

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust

2019
Protecting, Connecting
& Restoring Wildlands

Laden Trail Preserve on Pine Mountain




Laden Trail Preserve

This summer KNLT protected nearly 400 acres establishing the Laden Trail Preserve along the north face of Pine Mountain in Harlan County. Located near the Pine Mountain Settlement School and adjacent to Kentenia State Forest, the new preserve adds to the protected forested corridor along the 125-mile ridgeline that is important habitat for thousands of species including American black bears, green salamanders and neotropical birds.

The preserve protects the viewshed of the Laden Trail, the most scenic driving route over the mountain and a unique part of the region's history. Additionally, the planned route of the Great Eastern Trail is along the summit of Pine



Wood thrush

Mountain adjacent to the new acquisition. This 1,800-mile backcountry hiking trail will stretch from New York to Alabama and represents an important asset for the outdoor recreation economy unfolding in the region. 



Eastern Wildway

Art & Conservation

Artists' Retreat, Pine Mountain summit

Large landscape conservation has been championed by visionary conservationists for decades and has been fundamental to KNLT's efforts from the beginning. In recent years the concept has become more broadly embraced and is viewed as essential to protecting all life on the planet. Our partner, the Wildlands Network, has been a pioneer of this approach, long promoting

conservation plans that illustrate the means to reconnecting wildlands at a continental scale. Their latest plan is the **Eastern Wildway**, a vision for reestablishing ecological connectivity throughout eastern North America.

The plan identifies Pine Mountain as key habitat within Central Appalachia. For nearly 25 years, KNLT's efforts have been focused on protecting this forested corridor that passes through a geography with a history of intense landuse. Pine Mountain is within the second most biodiverse temperate zone region on the planet and harbors thousands of species of plants and animals. The mountain's unique geologic history has resulted in a textured landscape considered to be resilient to climate change meaning the plants and animals living along the mountain are better positioned to adapt and persist in the face of a changing climate.

KNLT has a long history of collaborating with artists, and over the last five years we've more holistically fostered this partnership with the creative community. In 2015, we began hosting regular retreats for artists from across the Commonwealth and around the country. The weekend events offer an immersive experience with the hope that artists are inspired by Pine Mountain and our conservation efforts. The

resulting creative projects and events have been amazing and help raise awareness of our important work. We are particularly honored by the recent release of the **Pine Mountain Sessions**, a double album featuring new recordings by Kentucky musicians & writers. Recorded by Daniel Martin Moore in a near century old chapel on the mountain, the proceeds benefit KNLT and the Pine Mountain Settlement School.



American black bear



Pine Mountain Sessions cover



Ancient Eastern hemlock forest

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust by the numbers:

14,000+ acres
directly purchased
& protected

30,000+ acres
purchased & protected
with our help

Our conservation successes are made possible by our broad support base of individuals, board members and advisors, longtime major supporters and key partners such as the Snowy Owl Foundation, The Forecastle Foundation, Beckham Bird Club and Patagonia.

*A future without wildlands
is no future at all!*

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust

KNLT.org | (859) 986-0744 | info@KNLT.org

photo credits:

front: Laden Trail Preserve ~ Ted Wathen, KY Documentary Photographic Project * Wood thrush ~ Steve Maslowski, USFWS
inside: Pine Mountain Artist's Retreat ~ Greg Abernathy, KNLT * American black bear ~ Marc Evans, KNLT
Pine Mountain Sessions cover ~ Daniel Martin Moore
back: Eastern hemlock forest ~ Ellis Lauder milk