

# New River Land Trust Mission

**Conserving farmland, forests,  
open spaces and historic places  
in Virginia's New River region  
since 2002**



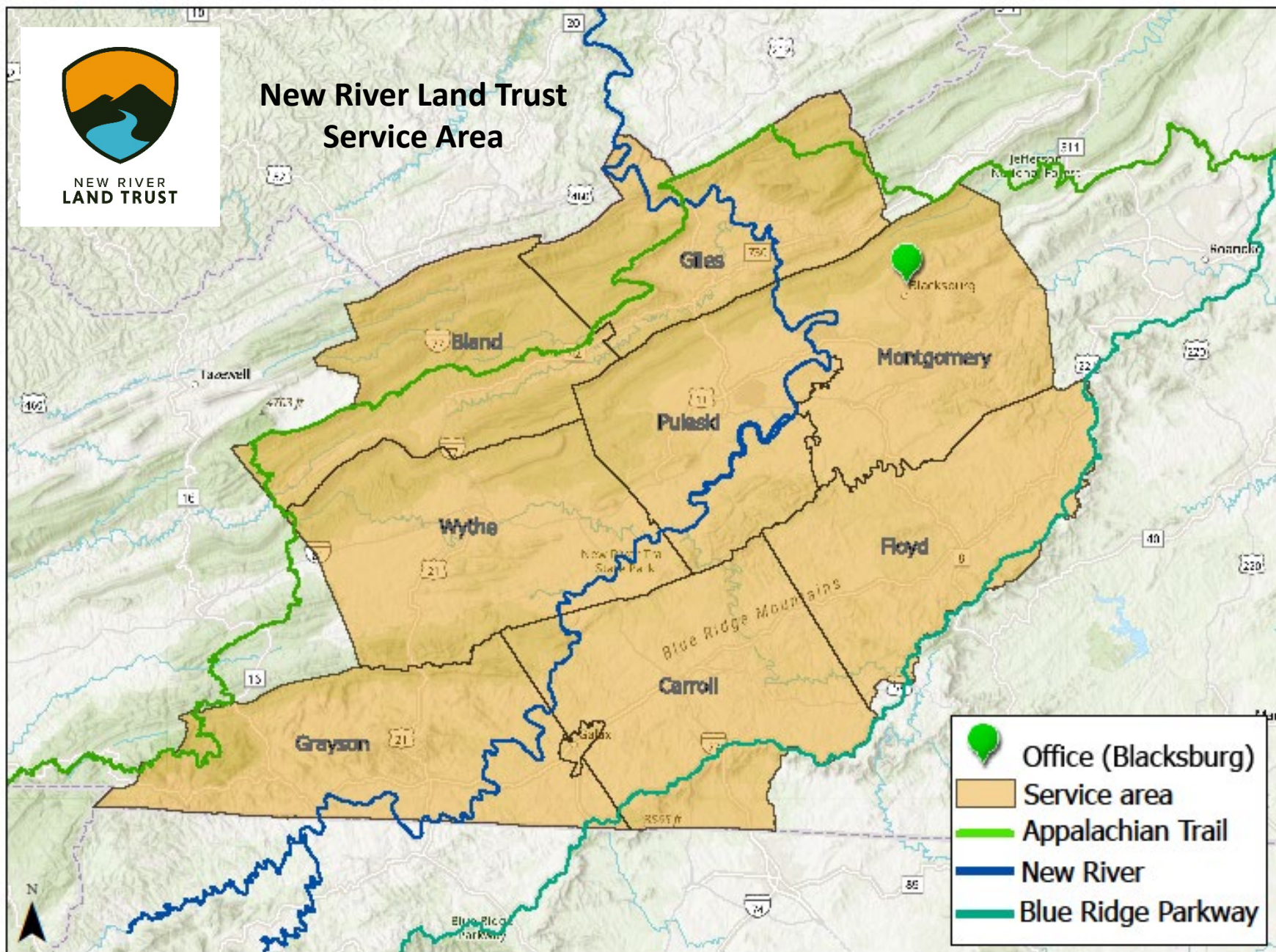
**Proudly Accredited in 2013, Renewed in  
2018 & 2<sup>nd</sup> Renewal in 2024**







