

January 2009

# Footnotes



Celebrating 35 Years Along The Foothills Trail • The Foothills Trail Conference Newsletter

## The Foothills Trail Conference Celebrates 35 Years!

A love of the Appalachian foothills united them, however few records exist describing the inception of the trail in the mid 1960's. The concept of an extensive trail occurred to several individuals, however the US Forest Service started the initial trail construction in the Sumter National Forest in 1968. By 1970 many agencies had developed a conceptual route for a trail joining Table Rock State Park to Oconee State Park. The Foothills Trail conference was officially organized and established on May 22, 1974 with the purpose of "the coordination of groups and individuals interested in advancing, completion, use and maintenance of the Foothills Trail."



The Foothills Trail Conference had an important role in the (cont...)

The purpose of the Foothills Trail Conference shall be to promote and coordinate for the benefit and use of the general public the proper use, construction and maintenance of a connected trail, to be called the Foothills Trail, running, as far as is practical over the summits of mountains and through the wild lands of the Southern

### Board Of Directors

R. Glen Hilliard, Chair Emeritus  
Robert Stephenson, Chair  
Bill Baskin  
Greg Borgen  
Thomas Brown, Treasurer  
Bruce Cannon  
Mike Despeaux  
Heyward Douglass  
John Garton, Emeritus  
Jack Hudish  
Jan Jackson  
Greg Lucas  
Steve Pagano  
John Park  
Chip Simmons  
Mike Stafford, Emeritus  
Scott Stegenga  
Les Storm

Maija Hurst, Executive Secretary

Foothills Trail Conference  
PO Box 3041  
Greenville, SC 29602  
info@foothillstrail.org  
864.467.9537

Foothills Trail Conference  
PO Box 3041  
Greenville, SC 29602

(Continued from front page)

development of the Bad Creek Hydroelectric project to be constructed west of the Whitewater River.

Duke Power Company recognized northwestern South Carolina as a potential site for the construction of hydroelectric generating facilities and began acquiring land in Pickens and Oconee counties in South Carolina and Transylvania county in North Carolina, they had to obtain a license from the Federal



Energy Regulatory Commission. A part of the licensing requirement requires Duke Power to provide for recreational opportunities on the lake to be created (Keowee). Since the Bad Creek project would only consist of a 300 acre lake that could not be accessed for public recreational purposes, the concept of developing the hiking trail across Duke Energy land from Table Rock to Upper Whitewater Falls enters the picture.

Glenn Hilliard, President of Liberty Life Insurance Corporation, Bill Lee, President of Duke Power Company and Herman Hermelink, President of Crescent Land and Timber Cooperation (CLT) (Duke's land holding subsidiary), set the stage for establishing the missing trail link between table Rock State Park and the Upper Whitewater Falls trails. Glenn Hilliard was instrumental in forming the Foothills Trail Conference, an organization that would serve as the uniting body among land managers of various sections of the trail and to establish management continuity along the length of the trail.

At the end of a two year construction period the connecting trail between Table Rock and Upper Whitewater Falls was completed. Then it was time to sit back and see if the hiking public would use the trail.



Over the past 35 years many people have enjoyed hiking the almost 80 miles of continuous pathways that make up the Foothills Trail. Many of the hikers have become members and have volunteered their time to maintain and construct parts of the trail. Robin Andrews put together the first and second edition guidebooks to highlight the scenic aspects of the trail. The third edition was created in 1996. The fourth edition was created in \*\*\*\*and most recently the fifth edition.....\*\*\*\*

The Foothills Trail has a long history and an ever expanding future as the Conference strives to connect people to this magnificent hiking opportunity in the Upstate. Our members will be key to our future success and can pat themselves on the back for providing the opportunity to experience the beauty of the region to future generations.

Adapted from an article by Charles Borawa. Chuck was an employee of Duke Power and a Foothills Trail Conference board member.

