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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Catawba Lands Conservancy Receives Land Gift

95 Acres Protected in Gaston County

Charlotte, N.C. -- Catawba Lands Conservancy announces the preservation of 95 acres of land along the South Fork Catawba River through a donation made by Pharr Yarns and the Carstarphen family. Known as the Pharr Yarns Preserve, the conserved land will offer walking trails and river access as part of the Carolina Thread Trail (The Thread), a fifteen-county network of trails and conservation areas connecting more than two million people in the Carolinas.

The preserve features 3.45 miles of river frontage, 69 acres of wetlands, protects 18,000 feet of riparian corridor and provides habitat for numerous species of wildlife and plants. The preserve will serve as a key link of conserved lands along the South Fork.

“The Carstarphen family has been a longtime supporter of Catawba Lands Conservancy and the Carolina Thread Trail and this gift furthers the family’s legacy in Gaston County,” said Dave Cable, Executive Director of Catawba Lands Conservancy, lead agency of the Carolina Thread Trail. “This land gift, coupled with the energy and enthusiasm of local community leaders committed to advancing The Thread, ensures that a significant portion of the trail will be built this year. This project offers multiple benefits for the community; it conserves land, provides public access and protects water quality and wildlife.”

Bill and Carol Carstarphen, The Thread Governing Board members since the project’s launch in 2007, have been instrumental in furthering land preservation and advancing the trail system throughout the community.

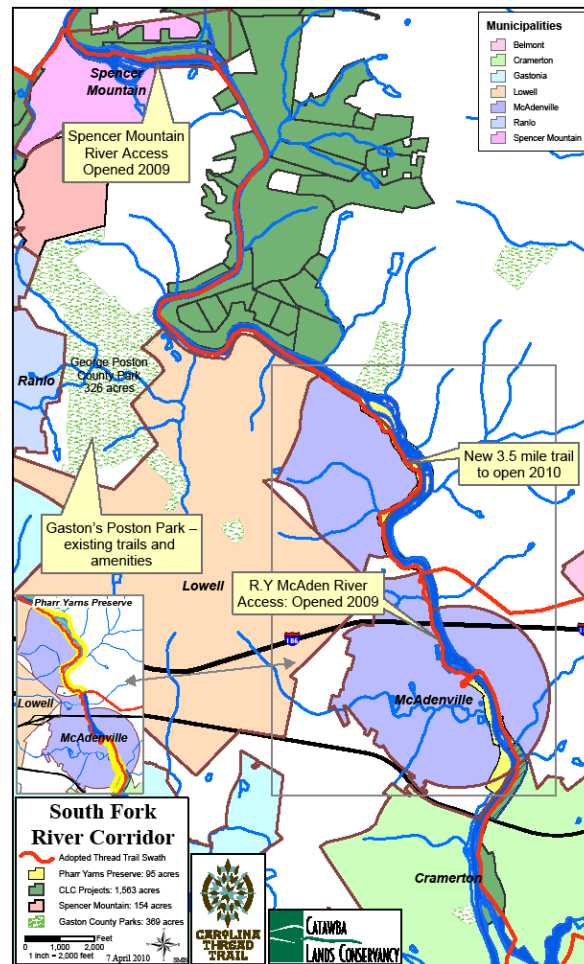
“The Conservancy is leading a regional effort to conserve important lands, protect our environment and help us connect with nature,” said Bill Carstarphen. “Gaston County

has seen rapid growth over the last decade, making it critical that we act now to ensure that our children and grandchildren inherit a green and prosperous place to call home.”

The Thread in Gaston County

In March 2009, Gaston County adopted its Carolina Thread Trail master plan. The plan outlines the long-term course for greenway and trail development within the county and integrates local trails with regionally significant trail segments and conservation corridors.

Gaston’s plan identified the South Fork Corridor, home of the Pharr Yarns Preserve, as a priority corridor for near term trail construction. Fueled by energetic local leadership and a \$74,484 Carolina Thread Trail implementation grant, an initial 3.5 miles of natural surface trail will be constructed along the river this summer. This new trail segment will join the existing blueway, a paddling trail extending from the Spencer Mountain River Access downstream to the R.Y. McAden River Access, which opened in September 2009. Ultimately, The Thread’s South Fork Corridor will offer 9.5 miles of multi-use trails for public enjoyment.



About The Carolina Thread Trail

The Carolina Thread Trail (The Thread) is a 15-county, two state initiative designed to inspire and facilitate the creation of a regional network of trails, blueways, and conservation corridors that is growing to link more than 2.3 million citizens. With

technical resources and catalytic funding from The Thread, local communities plan and implement their portions of this green interstate system. Catawba Lands Conservancy is the lead agency for The Thread, working in partnership with the Trust for Public Land, Foundation For The Carolinas, and many local partners and land trusts.

Land Trust Partners:

- *Catawba Lands Conservancy*
- *Davidson Lands Conservancy*
- *Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina*
- *Katawba Valley Land Trust*
- *Nation Ford Land Trust*

Additional Resources:

- *www.carolinathreadtrail.org*
- *www.catawbalands.org*
- *www.davidsonlands.org*
- *www.foothillsconservancy.org*
- *www.kult.org*
- *www.nationafordlandtrust.org*

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