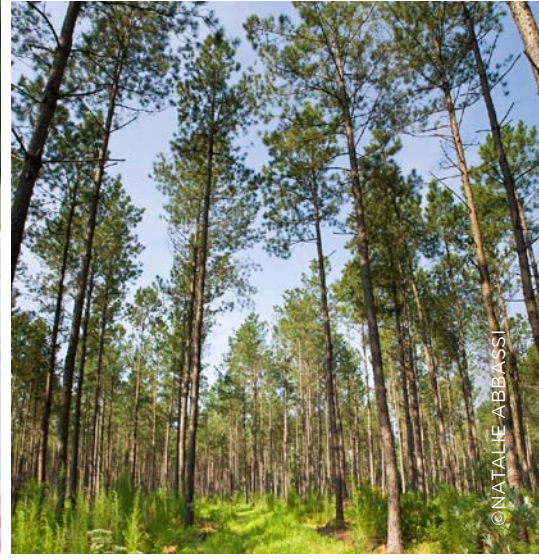




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THE
CONSERVATION FUND



A CONSERVATION QUILT:
LAND AND WATER FOR ALL



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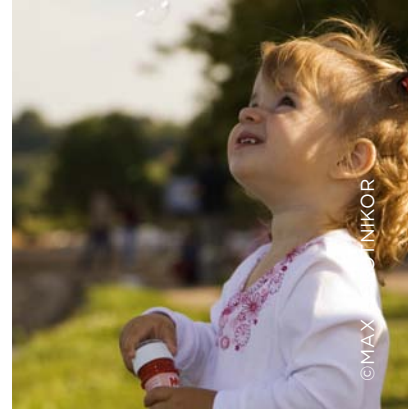
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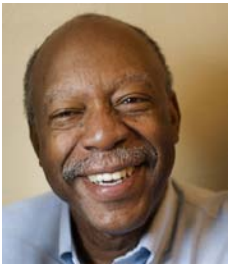
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Charles Jordan

“Conservation is an all-hands-on-deck proposition.”

These wise words were among many spoken by Charles F. Jordan, a 20-year member of The Conservation Fund’s Board of Directors, and its Chairman from 2003 to 2008. Charles Jordan had a clear vision and high ambition for America’s parks and public lands. He was equally dedicated to bringing every citizen to the table—“color coordinating the movement” was how he put it—to enjoy and protect the places that belong to everyone.

A Conservation Quilt: Land And Water For All is the first in an annual series, and we dedicate this inaugural document to Charles Jordan’s powerful inspiration to all of us.

Lawrence Selzer
President and CEO
The Conservation Fund

The Conservation Fund saves special places all across America for all its people. We have protected more than 7 million acres of land and water, from the park down the street to farms to wild areas and favorite destinations of all kinds, in all 50 states. In every aspect of our work, we strive to balance economic and environmental goals, ensuring that conservation offers a broad array of benefits.

To do that, we partner with community and government leaders, businesses, landowners, conservation nonprofits and other dedicated partners that come from diverse backgrounds and often from underrepresented groups. The Fund has amassed an outstanding portfolio of projects and initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to conserve land and water and build strong communities for all.



