

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MOUNTAIN RESOURCES COMMISSION SUPPORTING THE
STATE'S FOUR CONSERVATION TRUST FUNDS**

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

WHEREAS, in 1987 the General Assembly created the Natural Heritage Trust Fund to help protect the state's most important natural and cultural resources, including grasslands and forest lands, coastal marshes, mountain tops, wetlands and river frontage, historic structures, battlefields and viewsheds, representing a wide swath of ecological diversity and historical significance; and

WHEREAS, the Natural Heritage Trust Fund has funded more than \$300 Million in projects across the state; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly created the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund in 1994 to fund improvements in the state's park system, using dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local government for parks and grants to local governments to provide funding for state park improvements and acquisition of land to create new parks or expand existing ones; and

WHEREAS, The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund has funded more than \$449 million in projects across the state; and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina General Assembly created the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund in 1996 (Article 18; Chapter 113A of the North Carolina General Statutes); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly created the Clean Water Management Trust Fund "to clean up pollution in the State's surface waters and to protect and conserve those waters that are not yet polluted" and "shall be used to help finance projects that specifically address water pollution problems and focus on upgrading surface waters, eliminating pollution, and protecting and conserving unpolluted surface waters, including urban drinking water supplies" and "to build a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefit; and

WHEREAS, since 1996, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund has awarded 1,380 grants to hundreds of state agencies, local governments and nonprofit organizations all across North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly passed House Bill 607 in 2005 establishing the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to support the farming, forestry, and horticulture communities within the agriculture industry by supporting the purchase of agricultural conservation easements (on farm, forest, and horticulture lands), and funding public and private enterprise programs that will promote profitable and sustainable family farms through assistance to farmers in developing and implementing plans for the production of food, fiber, and value-added products, agritourism activities, marketing and sales of agricultural products produced on the farm, and other agriculturally related business activities; and funding conservation agreements (on farm, forest, and horticulture lands) targeted at the active production of food, fiber and other agricultural products; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation, tourism and agriculture are critical to the economy of communities across Western North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the current economic climate and current market conditions have created historic opportunities to accomplish the stipulations and objectives of the State Constitution, and the state's conservation trust funds;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mountain Resources Commission supports the stipulations and objectives of the State Constitution and the state's four conservation trust funds; and

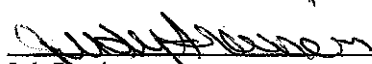
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mountain Resources Commission supports funding for the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund at the prior-year funding level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mountain Resources Commission supports maintaining existing dedicated funding for the Natural Heritage Trust Fund and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.



David Gantt, Chairman
North Carolina Mountain Resources Commission

ATTEST:



Judy Francis
Staff to the Commission