



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Elrod family now protects 41.5 acres of prime wildlife habitat and forestland along the Duck River with The Land Trust for Tennessee

Conservation group highlights efforts along threatened Duck River amidst recent community and legislative attention

HICKMAN COUNTY, TENN. – With the importance of conserving natural spaces near the Duck River in mind, Zita and Dan Elrod recently worked with The Land Trust for Tennessee on a conservation easement to protect their property in Hickman County. The agreement permanently protects their 41.5 acres of prime wildlife habitat, native hardwood forest, and springs in an area of significant conservation importance to the threatened Duck River.

According to [American Rivers](#), “The Duck River flows 269 miles through seven counties in Middle Tennessee. It is one of the top three most biodiverse rivers in the world, home to 22 aquatic snail species, 56 mussel species and 151 fish species.” But the river is threatened by overdevelopment in Middle Tennessee and dramatically increased water usage. Recently, Governor Lee signed [Executive Order 108](#) to establish the Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership. Encouraged by the community and State’s recent conservation focus, The Land Trust for Tennessee remains committed to protecting land along the Duck River to keep it as healthy as possible.

Zita Elrod described some of the reasons the couple wanted to protect the land. “The woman we bought it from didn’t consider herself the owner of this land—she considered herself a steward. So, we wanted to honor that. We also know that there were Indigenous peoples on this land long ago, and we wanted to honor them too.”

The Elrods heard about The Land Trust for Tennessee through a coworker of Dan’s who serves on the organization’s Board of Directors. The couple attended an informational session in Nunnally, where members of The Land Trust team explained the process of land protection in greater detail. After learning more, Zita and Dan decided permanent land protection with LTTN was the right choice for them and their family.

“We saw an eagle the first day we were there on the land,” Zita said. “That just cemented our idea that this is a special place worth protecting.”

To achieve their goal of protecting their land, the Elrods and The Land Trust for Tennessee closed on a legal agreement called a conservation easement, a legal agreement limiting future development of the land. The agreement protects the aspects of the property that are



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important to conservation efforts while allowing them to continue to own, manage, sell, or pass the property to heirs in the future.

"We are incredibly grateful to work with landowners like the Elrods who recognize the importance of protecting Tennessee's valuable wildlife habitat and forests. This commitment ensures these landscapes will remain open spaces for generations to come, and we are humbled to be a part of that," said Emily Parish, Vice President at The Land Trust for Tennessee.

The Land Trust for Tennessee's role going forward is to ensure that the conservation easement is permanently upheld no matter who owns the land in the future, which is key to achieving the Elrods' conservation goals.

"We just feel so blessed to have this land and we want to make sure it's protected for future generations," said Dan Elrod.

The Elrods' decision will ensure that their wish to honor those that came before them, as well as their conservation goals, are fulfilled forever.

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About The Land Trust for Tennessee

The Land Trust for Tennessee is a non-profit conservation organization working statewide to protect land important to the people of Tennessee. From family farms and historic landscapes to public parks and forests, the work of The Land Trust has a lasting impact on people and places from Memphis to Mountain City. The organization has conserved approximately 137,000 acres of land since its founding in 1999 and is recognized for meeting the highest standards for excellence and conservation permanence. Learn more at <https://www.landtrusttn.org>

Contact:

Amy Frankel

The Land Trust for Tennessee, Marketing & Communications Manager

afrankel@LandTrustTN.org