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FLORACLIFF NATURE SANCTUARY TO PROTECT MORE LAND ALONG THE KENTUCKY RIVER

LEXINGTON, KY. (July 19, 2016) — Floracliff Nature Sanctuary is excited to announce it is working to acquire an adjacent 60 acres in southern Fayette County to be protected with a conservation easement.

Partnering with the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (funded in part by the sale of “Nature’s Finest” license plates) and the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund (a partnership of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Kentucky Natural Lands Trust), Floracliff has an opportunity to purchase and protect the mostly forested land known as Trail’s End. “This is an incredible opportunity for Floracliff and our community,” says Preserve Director, Beverly James. “This tract includes a beautiful, mature forest along Elk Lick Creek and the Kentucky River and we are in a position to protect it. We can also expand our trail system, address invasive species on the property, and incorporate the land into our educational programs.”

The project has received additional financial support from some private individuals, but more help is needed to reach the fundraising goal of \$775,000. James said they still need to raise \$265,000.

Located in the Kentucky River Palisades region, the 60-acre tract was once part of Camp Trail’s End, a girls’ summer camp that operated from 1913 to 1935. Led by Mary Dewitt Snyder and Sarah Gibson Blanding, it was one of the first organized camps for girls in the south. During the late 1950s, 60s, and 70s, the land and facilities were used as a camp by local scout troops and Central Christian Church in Lexington.

Purchasing Trail’s End will increase Floracliff’s land area by 20 percent and will be the first addition of land to the sanctuary since the passing of its founder, Dr. Mary E. Wharton, a well-known botanist and author. The addition will fully protect the last quarter mile of Elk Lick Creek, preserving habitat for migratory birds, bats, amphibians, and bobcats that depend on healthy forests and streams.

Floracliff has plans to incorporate the Trail’s End tract into their restoration, education, and research programs. Invasive species such as honeysuckle, wintercreeper, and garlic mustard have impacted the forest at Trail’s End, but those are all species Floracliff has had much experience managing over the last 16 years. Future trails will offer views of the Elk Lick ravine, the Kentucky River, and historical features of the camp and will enhance the sanctuary’s guided hikes on plants, wildlife, ecology, and more.

About Floracliff

Floracliff Nature Sanctuary is a 287-acre private nature sanctuary that was established in 1989 by Dr. Mary E. Wharton and dedicated as a Kentucky State Nature Preserve in 1996, the first in Fayette

County. Focusing on conservation and education, the sanctuary is open for guided hikes and events and offers a variety of programs, volunteer and research opportunities, and hands-on workshops to interested individuals and groups.

For more information about Floracliff and the Trail's End project, or to make a donation, visit floracliff.org.

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