**In celebration of our 35th Year, please join us in 2009 for a sequential series of hikes of the entire Foothills Trail.**



## **Best of the Blue Ridge**

In the twentieth Anniversary edition (August 2008) of Blue Ridge Country magazine, the Foothills Trail was rated "Your Favorite Hikes" by long-time hiking columnist Leonard Adkins and the magazine's readers. The Foothills Trail was awarded a gold award and tied with The Peaks of Otter, near Bedford, Virginia. Congratulations!

To see more "Best of the Blue Ridge" winners visit <http://www.blueridge-country.com/bestof/outdoors.html>

## So Who Uses The Trail, Anyway?

A number of groups utilized the Foothills Trail in 2008. The trail was used for a variety of activities also. Some of the groups visiting our trail were the Fatpackers, Outward Bound, Go Adventure Races, scout groups and college groups.

Fatpacking provides participants a supportive environment in which slower hikers can feel comfortable and enjoy themselves. The national tour group utilized the Foothills Trail earlier this year. They specialize in leading groups of people who love the outdoors, but are a little overweight or older and prefer not to feel rushed by super-fit athletes or obsessive hi-mileage hikers.

Outward Bound is a non-profit educational organization that serves people of all ages and backgrounds through active learning expeditions that inspire character development, self-discovery and service both in and out of the classroom. Outward Bound delivers wilderness-based programs to participants across the country and focuses its outreach on underserved youth. Customized courses provide curricula developed for struggling teens, groups with specific health, social or educational needs and business and professional organizations. Expeditionary Learning Schools Outward Bound offers a whole school reform model to more than 150 elementary and secondary schools throughout the country.

We help individuals and teams achieve their potential and develop the leadership skills needed to serve others and care for the world around them. Today Outward Bound serves 70,000 students and teachers annually.

Want to learn more about the groups using the Foothills Trail?

You can visit their websites:

Fatpackers - [www.fatpacking.com](http://www.fatpacking.com)

Outward Bound - [www.outwardbound.org](http://www.outwardbound.org)

**Don't forget to check out all the exciting outings the Foothills Trail Conference has planned for 2009!**

## Annual Meeting 2008

What a great success! The conference welcomed over 120 attendees to the 2008 Annual Meeting at Oconee State Park. Conference attendees were treated to a picturesque fall weekend glittered by a series of wonderful hikes including a Friday hikes to Elliott's Rock and Stumphouse Tunnel and a maintenance hike and history walk on Saturday. On Sunday hikers were off to Station Cove Falls and Tamassee Knob.



Those who arrived early Friday were treated to a light supper and heard local historian, Alan Warner, give a interesting slide presentation.

Before setting out on our hikes on Saturday morning, we had a delicious breakfast catered by Manna from Heaven. Saturday evening we enjoyed scrumptious barbeque from Huntin' Camp BBQ in Travelers Rest before gathering in the barn to hear our guest speaker, renowned naturalist Rudy Mancke. Mr. Mancke is the host of ETV's award winning, Naturescene.

A special thanks to Bill Baskin and the annual meeting committee for a fantastic weekend. Thanks also to all who attended. Your financial support, volunteer labor and attendance at FTC outings and functions help us to accomplish the goal of promoting and maintaining the Foothills Trail.

## A Gift from Johnson Controls



Heyward Douglass and Greg Lucas (on behalf of the FTC) received a \$1000 check from Johnson Controls.

## A Gift from Duke



Jack Hudish, Robert Stephenson, Steadman Suggs and Mike Despeaux

Several board members met with Steadman Suggs with Duke Energy in November. Mr. Suggs presented the Foothills Trail Conference with a gift of \$5,000! We are certainly thankful for Duke's generosity and support for all the efforts on The Trail. The other good news is that Stedman discussed with us his role at Duke, which includes direct involvement and support for the Foothills Trail. He is excited about "re-energizing" the relationship between Duke and the FTC. We look forward to continued good things from Duke.



Rudy Mancke speaks to FTC Annual Meeting Attendees



Jack Hudish at the Duke Hunting and Fishing Event