

## **Nature Conservancy** <sup>[1]</sup>

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The Black River in Pender County, home to 1,700-year-old cypress trees identified as the oldest living trees east of the Rocky Mountains, is among the North Carolina habitats protected by the Nature Conservancy. This 1986 photograph shows one of the old-growth trees. Photograph by

by Bland Simpson, 2006Frederick W. Annand.

Nature Conservancy <sup>[2]</sup>, with headquarters in Arlington, Va., is a national organization working for land conservation and the preservation of biodiversity. North Carolina's chapter, the North Carolina Nature Conservancy <sup>[3]</sup>, was started in 1977. Headquartered in Durham <sup>[4]</sup>, the organization had 27,000 members by the early 2000s. Well known for its purchases of ecologically important areas, the Nature Conservancy uses a wide array of conservation tools, from conservation easements that allow private landowners to protect their property to the negotiation of innovative agreements with private companies and government agencies. The conservancy's work has led to the creation of more than 1,400 nature preserves nationwide, enjoyed by many thousands of visitors each year. The preserve system includes over 100,000 acres in North Carolina, with Bat Cave <sup>[5]</sup>, Bluff Mountain <sup>[6]</sup>, and the Roanoke River <sup>[7]</sup> being among the state's most popular preserves.

By 2004 the North Carolina Nature Conservancy had protected and preserved over 545,000 acres of critical lands in the state. Some of its most prized projects to date include Bluff Mountain in Ashe County <sup>[8]</sup>, Green Swamp <sup>[9]</sup> in Brunswick <sup>[10]</sup> and Columbus <sup>[11]</sup> Counties, the Black River corridor <sup>[12]</sup>, Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge <sup>[13]</sup>, the longleaf pine stand at Weymouth Woods <sup>[14]</sup>, the hardwood swamps of the Roanoke River bottomlands, and the maritime forest and dunes at Nags Head Woods <sup>[15]</sup> in Dare County <sup>[16]</sup>. The North Carolina Nature Conservancy's campaign, Forever Wild: A Campaign to Save the Last Great Places in North Carolina, initiated in the early 2000s, has sought \$25 million toward purchasing large acreage in the New River <sup>[17]</sup>'s mountain headwaters, Hickory Nut Gorge <sup>[18]</sup>, the Sandhills <sup>[14]</sup>, the lower Cape Fear River <sup>[19]</sup> valley, the upper Tar River, the Roanoke River valley <sup>[7]</sup>, and the Green Swamp-Boiling Springs Wetlands <sup>[20]</sup>.

#### **Reference:**

Ida Phillips Lynch, *North Carolina Afield: A Guide to Nature Conservancy Projects in North Carolina*(2002).

#### **Additional Resources:**

Nature Conservancy: <http://www.nature.org/> <sup>[2]</sup>

#### **Subjects:**

21st Century (2001-present) <sup>[21]</sup>

Natural resources <sup>[22]</sup>

Post War 20th Century (1946-2000) [23]

Wildlife [24]

**Authors:**

Simpson, Bland [25]

**Origin - location:**

Brunswick County [26]

Columbus County [27]

Dare County [28]

Ashe County [29]

Durham County [30]

Durham [31]

**From:**

Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. [32]

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