Outdoor recreation has never been more popular, and exploring Panthertown provides a remarkable backcountry experience for those who make the trek. With thousands of visitors each year, and plenty of trails to explore, Panthertown provides a little something for everyone.

Friends of Panthertown sustains 30-miles of multi-use non-motorized public trails and protects the fragile natural resources of Panthertown. We sustain and improve the recreational opportunities here with the support of our Friends, including our partners, donors, and volunteers.

Panthertown provides valuable educational opportunities for all who visit. Friends of Panthertown provides in-person and virtual programs with opportunities for local residents, visitors, and youth groups including Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, and local students, by offering everything from citizen science, volunteer days, internships, university studies, and school field trips, to interpretive hikes, “walk-n-talk” events, educational presentations, Leave No Trace Hot Spot activities, and sustainable TRAILS trainings.

Panthertown provides a sanctuary where bears are protected, the flora is abundant, and the fauna thrive. Panthertown provides a sanctuary for wildlife, and for people. Thanks for sharing in the stewardship of Panthertown and its resources. By being a Friend, and by leaving no trace when you visit, you help us sustain this incredibly special place.

Tell us how Panthertown provides for you. Send us your comments to friends@panthertown.org and show us how you #ProtectPanthertown and always #LeaveNoTrace when you visit this natural treasure.
Happy holidays from Friends of Panthertown!

Friends of Panthertown Featured in Plateau Magazine

The importance of our conservation and stewardship work in Panthertown Valley, was highlighted in this month’s (Oct/Nov) issue of Plateau magazine with a wonderful feature article appearing on pages 80-83. Available online and in print across the region. Visit our website for a link to the Panthertown article. panthertown.org/plateau

Panthertown Hike Honored Cherokee Identity & Culture

Western Carolina University Parks & Recreation students hosted a public “walk-n-talk” earlier this season with Dr. Brett Riggs, distinguished Sequoya Professor of Cherokee Studies at WCU.

Panthertown came alive with new eyes as we walked and learned about historical massive Chestnut crop harvests, thriving networks of towns, the place of the box turtle, and the legends of stone-woman Spearfnger and the giant, Judaculla! We hope to have Dr. Riggs and the students back for more walk-n-talks in 2022.

Congratulations to the 19 graduating participants of our 4-day comprehensive Sustainable Trails Training led by instructor Tim Johnson in Panthertown Valley, and funded by a Recreational Trails Program Safety & Education grant awarded by the North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources.
Stewardship Crew volunteers help us sustain the trails in Panthertown Valley

To volunteer or learn more about the work our volunteers do, visit: panthertown.org/volunteer

To Adopt-A-Trail or become a Trail Ambassador, business sponsor, or community partner, visit: panthertown.org/adopt

Boy Scouts’ Eagle Scout Project At Shook House

We were happy to host Oliver Tumbel and the young men of BSA Troop 4 from Asheville this summer for Oliver’s Eagle Scout service project. Together we worked on repairs to the historic Shook House in Panthertown, installing replacement windows to help protect the house from the elements, and stabilizing the foundation of this rustic building to help preserve and protect as much of the original home as possible. If you’d like to help in any way with this ongoing restoration effort, or if you or your group would like to participate in a service project in Panthertown, please contact Jason at: friends@panthertown.org

Krista Robb, Friends of Panthertown Trail Stewardship Coordinator, reported from Panthertown that volunteers hiked in about as far as you can get from the trailhead to replace rotten steps and rebar on Little Green Mountain. “We dug out the old and put in the new on the Mac’s Gap side of Little Green Trail”, she said. “Thank you volunteers for all your hard work on this gorgeous and perfectly cool day.” Volunteers are needed to help with projects throughout the valley. Everyone is welcome and no experience is required. Contact Krista with questions: trails@panthertown.org
Leave No Trace Hot Spot Week Kicked Off: The Great Panthertown Campsite Cleanup

