Celebrating our 12th year of Panthertown Conservation 2005 - 2017

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.” - John Muir

NOTEWORTHY

Panthertown Map

Looking for a gift for the backcountry explorers on your list? We recommend Burt Kornegay's Guide's Guide to Panthertown as an essential resource. Burt and the folks at Panthertown Map Association say they have plans to revise this popular map in the future. We have been told limited copies are available in stores, and from the publisher, while supplies last: www.PanthertownMap.com

Amazon Smile

This holiday season, if you shop on Amazon, please consider using this link. When you shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase to benefit Friends of Panthertown! smile.amazon.com/ch/27-3758868

Autumn 2017 Friends of Panthertown News

Our members enjoyed a guided hike and volunteer trail cleanup this summer in Panthertown.

Thanks for supporting the work that we do!

Big thanks to our members and volunteers who throughout the past year have supported our mission to work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to conserve this outstanding natural resource while improving the recreational opportunities in Panthertown. We are working on your behalf!

This fall, with the help of our dedicated volunteers, we survived the high winds and rain of several hurricanes and tropical storms, and we cleaned up much of the storm debris. We still have plenty of work to do. If you see something that needs our attention, please send us a trail condition report via e-mail, or give us a call.

If you are interested in volunteering, or would like to Adopt-A-Trail in Panthertown, we would love to hear from you. Visit our website to take a quick survey about your interests. Everyone is welcome, and there are lots of opportunities to get involved. You can volunteer on the trails, at our events, in the office, on the phone, and in many other ways. Find out more, or sign-up to receive notices about upcoming guided hikes, special events, and trail work days. We have lots of fun, and it's a great way to give back.
Giving Thanks

Thanks to all the hard working volunteers who helped us this year maintain the 30-miles hiking and mixed-use trails in Panthertown! Together they contributed over 1,000 hours of their time and labor, with a value near $19,000. Our volunteers help in lots of roles: on the trails, at our events, in the office, on a committee, and on the phone. Every little bit helps. To volunteer, or to Adopt-A-Trail in Panthertown, visit our website, call us at (828) 269-HIKE (4453), or send an e-mail to: friends@panthertown.org

Thanks to the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina for their Cashiers Community Fund grant award of $10,000 that will be used in support of our Panthertown Valley trail maintenance and stewardship.

Thanks to Wade Hampton Donor Advised Fund and the members of Wade Hampton Golf Club for a $5,000 grant in support of a Panthertown educational program for local students and schools.

Thanks to all our Salt Rock donors, who collectively contributed $50,000 this year towards the purchase of the Salt Rock trailhead property, allowing us to protect and conserve it for future public access.

Thanks to the 25,000 visitors who visited Panthertown over the past year. Thanks especially to those who practice Leave No Trace principles when visiting. We appreciate each of you for helping us protect this incredibly special place. Thank you!

Happy Thanksgiving from Friends of Panthertown. We hope you will enjoy our autumn edition of The Panther’s Roar.

We would like to introduce our student intern, Ben Davis, a Parks & Recreation Management undergrad from Western Carolina University, who will be working with us on the trails, and in the office, this winter and spring.

We are thankful to Carrie Coen for her assistance with our membership mailings, and to our committee members, and board members, for their many contributions of time and resources. Combined, our volunteers have contributed more than 1,000 hours this past year towards the conservation of Panthertown. Their volunteer hours are valued at nearly $19,000.

We work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to maintain and protect Panthertown Valley. With the generous support of our members and volunteers, we maintain more than 30 miles of trails in Panthertown, and work towards improving the recreational experiences for all who visit.

Friends of Panthertown - Planning For 2018

We are currently working with the U.S. Forest Service on plans for our conservation projects in Panthertown Valley over the next year. We will continue to maintain the 30-mile trail system in Panthertown while we conserve this incredibly special backcountry recreation area in Nantahala National Forest for all to enjoy. There are lots of opportunities to get involved with the work we are doing. Contact us for more information on how you can help us further our mission.