# New River Land Trust Service Area





**SINCE 2002 CONSERVED: More than 57,300 acres  
of farms, forests, open spaces & historic places  
including 27 miles along the New River**





# Key Partners



- **William Larsen Charitable Trust**
- **Sister Clare**
- **Dessy Trust**
- **Bob & Dee Leggett Foundation**

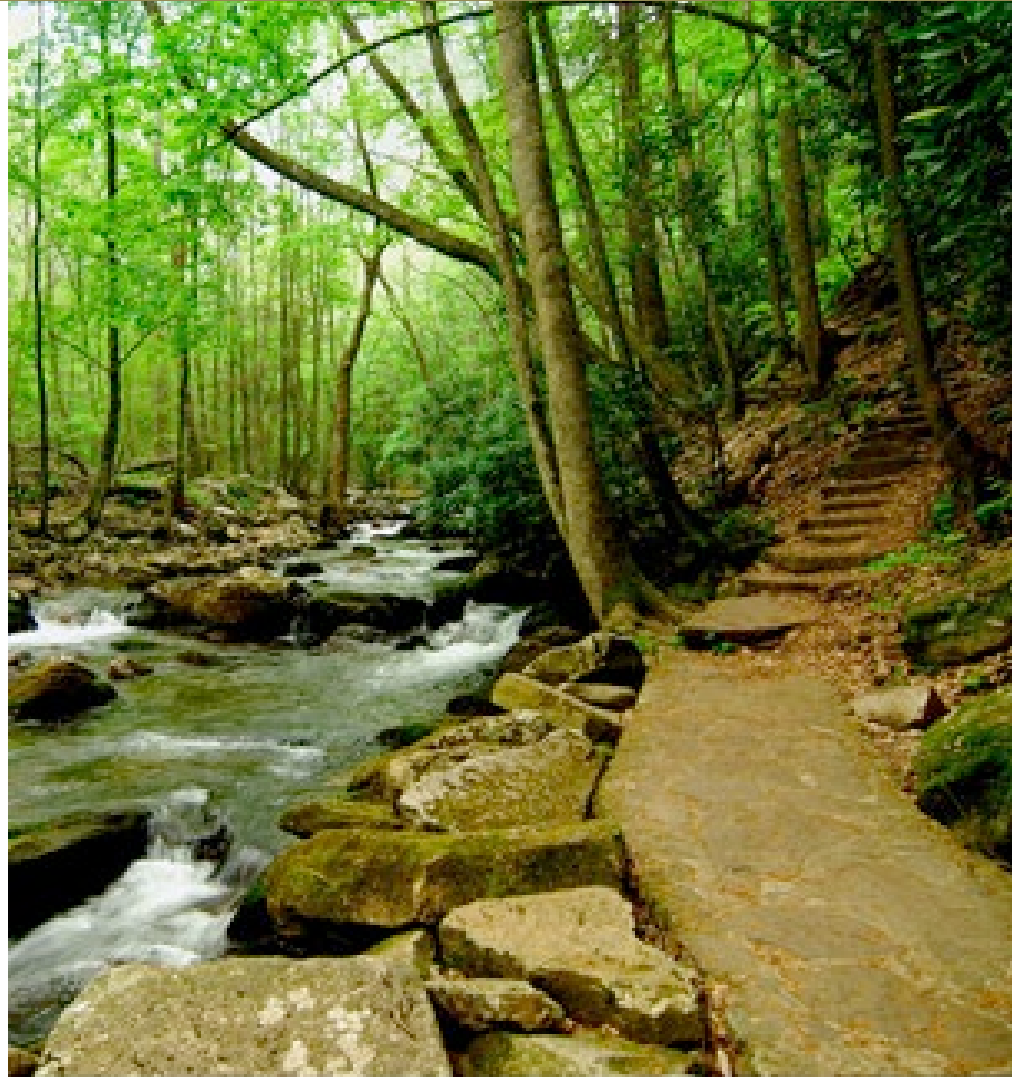


# **What do we mean by conservation?**

- **Outreach, Education, Advocacy – traditional role**
- **Land Protection – fill gaps & conserve vital places**
- **Public Access – priorities, important & strategic**
- **Restoration/Management – logical next step (water quality, climate, bird habitat)**