Ever-increasing levels of visitation to an area less than 7,000 acres has caused significant impacts over the years, including campsite impacts, campfire impacts, and a proliferation of undesignated trails. During LNT Hot Spot week at the end of August, Friends of Panthertown hosted 7 events directly involving 102 individuals, including 19 volunteers who contributed 133 hours. We improved dispersed campsites, cleaned 16 campfire rings, recycled scrap metal, and removed 5 bags of trash. As a longtime partner with Leave No Trace, and with your generous support, we practice and teach the LNT 7-principles of outdoor ethics, on the trails, and in our community. Reach out to our LNT Master Educator and Trail Stewardship Coordinator, Krista Robb, with questions or to get involved. There are plenty of opportunities to help, and everyone is welcome. Contact: trails@panthertown.org

Special thanks to these community partners for sponsoring LNT week!
First Sustainable Trails Training Held In Panthertown Was A Success

Friends of Panthertown hosted 19 students for a 4-day sustainable trails training led by Tim Johnson in Panthertown this November thanks to an RTP Safety & Education grant awarded by the North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources. Professionals and volunteers from trail organizations throughout the region refreshed their skills and learned about modern sustainable trail methods.

Krista Robb, Friends of Panthertown’s Trail Stewardship Coordinator and a student of the course wrote: “Reveling in the AMAZING Sustainable Trails Training! What an eye opening program week with trails champion and local expert, Tim Johnson. Local land managers, trail maintainers and builders, and volunteers from across the forest are sharing strategies and soaking in the scientific knowledge for sweetening our local trail experiences! A trip to Panthertown makes the learning come to life, seeing firsthand the impacts of water drainage and usage, particularly at the top of Wilderness Falls Trail. Mind blowing what a group can do in a few hours together! We looked at trail problems spots, envisioned solutions, and, check us out…we even built steps from a fallen locust.” Thank you, all!

We hope to be able to fund and offer this valuable training again in 2022.

Thanks to our 2021 community funding partners for $49,686 in grants awarded this year in support of essential conservation, education, and stewardship work in Panthertown Valley:

- Cedar Creek Club ($5,000)
- Community Foundation of Western North Carolina ($10,000)
- Cullasaja Women’s Outreach ($7,500)
- Jackson County Tourism Development Authority ($1,200)
- National Environmental Education Foundation ($2,500)
- National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance ($13,486)
- NC Department of Natural & Cultural Resources ($5,000)
- Wade Hampton Golf Club ($5,000)
Thank you for supporting the Panthertown Stewardship Fund and our mission, Friends! It takes Friends like YOU to help us protect and maintain Panthertown Valley. In this season of thanksgiving, we recognize and show our appreciation for those Friends who have made donations or in-kind gifts in 2021 in support of our mission. Next season, we will highlight our volunteers and the tremendous work they each contribute. Today we give thanks for your shared stewardship and the impact your generous gifts have made.

### Stewardship Champions ($5,000+)
- Danny & Kim Bottoms

### Stewardship Sponsors ($2,500+)
- Kevin Matti
- H.A. & Kay Moore

### Stewardship Leaders ($2,000+)
- Tom & Jean Dodson
- Kirt & Carrie Kinsell

### Stewardship Sponsors ($500+)
- Abbey & Mike Bearer, Hazel B. Bundy Memorial Fund, Van Carlisle, Ian Carmichael, Nicole Carr, Margaret & Bob Carton, Bill & Penny Dickason, Donald Harrison, Mike & Nancy Kota, Mike & Suzanne Magalis*, Anne McKee*, McKee Properties*, The Moring Charitable Trust, Kenny Privat, Mike & Margo Purdy, Wendy Renoux, Adam & Cheryl Rursdorf, Andrew Rogers, Jon & Carletta Tabor, Tim & Tina Watkins, Kevin & Kelli Wenzel, Christina West*, Richard Yow
- The Moring Charitable Trust, Kenny Privat, Mike & Margo Purdy, Wendy Renoux, Adam & Cheryl Rursdorf, Andrew Rogers, Jon & Carletta Tabor, Tim & Tina Watkins, Kevin & Kelli Wenzel, Christina West*, Richard Yow