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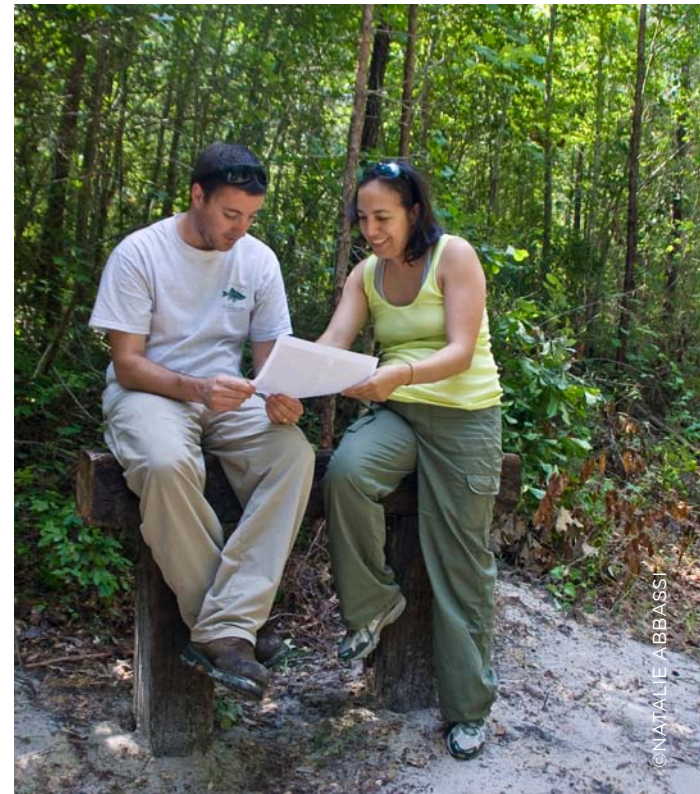
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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

We work closely with people and community organizations to learn how to most appropriately address priorities and provide expertise and technical assistance. By building trusting relationships, we can help build capacity, open up access to needed resources and create collaborative solutions that have environmental and economic endurance.



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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

Parks with Purpose, Atlanta, Georgia

The Challenge

The Fund has been working for more than a decade to establish parks and green space in Atlanta. As part of our effort, we're working with local partners in the Proctor North Avenue section of the city, stretching from the Georgia World Congress Center and Georgia Dome to the Atlanta Beltline.

The Proctor North Avenue area, which includes the English Avenue and Vine City neighborhoods, lies in the shadow of downtown Atlanta, less than a mile from the Georgia Dome and the site where the Atlanta Falcons football team will build its new \$1 billion stadium. Yet these streets are plagued with some of the highest rates of crime, unemployment and foreclosure in the city. These neighborhoods also lie in the headwaters of Proctor Creek and its tributaries.

At one time, water flowed freely from the headwaters to the Chattahoochee River. Over the past several decades, the creek has been nearly destroyed by development and piped with sewage drains. Today, Proctor Creek is besieged by high bacteria levels, illegal dumping, pollution and erosion. The pollutants from the Proctor Creek Watershed affect water quality in these neighborhoods and have a direct impact on the Chattahoochee River.

Our Role

The Fund's unique approach to conservation is based on our understanding that for conservation solutions to last, they need to benefit the community. We've partnered with local residents; the city; the Arthur M. Blank Foundation; the Waterfall Foundation; and Park Pride, a citywide nonprofit organization, to develop and implement a comprehensive acquisition and restoration plan for these neighborhoods.

Why It Matters

The goals of this plan include more than increasing green space; the new green space is planned to create jobs, improve water quality, mitigate flooding and improve public health and quality of life.



©CENTER FOR HEIRS' PROPERTY PRESERVATION

The Center For Heirs' Property Preservation, South Carolina

The Challenge

The nonprofit Center provides education and legal services to heirs' property owners of low wealth to protect family lands and promote their sustainable use. The Center's goal is to ensure that heirs receive and exercise the full rights and economic benefits associated with property ownership.

Our Role

In 2010, the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation approached our Resourceful Communities and Strategic Conservation Planning Programs, seeking a geographic information system assessment of parcel data and potential heirs' property in seven coastal counties in South Carolina: Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Georgetown, and Jasper Counties. The primary purpose of this assessment was to develop a database and focus area maps that identified priorities for the Center.

Why It Matters

These tools helped the Center strategically target areas with the greatest need and to further partner with large industrial timber owners and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and communities in a project to help manage heirs' forestland in a sustainable manner.