# Conservation Easement

**Is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or a state agency to protect the open space, historic, agricultural or forest values of the land**



# Conservation Easements

**Within certain parameters each easement is tailored to the landowner and their land, but the easement must be permanent for the landowner to benefit from tax incentives**





# **With a Conservation Easement**

- **You own the land**
  - **You can farm**
- **You can harvest timber**
  - **You can hunt or fish**
  - **You can lease land**
- **You can sell it or give it to your children**
- **And it does NOT require public access to your property**

# **Easements Do Not**

- **Block Public Utilities**
- **Protect against Federal Condemnation**
- **Take land away from private landowners to put in the hands of government**
- **Get done if not in compliance with local Comprehensive Plan**
- **Block compelling future public needs**

# Financial Incentives

- **Federal & state income tax deduction 60% of property devaluation**
- **Virginia income tax credits 40% of the devaluation (credits can be sold)**
- **Lower local property taxes**
- **Can reduce chances of estate/inheritance tax**

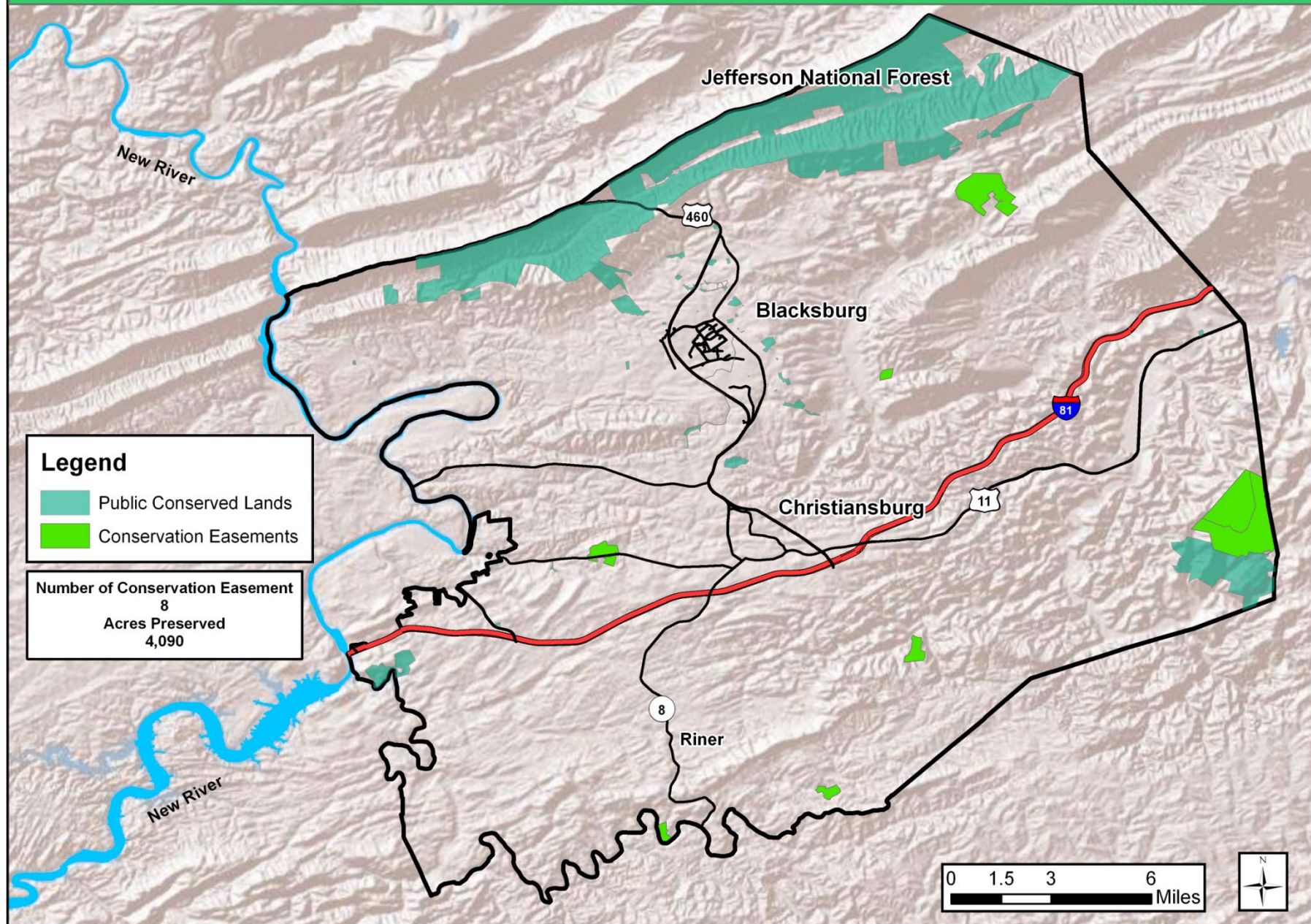


# Primary Incentive





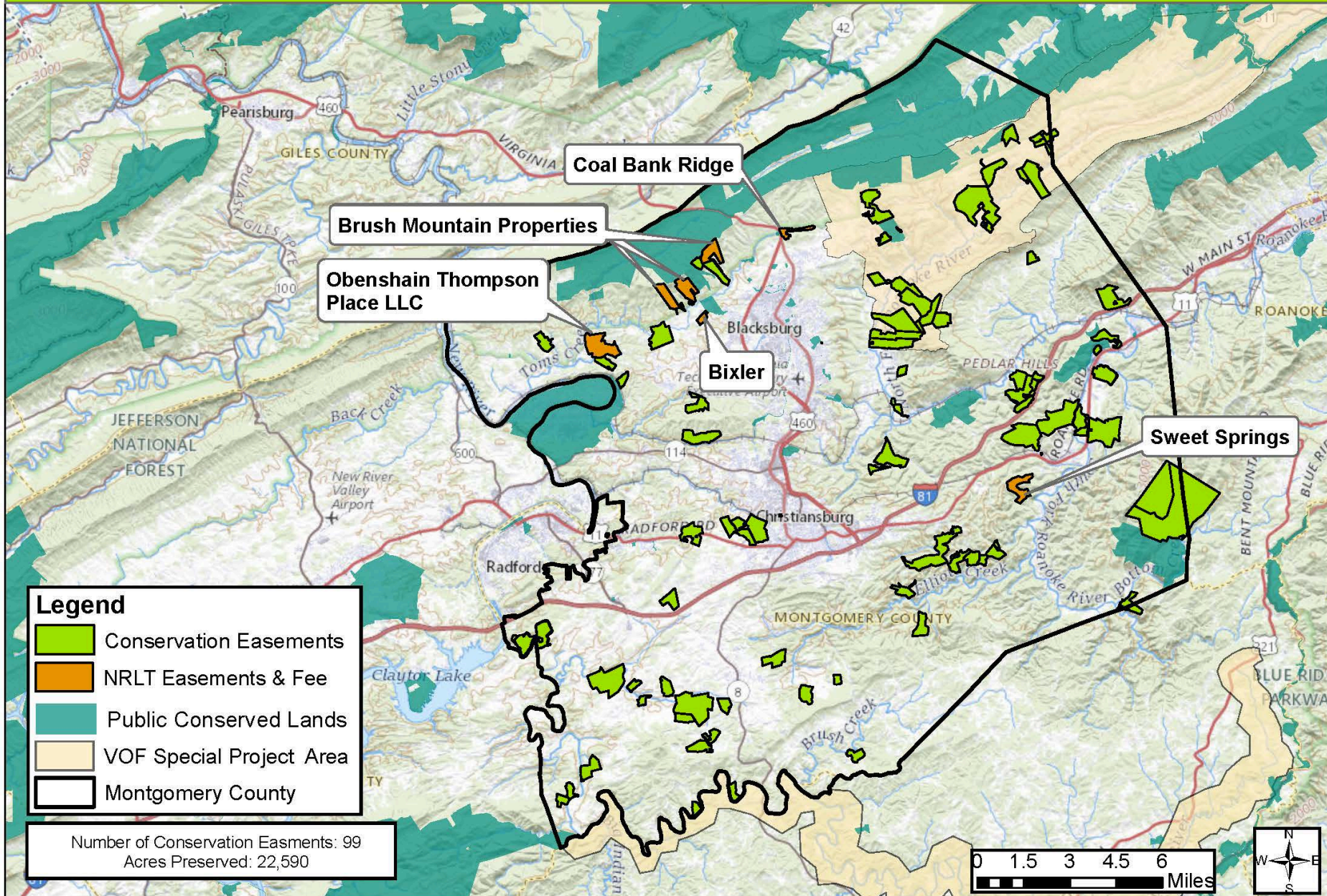
# Montgomery County Conserved Lands in 2002







