

# Conservation groups permanently protect historic site in Tennessee

*NALT transfers historic Reflection Riding conservation easement to the State of Tennessee*

CHADDS FORD, PA, USA, August 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [North American Land Trust](#) (NALT) today announced that a team of conservation, historic, and government groups has successfully preserved 300 acres of natural lands in Chattanooga, Tennessee, for the enjoyment and use of future generations.

NALT recently transferred a historic conservation easement to the State of Tennessee to permanently protect the 300 acres at [Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center](#) near Lookout Mountain.

"This conservation project truly was a team effort," said NALT President Steven Carter. "NALT was honored with the opportunity to partner with esteemed nonprofits and government agencies to help ensure the permanent protection of the Reflection Riding property."

"We are very grateful to NALT for their key role in helping facilitate the permanent protection of this incredibly significant property along the edge of Lookout Mountain," said Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer and Historical Commission Executive Director Patrick McIntyre.

The conservation easement, which prevents the land from future development, will ensure that future generations will be able to experience the scenic landscape in the Chattanooga region. The legal agreement also advances Reflection Riding's goals of improving accessibility, enhancing trails and recreations, and expanding the connections to Lookout Creek and the nearby National Park lands.

"Reflection Riding exists today thanks to visionary protection from development," said Mark McKnight, President and CEO of Reflection Riding. "The Chambliss and Humphreys families kicked off the process about a hundred years ago. Many thousands of donors and stewards have joined in over the years, partnering across multiple generations to ensure this land remains largely recognizable through time."

McKnight added: "Our campus will continue to serve this community as a nature center and protected wild space. The visitor experience will improve as we re-work trails and build new facilities. Operating under his easement in partnership with the State of Tennessee ensures that

our improvements do not interfere with the historic significance of the site.”

In 2021, Carter said, the American Battlefield Trust, the Tennessee Historical Commission, and the City of Chattanooga asked NALT to hold an interim conservation easement for Reflection Riding until the Commission could permanently hold the easement. Carter said NALT, which holds other conservation easements in Tennessee, was eager to help with the conservation effort and avoid delaying the protection of the natural, historic, and scenic property.

“Working with our partners at NALT has enabled us to move swiftly to protect important land on multiple battlefields, from multiple conflicts,” said American Battlefield Trust President David Duncan. “Their scope and efficiency make them an ideal partner, and together we demonstrate the inextricable link between environmental and cultural resources on our treasured landscapes.”

According to the [U.S. National Park Service](#), the Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center occupies a central location in the Civil War Battle of Lookout Mountain. After three days of fighting from Nov. 23 to 25, 1863, the Union Army held Chattanooga and secured a “gateway to the deep South.” This, according to historians, was seen as the “death knell” of the Confederacy.

McKnight said, “While a Civil War battle made this site significant for the purposes of the easement, we honor a much longer history, including thousands of years of human travel through this gap in the Cumberlands. The rich cultural landscape we protect now has one more layer of protection thanks to our partners who came together to make this easement happen.”

Reflection Riding is set on the 300 beautiful acres just 10 minutes from downtown Chattanooga. Visitors to the nature center and wild lands can hike a three-mile gravel loop offering mature hardwood forests, wildflower meadows, and wetland habitats. More than 10 miles of trails connect to National Park lands that lead to the top of Lookout Mountain.

“Reflection Riding restores the vital connection between people and nature,” says the group’s website. “The native animal conservation program brings visitors face-to-face with critically endangered American red wolves, as well as more common Chattanooga wildlife like bobcats, sandhill cranes, and more.”

For more information on this amazing nature center, visit Reflection Riding’s website. For more information on the North American Land Trust, visit the NALT website.

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About North American Land Trust

North American Land Trust is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that conserves and stewards more than 138,000 acres at 574 conservation areas in 24 states. Based in Chadds Ford, PA, North American Land Trust is proudly Accredited under Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit

Organizations and as such is recognized as having met all the requirements of The Standards for Excellence®: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector. For more information, go to our website.

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