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An Emerald Necklace For Los Angeles, California

The Challenge

More than 9.9 million people live in Los Angeles County, accounting for more than a quarter of California's total population. Conservationists in Los Angeles County are converting abandoned lots, empty street medians and other neglected spots into pockets of green that ultimately will connect 62 cities in an "emerald necklace" of parks and trails from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. To advance this effort, we're providing financing and strategic conservation planning to nonprofit Amigos de los Rios.

Our Role

The Fund's Expanded Vision Plan for green infrastructure in Los Angeles County includes action-oriented recommendations that have a foundation in existing work by Amigos de los Rios and numerous other agency and nonprofit partners throughout the region. The goal is to establish the 1930's Olmsted-Bartholomew Plan as a common vision for the expanded emerald necklace and adapt it to modern realities on the landscape. Despite the different green planning efforts currently underway in Los Angeles County, there is a surprising amount of agreement on what needs to be done. We assessed more than 40 planning, research and visioning documents related to green infrastructure in Los Angeles County in order to identify overarching themes.

Why It Matters

Analyzing themes and providing on-the-ground community facilitation ensures that the effort to create green space where people live moves forward strategically and successfully. With planning, coordination of resources and efforts, and creative solutions, green infrastructure becomes a reality.

Tackling Food Deserts In Michigan

The Challenge

Michigan has 250 farmers markets. However, those in poor, rural communities often lack the facilities needed to offer a variety of fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy. And area residents are often unaware that affordable healthy food is available in their own neighborhoods. Despite our conservation of 20,000 Michigan farm acres, fresh fruits and vegetables remain out of reach in the "food deserts" of rural Michigan. We're working to change that.

Our Role

With generous support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, we are helping minority and low-income farmers with small- and mid-size farms increase crop production and get their goods to farmers markets in 11 Michigan counties. We also are providing small grants to community groups so they can develop educational demonstrations and activities at rural farmers markets. These activities encourage young people and families to make healthy food choices.

Why It Matters

With Kellogg's support, we are assisting rural farmers, markets and communities in Allegan, Berrien, Monroe, Bay, Lenawee, Van Buren, Cass, Oceana, Kalamazoo, Muskegon and Washtenaw Counties. Our Midwest team set out to create maps to illustrate the variables that determine greatest need, such as the locations of food deserts and minority-owned farms. Together, they provide the information needed to determine the best places to disburse grant money. Working lands are staying in production, and food is getting where it's needed.



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©ACCENT ALASKA

PRESERVING HISTORIC SITES

America's story begins outdoors. Our lands and waters are the backdrop for our most poignant national memories: homesteads, explorations, war, escape, adventure and more. From day one at The Conservation Fund, we've worked to protect the places where history was made.



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PRESERVING HISTORIC SITES



©NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument, Maryland

The Challenge

Harriet Tubman was a true American heroine. Born on Maryland's Eastern Shore, Tubman spent nearly 30 years as a slave. She escaped but repeatedly returned to Dorchester and Caroline Counties to rescue other African-Americans, leading them to freedom along the Underground Railroad.

Our Role

The Conservation Fund helped establish this new national monument by donating a key 480-acre property—at the heart of the monument—to the National Park Service. That property includes the former homesite of Jacob Jackson, a “free black” who helped Tubman rescue her brothers.

Why It Matters

By designating lands honoring Harriet Tubman as a national monument, President Obama gives this property the same status as any national park, such as the Grand Canyon. Once a site has been designated a national monument, Congress still has authority to designate it a national park. In fact, almost half of our current national parks were first national monuments. Efforts to achieve a national park honoring Harriet Tubman continue.

Fort Davis National Historic Site, Texas

The Challenge

The Fund protects the landscapes that define America's history. That's why we worked with a group of partners to protect lands around Fort Davis National Historic Site in Texas. Although many of the original buildings and most of the surrounding landscape are protected, one aspect of the fort always remained at risk—its view. Fort Davis is one of the best preserved examples of a frontier military post in the American Southwest and serves as a reminder of the significant role of the military in the settlement and development of the western frontier. The fort is perhaps best known as the headquarters for the first African-American army regiments known as the Buffalo Soldiers, stationed here during the late 1800s.