A Note of Correction

In our summer newsletter, we inadvertently left off members Gary and Linda Leedham from our Salt Rock donor list. We are sorry for the error, and grateful for their generosity.

We owe many thanks to everyone who contributed time and money to the Salt Rock land purchase. The tremendous amount of community support we received is simply amazing.
Celebration at Salt Rock

Below: We had a great celebration this summer at the 16-acre Salt Rock trailhead property. We celebrated National Trails Day with a ribbon cutting and other festivities including bluegrass music, great food, kid’s activities, and guided waterfall hikes.

Right: Mainspring Conservation Trust executive director, Sharon Taylor, and Friends of Panthertown executive director, Jason Kimenker, with his daughter, Alinea Kimenker, cutting the red ribbon on the newly constructed parking area at Salt Rock Gap trailhead entrance property.

See more event photos on Page 4.

Photos by Ron Mau, Karin Kimenker, and Virginia Willard
We had a great Celebration at Salt Rock this summer. Thanks to all those who contributed to the land purchase. With your help, and in partnership with Mainspring Conservation Trust, together we were able to conserve the 16-acre trailhead property located adjacent to the Salt Rock Gap entrance to Panthertown.
Where Does The Money Go?

Have you ever wondered how Friends of Panthertown raises the money it needs to support our mission, and how that money is spent?

Our mission is to work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to conserve this outstanding natural resource while improving the recreational opportunities in Panthertown.

As these charts on the right show, the bulk of our $116,000 revenue over the past twelve months came from membership contributions (17%), grants from private foundations and civic organizations (14%), a grant from the State of North Carolina for trailhead improvements (17%), and a special capital campaign which raised $50K for the acquisition of private property at Salt Rock Gap to be added to Panthertown Valley (43%).

In a “normal” year, without such a large capital project, our total annual revenues and expenses are approximately $50,000, and contributions by members and foundation grants would normally assume a larger percentage of the total. Additional small sources of funds also include special events, raffles, sales of merchandise, and bequests.

So much of what we do to conserve and protect Panthertown Valley is accomplished by volunteers! Our members and other volunteers contributed over 1,000 hours this past year working to maintain the trails, and help with conservation projects in Panthertown — and in many other ways. But, our mission-related activities (Program) also require cash. Program expenses, including property acquisition and improvements, accounted for 71% of our expenditures in the past 12 months, Membership support and acquisition plus Fundraising account for 18% and Administration accounts for 12%.

Friends of Panthertown has one part-time employee (our executive director, Jason Kimenker). We also occasionally engage contract services to help us get our work done.

This year we spent $50,000 on property acquisition plus $10,718 on creating a parking lot on a small portion of the Salt Rock Gap property.

We had a Net Surplus of $1,023 for the 12 months.
We Improve The Recreational Opportunities In Panthertown Valley

Part of our mission is to improve the recreational opportunities in Panthertown Valley. This summer, we added gravel, filled in pot holes, and graded the western entrance road leading to the Salt Rock Gap trailhead. We also constructed a much needed parking area at the trailhead gate, improving access to this backcountry area, and with your help we conserved the surrounding 16-acres adjacent to Panthertown Valley’s Cashiers entrance.

Thanks to our trail work leaders, Mike Purdy and Mike English, for their coordination of our trail work days throughout the year.

Thanks to all who have volunteered at our trail work days, and to those who have helped us achieve our work by being a supporting member of Friends of Panthertown. We could not do the work without you.
Panthertown Valley Unique Geology Presentation

On July 18th, we hosted an event at the Cashiers library. Friends’ co-founder, Bill Jacobs, gave a fascinating talk on the unique geology of Panthertown and the Cashiers area. Visit our website to view a video of the presentation.

Photo of Friends of Panthertown members enjoying Warden’s Falls, September 2017, contributed by Thomas “Badger” Mabry.
Happy Thanksgiving

Friends of Panthertown
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we’re
Thankful