in history from East Carolina University, a Masters in Sociology from Appalachian State University, and a Ph.D. in Sociology from North Carolina State University. He came to Columbia, S. C. as an instructor at USC. In 1984, he began working in natural resources as manager of the State Scenic Rivers Program. He advanced in the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR), serving in the last few years before his retirement from that agency as Section Chief for Habitat Protection and Environmental Conservation. In his positions with DNR, Barry was responsible for the Heritage Trust Program, the River Conservation Program, and other activities related to land and natural resource protection. For a number of years, he worked as co-chair of the Catawba River Corridor Plan, during which he became familiar with the issues and people of the Catawba River Valley. One result of the Corridor Plan was the organization in 1992 of the Katawba Valley Land Trust to help implement the recommendations

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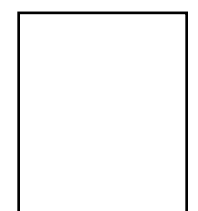


Blue Heron
Bill Stokes

Note Cards Available



Mary Brown's beautiful note cards of area wild flowers and our special places are available at the KVLT office. The purchase of these note cards benefits the land trust. For more information call 803-285-5801 or stop by 106 E. Meeting St.



Dick Christie Becomes KVLT Executive Director January 1

KVLT's new executive director is Richard "Dick" Christie. Dick comes to KVLT after almost 38 years working for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. He spent his first nine years with the SCDNR in the low country, working with the restoration of American shad and river herring populations in the Santee Cooper basin. Dick then spent 11 years as a district fisheries biologist in the Rock Hill office, where he managed freshwater fisheries resources in a seven-county area which included Lakes Wylie, Wateree and Monticello; and the Broad and Catawba rivers. Since 2000, Dick has worked in the Environmental Programs Office, with a focus on protecting, enhancing and mitigating natural resources associated with the operation of hydroelectric plants which included Santee Cooper, Catawba-Wateree, Lake Murray, Keowee-Toxaway and a number of smaller projects. Those efforts have included enhancing/restoring river flows, enhancing recreational access, protecting fisheries resources, establishing mitigation funds, and land protection. Through his work as the district fisheries biologist and the work on the Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Project, Dick has become very familiar with the Catawba River Watershed and the surrounding area.

Land Trust President Mark Grier says, "the Katawba Valley Land Trust is very excited to welcome Dick Christie as Executive Director. Dick follows the tradi-

tion of prior KVLT Executive Directors Austin Jenkins and Barry Beasley with a strong professional background related to conservation. Dick and his wife, Ann, have been avid supporters of KVLT for many years, and Dick has demonstrated his commitment to conservation as a KVLT Board Member. His knowledge of the land and the people of our region of South Carolina is a great asset for KVLT!"



Dick Christy

Dick states, "I have lived in Lancaster County for almost 28 years, and I have witnessed the rapid growth and development occurring in this area. I strongly believe in the mission of KVLT, which is to protect the natural resources, cultural resources, open lands, waters, and vistas of aesthetic value in the Catawba River Valley and surrounding areas, and I look forward to working with KVLT to continue that mission."

Dick is married to Ann Christie who has recently retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service after many years of great conservation work, and they live in Heath Springs.

Revolutionary War Battlefield Protected



Patriot Grave Site at Battlefield Mary Brown

KVLT recently acquired an easement protecting 50 acres of the Revolutionary War battlefield that was the site of the Battle of Waxhaws or Buford Massacre, which occurred on May 29, 1780. This battle was an engagement between Continental troops led by Colonel Abraham Buford and British troops and Loyalists commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Banastre

Tarleton. Almost as quickly as it had begun, the Battle of Waxhaws was over. British casualties were slight, with 5 killed and 14 wounded. The Americans lost 113

men killed and 203 wounded. Colonel Buford managed to escape from the slaughter. He reported what he saw on the battlefield to Patriot officials and the effect was electrifying. The Battle of Waxhaws became known as "Buford's Massacre" and Tarleton, already known as an aggressive commander, was condemned as a butcher. This conservation project is a partnership between KVLT, the South Carolina Battleground Trust, the Civil War Trust, the National Park Service and Lancaster County.

Barry Beasley, KVLT Executive Director states, "the land trust has a strong interest in protecting important historical sites and we are delighted to hold this easement that protects this site. KVLT expects two other land protection projects protecting Revolutionary War sites in 2018."

Carolina Heelsplitter Restoration

One of the most endangered species of all endangered species is the Carolina heelsplitter mussel. In 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reported that only 154 individual mussels remained in the wild in the 11 stretches of streams that held them in North and South Carolina. The largest known population is found in Flat Creek in Lancaster County. In October, the Carolina heelsplitter population in Gills and Flat Creeks in Lancaster County got a boost. Approximately 300 endangered mussels were placed in each stream by USFWS staff. The mussels were placed in the creek by hand by the USFWS biologists in portions of each creek on properties that are owned by the land trust. Heelsplitters require cool, clean water that is well oxygenated. They also need a stable and silt-free

streambed in order to survive. Both Gills Creek and Flat Creek have these necessary conditions. KVLT executive director, Barry Beasley, states "protecting heelsplitter habitat has always been a priority of the land trust. We are very proud to own properties that possess the conditions that provide heelsplitter habitat and we are excited that the USFWS were able to place the young mussels in the creeks on KVLT's conserved properties".



Releasing Heelsplitters Barry Beasley

KVLT has Banner Month in Conservation

The last trust ended 2017 with a loud conservation bang! KVLT protected three properties for a total of 907 acres to end the year, raising the KVLT total for protected lands to 10,707 acres. We signed two conservation easements

and received a 367-acre parcel containing Carolina Heelsplitter habitat from the Haile Gold Mine. Look for more about these conservation projects in the Spring, 2018 KVLT newsletter.

S.C. Conservation Bank at Risk

The S.C. Conservation Bank provides funding to land trusts, state agencies and other conservation organizations to protect and conserve properties in South Carolina. The bank has protected 288,066 acres of land in the state for an average cost of \$526 per acre. The Katawba Valley Land Trust has received funding from the bank for four conservation projects protecting over 1000 acres. The bank has to be re-authorized this year by the S.C. General

Assembly or it goes away and the funding for protecting conservation properties also goes away with the bank. If you appreciate the great conservation work accomplished with funding from the S.C. Conservation Bank, call your S.C. representative in the House and your State Senator and ask them to re-authorize the conservation bank and keep the funding for conservation in place.

Comments from the Director



2017 Annual Board Meeting Barry Beasley

As many of you know, I decided that 2017 was to be my last as director of the Katawba Valley Land Trust. After seven years, it is time to turn the reins over to new leadership. Fortunately, the board has found an outstanding new executive director right here in Lancaster county in Heath Springs. Dick Christie will become KVLT's new director on January 1. I had the pleasure of working with Dick for many years at the SCDNR. He is a committed conservationist and has a background in biology and forest management. The land trust is in good hands!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at KVLT. Working

with the outstanding KVLT Board has been a pleasure and it has been a great treat to get to know to you – our KVLT members. I have appreciated going on outings with you, seeing you at the KVLT Speaker Series and eating barbeque with you at our annual meetings each year. I also want to thank each of you for your generous and loyal financial support of the land trust. I have particularly enjoyed getting to know our land trust members who had an interest in conserving their land and did so by placing a conservation easement on their property. I appreciate the conservation ethic of all these individuals and families.

I will not be completely gone. I am going to join the KVLT Board so maybe I will see you at the Spring Bird Count or at the Forty Acre Rock Spring Hike in 2018. Thanks again for all your support for the land trust.