Our Role

We purchased the property in January 2010 from a conservation buyer and worked with the National Park Service to add the land to the Fort Davis National Historic Site. We accomplished this in early 2011.

Why It Matters

When the famed Buffalo Soldiers stepped out of their barracks, they saw a dramatic skyline created by the jagged cliffs of the rugged Davis Mountains. But this long-standing view was in jeopardy when the prominent 41-acre bluff overlooking the fort went up for sale in 2006. Today, that view survives.



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Japanese-American Internment Camp Preservation Initiative Minidoka, Idaho

The Challenge

At the start of World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing the forced relocation and incarceration of Japanese-Americans to internment camps. About 120,000 people were interned during the war; families were forced to leave their homes, businesses and belongings to live in isolated camps surrounded by barbed wire and guard towers. One of those camps was Minidoka in Idaho.

Our Role

Between August 1942 and October 1945, nearly 9,500 Japanese-Americans from Portland, Oregon, Seattle and the surrounding areas were interned at Minidoka. Yet little evidence remained that a camp was ever there. The Conservation Fund has supported the expansion of Minidoka's boundaries and in acquiring lands to add to the preservation and interpretation of this historic site.

Why It Matters

Expanding Minidoka's boundaries honors the memory of the interned and dedicates the land to remembrance and reconciliation. Protecting historic sites provides a lasting opportunity to learn and reflect.



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Southwest Alaska

The Challenge

The commercial fishing industry in Southwest Alaska is under pressure from global economic changes that have reduced the value of wild salmon and increased the operating costs of fishermen. Native Alaskans are faced with the prospect of selling their land—their legacy and one of their only assets—and moving out of the region.

Our Role

The Fund is working closely with native corporations to protect large community-owned parcels, as well as working with individual landowners to protect family-held lands. The Fund is protecting land through the purchase of fee interests and conservation easements.

Why It Matters

This initiative is effectively helping indigenous landowners generate income from their lands, sustain their way of life and retain the landownership that leverages economic, social and political power in rural areas.



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WORKING WITH PARTNERS

A vibrant community has a healthy environment and a healthy economy. That's why we work toward both goals, by helping our partners and communities strategically plan development, train leaders in conservation, and sustainably use natural resources.



© NATALIE ABBASSI



© JEAN LEMUNYON

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Sustainable Forestry and African-American Land Retention, North Carolina

The Challenge

Rural electric cooperatives are a critical part of our rural communities and landscapes, with 905 co-ops serving 42 million individuals in 18.5 million homes, businesses, schools, churches, farms, irrigation districts and other establishments in 2,500 of the nation's 3,141 counties in 47 states. In addition to providing electricity, the co-ops also provide investments in economic development and work to improve the quality of life for their members. The Roanoke Electric Cooperative serves five of northeastern North Carolina's most economically-distressed counties, four of which have majority African-American and Native American populations whose primary wealth lies in landownership in these forested and agricultural landscapes.

Our Role

The Fund assisted Roanoke Electric Cooperative and its nonprofit subsidiary, the Roanoke Center, in developing a project designed to strengthen African-American landownership through increasing landowners' access to conservation resources and increasing sustainable forestry practices on farms and family-held lands. In partnership with the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Roanoke Electric has created an unprecedented project team that includes USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA Forest Service, the Roanoke Center, The Conservation Fund, N.C. Forest Service, N.C. Department of Agriculture, N.C. State University-College of Natural Resources, Land Loss Prevention Project, Cobank, AgCarolina Farm Credit and AgFirst Farm Credit. Together, they are working to stabilize African-American land ownership across generations and enhance family wealth by increasing income and land asset value through sustainable forestry.

Why It Matters

Landowners are receiving support in managing heirs' property status, developing forest stewardship plans and managing their forestlands for income generation, recreation and forestry.