### Stewardship Champions ($5,000+)
- Steve & Kim Wright, Jim & Dawn York, Sally York

### Stewardship Champions ($5,000+)

### Leadership Gifts ($1,000+)
- Chris & Anne Bulleit R. Grant & Michele Campbell W. Wilson Denney* Mike & Suzanne Magalis Rick Stocker Lee & Dorothy Thomas Cary & Herron Weems Nancy West*

### Stewardship Sponsors ($250+)

### Stewardship Sponsors ($100+)

### Leadership Gifts ($500+)
- Abbey & Mike Bearer, Hazel B. Bundy Memorial Fund, Van Carlisle, Ian Carmichael, Nicole Carr, Margaret & Bob Carton, Bill & Penny Dickason, Donald Harrison, Mike & Nancy Kota, Mike & Suzanne Magalis*, Anne McKee*, McKee Properties*, The Moring Charitable Trust, Kenny Privat, Mike & Margo Purdy, Wendy Renoux, Adam & Cheryl Rursdorf, Andrew Rogers, Jon & Carletta Tabor, Tim & Tina Watkins, Kevin & Kelli Wenzel, Christina West*, Richard Yow

### Leadership Gifts ($1,000+)
- Chris & Anne Bulleit R. Grant & Michele Campbell W. Wilson Denney* Mike & Suzanne Magalis Rick Stocker Lee & Dorothy Thomas Cary & Herron Weems Nancy West*

### Leadership Gifts ($500+)
- Rick Stocker*
Friends of Panthertown hosted 19 volunteers, including U.S. Forest Service Nantahala District Ranger Troy Waskey, for The Great Panthertown Campsite Cleanup, during LNT Hot Spot week in Panthertown at the end of August, in partnership with the Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River, National Environmental Education Foundation, Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, and U.S. Forest Service. Participants represented more than a dozen different partner organizations. (Photos: Steven Reinhold / The Appalachian Adventure Co.)

Help us protect Panthertown. There are 4 easy ways to contribute to the Panthertown Stewardship Fund:

- Donate online at panthertown.org/give
- Text PANTHERTOWN to 44-321
- Open your phone’s camera app, then point camera at QR code.
- Mail a check to our address.
Friends of Panthertown

PO Box 51
Cashiers, NC 28717

Learn more about our conservation work at: panthertown.org

Important Message from U.S. Forest Service (Posted November 24)

Duke Energy will have equipment and trucks parked at Salt Rock Trailhead to begin maintenance work needed on North Road (FS 452) about 1.29 miles long to Powerline Road (FS 451) about 1 mile up from the intersection of North Road and Powerline Road.

Work will begin on Monday, November 29th, 2021 and will end on December 18th, 2021.

The Trails will not close. There will be traffic control on both sides to safely manage folks hiking/biking in and out of those trails.

The Nantahala Ranger District recommends Equestrian Users to not use North Road (FS 452) during that time period.

Important Message from U.S. Forest Service (Posted November 24)

Duke Energy will have equipment and trucks parked at Salt Rock Trailhead to begin maintenance work needed on North Road (FS 452) about 1.29 miles long to Powerline Road (FS 451) about 1 mile up from the intersection of North Road and Powerline Road.

Work will begin on Monday, November 29th, 2021 and will end on December 18th, 2021.

The Trails will not close. There will be traffic control on both sides to safely manage folks hiking/biking in and out of those trails.

The Nantahala Ranger District recommends Equestrian Users to not use North Road (FS 452) during that time period.

Shared trails, tales, and backcountry adventures with visitors, volunteers, and the Leave No Trace Hot Spot training teams.