



**March 28, 2024**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**KNLT Safeguards Chained Rock Trail**

*Kentucky Natural Lands Trust protects access to one of Eastern Kentucky's most iconic overlooks*

**Berea, KY** March 28, 2024 – Over this winter Kentucky Natural Lands Trust (KNLT) protected 49 acres of Pine Mountain just outside of Pineville. The tract connects two noncontiguous portions of Pine Mountain State Resort Park, Kentucky's first state park. The newly protected tract safeguards the trail to Chained Rock, one of the most iconic overlooks in Eastern Kentucky.

Chained Rock in Bell County has long been the subject of local lore. The ridgeline above present-day Pineville and the Cumberland River has a rock outcrop that looks like a large boulder poised to tumble down the mountain into town. Tales of the rock being secured by a chain were told to local children and passing travelers. In fact, there wasn't a chain until a group in the early 1930s made the local lore a reality by installing a 110-foot chain. The feature is accessible via a 0.5-mile trail from the Chained Rock Lookout Road parking area.

The newly protected tract is part of 13,000 acres of contiguous state conservation lands that include the state park, a state park nature preserve and a state forest. The Cumberland River cuts through Pine Mountain in this area forming a natural passage through the rough terrain.

*"We are grateful to local landowner Katherine Reese for partnering with KNLT to safeguard such an important part of Pine Mountain. KNLT is delighted to secure the trail to Chained Rock and will work with Kentucky State Parks to ensure ongoing access to this historic landmark."*

*~ Greg Abernathy, KNLT Executive Director*

Pine Mountain is a 125-mile forested corridor that provides critical habitat for thousands of species of plants and animals; nearly 200 of these species are considered rare, some found nowhere else on the planet. The newly protected tract contains forested headwaters of the Cumberland River, part of a notable aquatic system with extraordinary biodiversity. The streams and rivers of this

region are the most biodiverse temperate freshwater ecosystem in the world and part of the Mississippi River Watershed, the fourth largest watershed in the world.

This conservation project is made possible by the power of partnership. We are grateful for support from individual donors, foundations, and partners. We thank the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Field Office) for supporting this project.

**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 individuals, nonprofits government agencies and businesses, KNLT has protected more than 57,000 acres of wildlands throughout the Commonwealth. For more information on how you can help KNLT protect wildlands, visit [KNLT.org](https://www.knlt.org).