

Jocassee Journal

Information and News about the Jocassee Gorges

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Developer donates \$100,000 to Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund

GORG
NWS

Upstate South Carolina developer Jim Anthony - whose development Cliffs at Keowee Vineyards is adjacent to the Jocassee Gorges - recently donated \$100,000 to the Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund.

"The job that the conservation community has done at Jocassee Gorges has really inspired me," said Anthony, president of Cliffs Communities. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be here at the right time and to be able to help like this. We're delighted to play a small part in maintaining the Jocassee Gorges tract."

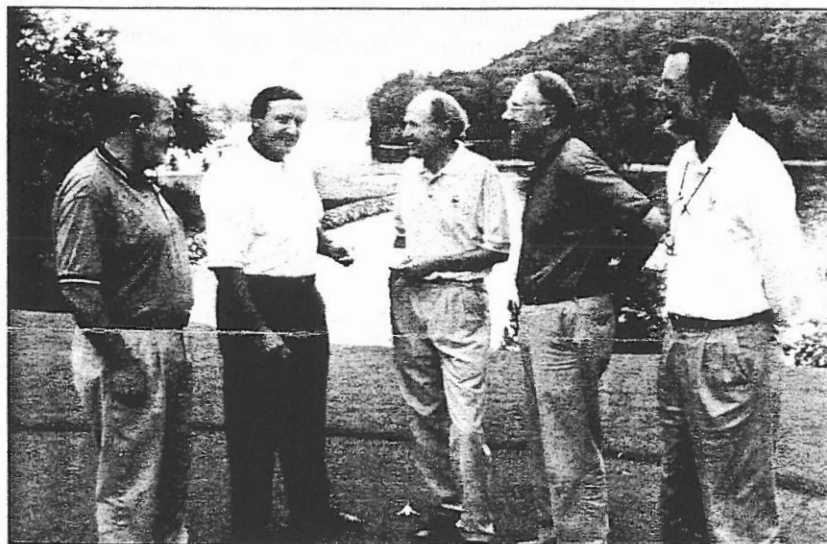
John Frampton, assistant director for development and national affairs with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, said Anthony's donation will "jump-start the Trust Fund. This will be a living gift, because we will eventually be able to do many good

things at Jocassee with the interest from the Trust Fund.

"We are excited about Cliffs Communities becoming a partner with the DNR on the Jocassee project," Frampton said. "Although there is a substantial amount of acreage protected in the Jocassee Gorges, some development around it is going to occur. The citizens in this state are fortunate to have a developer like Jim Anthony whose conservation ethic is reflected in his properties. In the Cliffs Communities' developments, a lot of the green space and key wildlife portions are preserved and enhanced. Jim Anthony has long been known as a conservationist, and this generous donation further illustrates his commitment to conservation and protection of these unique mountain habitats."

Approved in 1997 by the S.C. Natural Resources Board, the Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund will provide money to manage the area and perhaps add to it if additional properties become available.

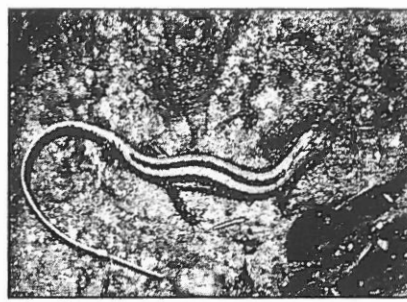
Those wishing to contribute to the fund may make a check to the S.C. Department of Natural Resources and send it to: Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund, DNR, PO Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202. In the "For" section of the check in the bottom left corner, write "Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund."



A \$100,000 donation by Cliffs Communities to the Jocassee Gorges Trust Fund will mean a living legacy for the upstate natural area. At the recent donation presentation were (from left) Sam Stokes Sr., DNR regional wildlife biologist; John Frampton, DNR assistant director for development and national affairs; Jim Anthony, Cliffs Communities president; Dr. Joab Lesesne, S.C. Natural Resources Board chairman; and Billy McTeer, DNR deputy director for wildlife and freshwater fisheries.



Red salamander



Three-lined salamander

While "charismatic megafauna" such as black bears and white-tailed deer draw most of the attention, the Jocassee Gorges is teeming with seldom-seen wildlife such as red salamander (left) and three-lined salamander (right). The state of North Carolina is currently conducting numerous research projects to catalog the Jocassee Gorges biological diversity on the nearly 10,000 acres that it acquired in 1999. (Photos by Seth Lambiase, N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation)

Natural resource inventories underway in North Carolina Jocassee Gorges

On April 29, 1999, the state of North Carolina purchased 9,749 acres of the Jocassee Gorges in Transylvania County from Duke Energy Corp. A new, 7,091-acre Gorges State Park was created, as was a new, 2,658 acre state Game Land to be managed by the N. C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a suite of biological studies of the Jocassee Gorges were supported by National Science Foundation grants awarded to the Highlands Biological Station in Highlands, N.C. New natural resource surveys, intended to update and complement past studies, have been funded by the N.C. Natural Heritage Trust Fund and coordinated by the N.C. Natural Heritage Program and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

In 1999 and 2000, research has been or is being conducted on area geology, natural community mapping, rare plants,

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rattlesnakes, fish communities, amphibians, small mammals, terrestrial mollusks and breeding birds. Some of these projects will continue into 2001.

These studies will provide data needed so that Gorges State Park and new Game Land may be effectively managed for the conservation of their nationally significant natural resources.

For more information, contact:

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Jocassee ecosystem diversity to be researched

By Scott Abella

Although forests in Jocassee Gorges appear pristine, most of the property has been clear cut or selectively logged several times since the late 1800s. Many commercial forest industries owned Jocassee Gorges before its purchase by the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and the property has supplied timber to build factories, houses and even sewing machine cabinets. A primary objective of DNR is to enhance and restore forests native to Jocassee Gorges. But what forest types would occupy Jocassee Gorges today had the property not been logged?

The purpose of my forest resources master of science project at Clemson University is to classify the different forest ecosystems that occur in Jocassee Gorges. Research plots will be established in some of the older forests of Jocassee Gorges that have not been cut recently, and the project will inventory trees, understory plants, soils and topography in each plot. Using computer programs, research plots will be grouped into ecosystem types that occupy similar soils and elevations and contain similar vegetation. The different forest types of Jocassee Gorges can then be mapped to help predict which ecosystems would occupy logged sites had the sites not been altered by logging.

Upon project completion, these ecosystem models may help DNR plan forest management and restoration in Jocassee Gorges. Southern Appalachian forests such as those in northwestern South Carolina are a center of biodiversity in North America, and in Jocassee Gorges there are incredible opportunities to enhance and restore native ecosystems. (Scott Abella is a master's student in Clemson University's Department of Forest Resources.)