

NEWS

ENVIVA FOREST CONSERVATION FUND HELPS WITH ACQUISITION OF NOTABLE NORTH CAROLINA LANDSCAPE

U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Greenville, SC
For IMMEDIATE RELEASE (**February 19, 2018**)

Greenville, S.C. – Protection of a key forest for the benefit of future generations was made possible by a \$195,000 grant from the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund (the Fund). That funding leveraged another \$800,000 in external funding, which allowed The Nature Conservancy to purchase property in Washington County, North Carolina, near the town of Plymouth. The 1,294 tract of cypress-tupelo swamps and stands of Atlantic white cedar located near the mouth of the Albemarle Sound creates a unique landscape with high ecological and conservation value.

The Nature Conservancy began a long-term conservation program in the area in 1982, known as the Roanoke River Project. Through the Project, The Nature Conservancy and partners have helped protect over 94,000 acres the Lower Roanoke River basin. This 1,294-acre parcel is one of the last unprotected areas near the mouth of the river; it is connected to The Nature Conservancy’s Roanoke Preserve and is across from the Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge, making it a highly desirable addition to the overall Roanoke River Conservation Plan. This property is among a large expanse of protected, un-fragmented floodplain forest that spans the lower 20 miles of the Lower Roanoke River.

“A key facet of good environmental stewardship is restoring and sustaining connectivity between protected areas and our critical resources,” said Carlton Owen, President and CEO of the U. S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, which administers the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund. “The Roanoke River basin contains significant ecological value and we are excited to be a part of its long-term conservation.”

The Roanoke River carries more water than any other North Carolina river. Its wide floodplain includes diverse vegetation and supports the state’s densest populations of white-tailed deer, bear, and wild turkeys. More than 220 bird species have been identified in the Roanoke River floodplain including 88 resident species that form the highest density of nesting birds anywhere in the state. Over 235 square miles of bottomland and cypress-tupelo forests lie along the lower Roanoke resulting in the largest intact and least disturbed expanse of these ecosystems on the East Coast.

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund was launched in December of 2015 by Enviva, the world’s largest producer of industrial wood pellets. Through the first two years of this planned 10-year partnership, seven projects have been funded, committing \$1 million. When these projects are completed, an estimated 10,500 acres of sensitive wetland forest and other habitats will have been protected.

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About the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund is a \$5 million, 10-year program established by Enviva Holdings, LP in December 2015 to permanently protect environmentally sensitive bottomland and wetland forests.

Administered by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the Fund awards grants annually to nonprofit organizations and government agencies for conservation projects in North Carolina and Virginia.

envivaforestfund.org

About The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is the largest environmental non-profit by assets and revenue in the Americas.

Founded in 1951 and headquartered in Arlington Virginia the organization's mission is to "conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends." The Nature Conservancy impacts conservation in 69 countries, including all 50 states of the United States. The Conservancy has over one million members, and has protected more than 119,000,000 acres (48,000,000 ha) of land and thousands of miles of rivers worldwide. www.nature.org

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The **U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities** (the Endowment) is a not-for-profit public charity working collaboratively with partners in the public and private sectors to advance systemic, transformative, and sustainable change for the health and vitality of the nation's working forests and forest-reliant communities – www.usendowment.org