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Go Zero Tree Planting At Rouge Park, Detroit, Michigan

The Challenge

Rouge Park, with two miles of the River Rouge running through it, is an urban restoration project. Established in 1920, the park is 40 percent larger than New York City's Central Park, encompassing more than 1,100 acres of mostly undeveloped land. Rouge Park is the only remaining riparian forest in Detroit and is home to a variety of wildlife and native prairieland. The Rouge River runs through this Detroit park, then flows downstream past Dearborn and other communities, until it finally flows into the Detroit River.

Our Role

Restoration activities in Detroit are complemented by the new growing Detroit's Green Economy Fund, established by U-Haul and The Conservation Fund to provide small grants to microenterprises and organizations with business models directly tied to the sustainable use of natural resources (with a preference for urban agriculture, community gardens and urban forestry).

Why It Matters

While the tree-planting activities at Rouge Park are for habitat purposes only (it's too small to be a validated carbon project), the EPA estimates that one tree can absorb approximately 1 metric ton of carbon over its lifetime. This means that 1,600 trees planted in Rouge Park can sequester 1,600 metric tons of CO₂ as they mature. This is similar to the emissions resulting from 300 vehicles in a year or the greenhouse gas emissions avoided by recycling almost 600 tons of waste instead of sending it to a landfill.



Growing Income Through Grain Storage In North Carolina

The Challenge

Low-resource farmers and farmers of color often have to overcome barriers that include smaller acreages to grow crops, limited access to new markets and limited or no access to fair lending. Without affordable grain storage, farmers must sell their grain at harvest time, when the market is typically flooded with supply and prices are low.

Our Role

Natural Capital Investment Fund's (NCIF) Grain Bin Project pairs cost-share grants with microloans to enable limited-resource farmers to purchase new 5,500 bushel grain bins at an affordable price. NCIF also provides farmers with training on how to monitor market trends to boost grain revenues and operate the bins effectively.

Why It Matters

Storing grain in order to obtain more favorable pricing through spot selling and the futures market is one viable strategy to boost income from the sale of commodity crops. Funding for the cost-share grants was provided by the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. The farmers purchased grain bins at reduced prices and received specialized training in tracking and monitoring market prices. Sixteen of the farmers are African-American, and several paid off the \$10,000 loans with the first year's income from increased crop sales.

Moving From Hatred To Healing In Alabama

The Challenge

Alabama's Calhoun County is home to the Talladega National Forest and the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge. Its county seat, Anniston, is also the site of the May 1961 bus burning and subsequent beating of civil rights activists known as Freedom Riders. In 2009, the Fund's Conservation Leadership Network conducted a Sustainable Tourism Assessment of Calhoun County, along with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, as part of our multiyear partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Our Role

The 2009 assessment encouraged the county to communicate its history, especially the difficult memories of the bus burning and beatings. In 2011, Sherri Summers of the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce told us: "Anniston received national recognition when the city hosted a stop of the 50th Anniversary of the Freedom Riders. As a part of that commemoration, private donations were collected to engage a muralist to depict the two historic sites. Previously, we had no "destination" for visitors to see. Perhaps the best outcome ... was community acceptance of its past and the realization that acknowledgement of a painful time in history can bring healing. A poignant moment was when the son of one of the attackers tearfully embraced the man his father had beaten 50 years ago."

Why It Matters

The bus burning was a painful episode in our country's history and in Anniston's past. Commemorating these episodes honestly helps people realize that reconciliation is possible and powerful. Our work acknowledges the unique assets and needs of our partners and helps communities pursue a stronger future.



THE
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1655 North Fort Myer Drive, Arlington, VA, 22209, phone: 703-525-6300

The Conservation Fund, working with public, private and nonprofit partners, protects America's legacy of land and water resources through land acquisition, sustainable community and economic development and leadership training, emphasizing the integration of economic and environmental goals.