# Montgomery County Conserved Lands in 2022





# Value of Rural Land

- **Agriculture & forestry \$70 billion, 414,700 jobs & 10.3% of VA gross domestic product**
- **Every job results in another 1.6 jobs & every \$ results in another \$1.63 for the Virginia economy**
- **\$520 Million in production & ecosystem services from conserved lands in VA**

# **Regional Value of Rural Land**

- **\$3.37 million of agricultural production**
- **\$16.5 million of forestry production**
- **\$569 million in tourism expenditures, 4,843 jobs & \$14.5 million in local taxes**
- **Cows don't go to school – conservation of rural land is revenue positive for local governments**
- **Rural landscape & heritage make region attractive to individuals & businesses**

# **Easements Provide Critical Environmental Benefits**

- **Water quality & quantity protection**
- **Land for food & timber production**
- **Wildlife habitat conservation**
- **Air quality & carbon sequestration**
- **Soil conservation**
- **Viewshed & cultural resources protection**
- **Resilience to climate change**





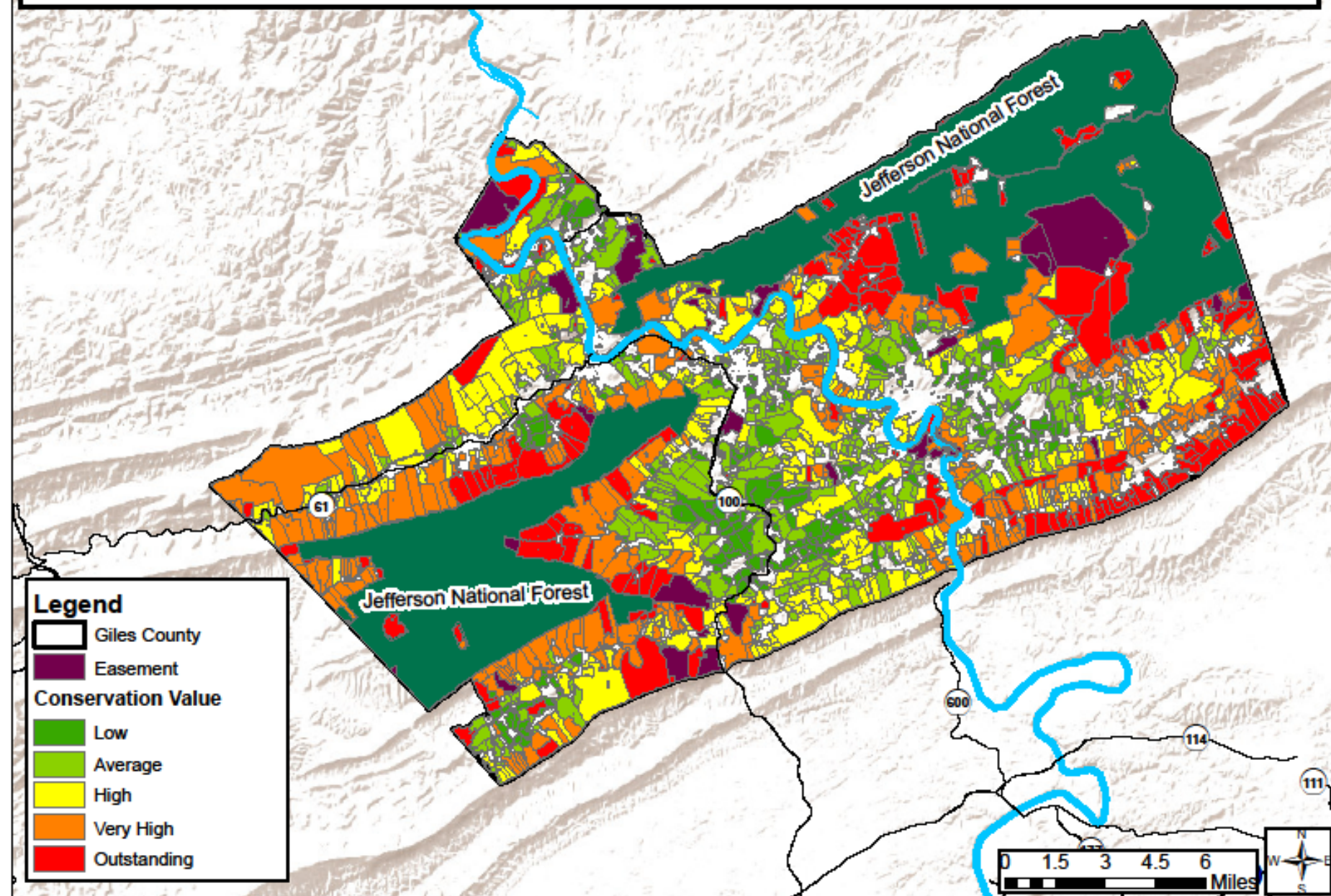
# Conservation Lands Prioritization 2012-22

# Twelve Categories for Prioritization and Analysis

1. Development
2. Habitat
3. Hydrology
4. Farmland
5. Recreation
6. Historic & Cultural
7. Forest
8. Climate
9. Scenic
10. Proximity & Size
11. Restoration\*
12. Storm water Management\* *(Conservation or Restoration initiatives by the NRLT to pursue Urban projects based on Storm water criteria)*



The NRLT can now set up different scenarios for **conservation easement planning** or outreach initiatives using multiple variables and different weights.

