



Celebrating that Christ is all and in all by seeking, inviting, belonging,
serving and reverencing God's creation

The Nature Conservancy's work near and far

The Nature Conservancy works in the United States and around the world, launching initiatives, tracking the endeavors of other like-minded groups and individuals, and celebrating successes. Recently, one report had articles about the following events - - -

- 1) An "America the Beautiful" initiative was launched last year to conserve and restore 30% of its lands and waters by 2030. The article listed five keys to achieve this ambitious goal. While the 30x30 project is world-wide, the US has its own version of what is needed and how to accomplish it. One of the components is "resilient lands", of which the Appalachian corridor is one. These resilient lands have a better combination of connected and protected areas, which allow endangered species, both flora and fauna, to move into.
- 2) Monarch butterflies are getting a lot of protection help, thanks to work being done jointly by the US and Mexico. While the monarchs are still in danger worldwide, their western migratory corridor is being guarded and improved by the Nature Conservancy and government agencies in Mexico. There is a Western NC component to the monarch butterfly story, a component which we can help by planting and supporting pollinator gardens.
- 3) Climate change and US Farmers - Our area farmers have already expressed their concerns and reported their actions about climate change and the future of farming in Western NC. From water shortages to flooding issues, from soil erosion to riverbank restoration, the folks at Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District and related organizations are addressing these and other vital aspects of the farming communities. Our dependence on the farmers and their advocates is larger and more complex than we know.
- 4) Prescribed fires and controlled burns - The Nature Conservancy in North Carolina has a solid history of conducting burns throughout our mountain areas, to prevent the expansion of choking undergrowth and to encourage the healthy propagation of native plants. The combination of techniques to keep our mountains healthy is working to the advantage of all.
- 5) Cooling hot spots and reclaiming dead zones - The Nature Conservancy is helping hot cities "cool down" by utilizing the right trees in the right places, and it is working with areas in and around abandoned mines to create new solar farms. We are fortunate here to have lots of trees already, but there is always the concern about the best trees and keeping what we do have. Solar farms are already present here in Haywood County, and there will most likely be more and more of them as we move toward the age of the electric vehicle.

Ever heard of the "butterfly effect"? Small things that happen can affect larger and more distant things. It seems to be true. Events here in our area can affect, and be affected by, other events all over the globe. The more we know, the more we understand, the more we can help.