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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kentucky Natural Lands Trust Protects Another 651 Acres of Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor

Berea, KY August 12, 2016 – Kentucky Natural Lands Trust (KNLT) recently acquired three tracts of forestland totaling 651 acres along Pine Mountain in Bell County. The tracts contain a diversity of unique habitats and add to the critically important conservation lands that are already a part of the Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor. Over the last year nearly 4,000 acres of forests in Bell and Harlan counties have been added to the wildlands corridor through the work of KNLT and the support of many donors and partners.

The largest of the three tracts recently protected is 560 acres along the south face of Pine Mountain, a 125-mile ridgeline in eastern Kentucky that is an important migratory route, a refuge for nearly 100 rare species and a resource for the emerging outdoor recreation economy in the region.

The tract contains a series of unique rock outcrops, protects mature forest and rare plants such as rock harlequin and is within known Northern long-eared bat summer habitat. It is also a key link in the Great Eastern Trail, an 1,800-mile backcountry-hiking trail planned from New York to Alabama that will add to the recreational and economic opportunities in the region.

Two additional tracts totaling 91 acres were also purchased along the Cumberland River. These tracts provide riparian buffer and protect bottomland hardwood forests, a rare and ecologically important natural community type. Additionally, these tracts offer unique access points to the river.

“These acquisitions preserve important upland-and riparian-forested habitats and are a major gain in our efforts to protect the Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor. The projects were made possible through funding from the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Field Office) along with ongoing support from Christina Lee Brown, Tom Dupree, Sr., Snowy Owl Foundation, Forecastle Foundation, KNLT’s board and our broad base of loyal donors. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our donors and partners,” said Hugh Archer, Executive Director.

About Kentucky Natural Lands Trust

KNLT is working to protect, connect and restore wildlands, large forest tracts and migratory corridors. Efforts began with the preservation of Blanton Forest, expanded to the Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor, and now include a range of conservation projects. KNLT uses a wide variety of tools to conserve natural areas and to work with forest landowners. Through partnerships with government agencies, nonprofits, corporations and private individuals the Trust has protected thousands of acres of wildlands. For more, visit <http://www.KNLT.org>.

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