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Warbler Ridge Preserve Expands with Queen Maggie Bailey Addition

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust's latest addition brings Warbler Ridge Preserve to over 3,300 acres

Berea, KY October 31, 2023 – Kentucky Natural Lands Trust (KNLT) is proud to announce the Queen Maggie Bailey Addition to Warbler Ridge Preserve. The 89-acre tract expands the preserve to 3,324 acres. The addition, on the north slope of Pine Mountain, in Letcher County, is a link in the planned route of the Great Eastern Trail, a contemporary to the Appalachian Trail.

Maggie Davidson Bailey was a celebrated Harlan County resident. At a young age Maggie left her family's homestead in Letcher County for Harlan, where she began using creative initiative to support her family. She was one of eight children and at 17 began bootlegging to look after her siblings. Maggie kept with the trade into her 90s and became a beloved community member who was given the title of "Queen." She was known for helping those in need including assisting with college tuition and even helping several local kids through law school.

"I believe Aunt Mag would be honored to have her family homestead added to the Warbler Ridge Preserve in her name. It has been wonderful to partner with Kentucky Natural Lands Trust on this project. This means so much to me and my family." ~ Helen Halcomb, relative of Maggie

For more than 25 years, KNLT has safeguarded wildlands along Pine Mountain through partnerships with landowners, conservation organizations and communities. The mountain is a notable biodiverse and climate resilient landscape in Central Appalachia. Pine Mountain is home to thousands of species of plants and animals, many of them rare or endangered. Along with globally significant forest and wildlife habitat, the mountain is also immensely important for the region's emerging outdoor economy.

KNLT is grateful for the support of individual donors, foundations, and partners. We thank the James Graham Brown Foundation, the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Field Office), and the estate of Letcher-county local Judy Hacker Kirby for making this project possible.

About Kentucky Natural Lands Trust

KNLT is a nationally accredited nonprofit working to protect biodiverse and climate resilient landscapes in ways that benefit communities. Through partnerships with government agencies, nonprofits, businesses and individuals, KNLT has protected more than 56,000 acres of wildlands throughout the Commonwealth. For more information on how you can help KNLT protect wildlands, visit KNLT.org.