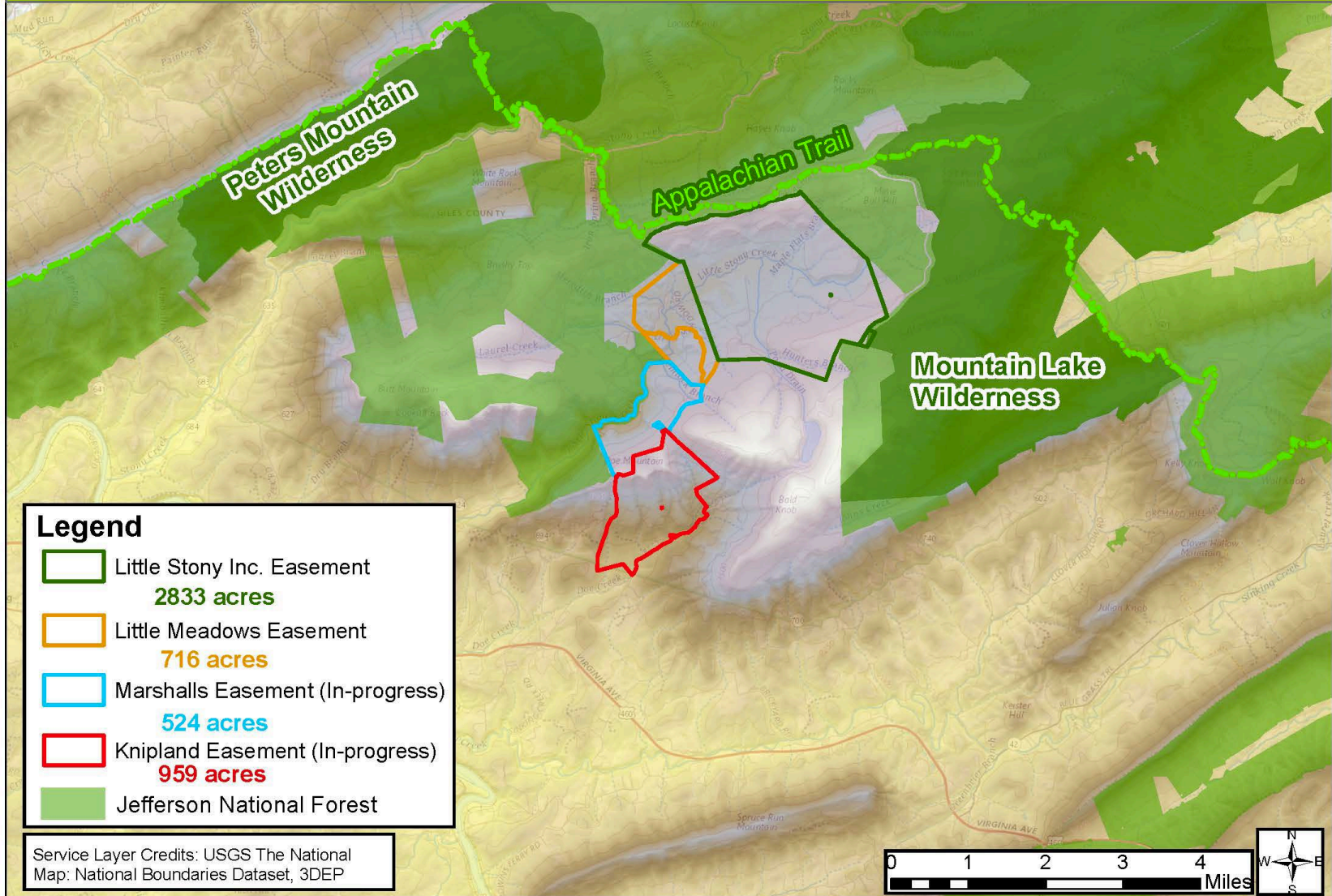




# Priority Properties Conservation



## Mountain Lake Area Current and In-Progress Easements



### Legend

- Little Stony Inc. Easement  
**2833 acres**
- Little Meadows Easement  
**716 acres**
- Marshalls Easement (In-progress)  
**524 acres**
- Knipland Easement (In-progress)  
**959 acres**
- Jefferson National Forest

Service Layer Credits: USGS The National  
Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP

0 1 2 3 4 Miles







**Forest Conservation  
Acquisition & Public  
Access**



# Natural Surface Non-Motorized Multi-Use Trails





## Partners

- Landowners
- Funders
- USFWS
- DWR
- Skyline
- NRCS

# Restoration

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## Water Resources

- Quality
- Quantity
- Ecosystems
- Rare species
- Livestock
- People



# Focal Area

FARMLAND STREAM CONSERVATION  
**NORTH FORK OF  
THE ROANOKE RIVER  
IN CATAWBA VALLEY, VA**









# Management Support

- **Partners – USFWS, USFS, VDOF, DWR, TNC & Soil & Water Districts**
- **Riparian plantings, livestock exclusion fencing & water systems**
- **Forest stewardship plans alone and/or matched with conservation easements**
  - **Improve forest health & productivity**
  - **Wildlife habitat**
  - **Remove invasive species**
- **Use of fire for management**
  - **Improve ecological function**
  - **Increase habitat diversity**
  - **Invasive species**

# **The New River Land Trust working to save the rural landscape and heritage of the New River region**

