

**MOUNTAIN RESOURCES COMMISSION RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT
EAST FORK HEADWATERS TRACT & TRUST FUND APPROPRIATIONS**

Whereas, the Mountain Resources Commission was established to encourage quality growth and development while preserving the natural resources, open spaces, and farmland of the mountain region of Western North Carolina; and

Whereas, the North Carolina State Constitution in Article XIV, Section 5, stipulates that it is the policy of state government "to conserve and protect its lands and waters for the benefit of all its citizenry;" and

Whereas, the East Fork Headwater Tract in Transylvania County comprises approximately 8,000 acres of land with ecological and recreational values including rare and endangered species habitat, landscape level connectivity for trails and habitat, water quality and watershed protection, and potential public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, and other outdoor pursuits; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission has expressed its intent to provide the necessary stewardship of the property to perpetuate conservation and recreational opportunities for the citizens of North Carolina; and

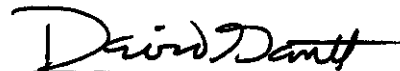
Whereas, The Conservation Fund has signed an option to purchase the property from Champion Cattle and Tree Farms for a sum of \$33 million financed over a 5-year period; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund, which has already committed \$3 million towards this project, and the North Carolina Natural Heritage Trust Fund could be partial sources of funding for this acquisition if they continue to receive funding from the General Assembly; and

Whereas, appropriations for the state's conservation trust funds should be a priority of the General Assembly every year, because our mountain region's economic health is inextricably tied to our ecological health even during difficult times.

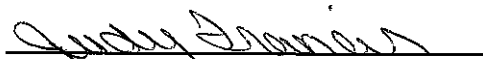
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North Carolina Mountain Resources Commission supports the efforts of the conservation community and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to preserve and protect the property known as the East Fork Headwaters Tract; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the North Carolina Mountain Resources Commission respectfully requests full appropriations for North Carolina's conservation trust funds so critical funding for watershed and open space protection, critical habitat, recreational access, farmland preservation, and water supply infrastructure for North Carolina communities and all citizens may continue to progress.



David Gantt, Chairman
North Carolina Mountain Resources Commission

ATTEST:



Judy Francis
Staff to the Commission