February 04, 2011

Ms. Audrey Hunter

Infrastructure & Reach Coordinator

NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources

217 West Jones Street, Office #3000-A

Raleigh, NC 27603

Ms. Hunter;

As a first time REACH intern recipient for 2011 Elk Knob State Park benefited greatly from the hard work and dedication of intern Charles Hayden. “Chip” was very determined to meet the goals set before him by the park staff. Due to the work accomplished and goals met, I am very excited about the possibilities of receiving another quality intern for the summer of 2012.

This year our proposal will shift focus a bit.

Elk Knob State Park, along with Beech Creek Bog, Sugar Mountain Bog, and Pineola Bog have very rich and diverse natural communities. Elk Knob, the second highest peak in Watauga County and one of only a few amphibolite mountains in the southern Appalachians is host to a large variety of flora and fauna due to the weathering of the amphibolite rock. When weathering and decomposition of amphibolite takes place, it produces a rich soil that provides a habitat for several rare and endangered plants. These natural communities also offer habitat for the endangered saw - whet owl and the pigmy salamander.

Appalachian mountain bogs are considered wetlands and are protected by the Federal Clean Water Act and state regulations. At least one third of the nation’s threatened or endangered species live in wetlands. Our Southern Appalachian bogs support a number of rare and unique life forms, some of which are found in no other habitat.

Elk Knob State Park seeks an intern with course study and field experience in biology, botony, and entomology, specifically identifying and compiling plant and animal inventories. These inventories will include a collection of digital photographs, gis locations and species lists that will be turned over to the park at the completion of the internship. The intern will be required to work Monday through Friday 7:30am to 4:00pm and will need to provide his/her own equipment such as cameras, lap top computer, any lab or scientific field equipment needed, gps unit, proper clothing and footwear, and transportation. The intern will need to provide their own housing, utilities, and food. The park will provide some transportation to and from the bog areas when vehicles are available. The park will also provide an office area for the intern to work as well as hip boots to wear around the bog areas when needed. This position will require someone who is self motivated, physically capable of hiking and carrying equipment to remote areas, and can work independently in all types of weather conditions.

Elk Knob State Park is located approximately 9 miles from Boone on Meat Camp Road. Please contact Larry Trivette, Park Superintendent at 828-297-7261 or larry.trivette@ncdenr.gov.