

Resolution #

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RECOMMENDATION AND DESIGNATION OF
CRAGGY MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS AREA IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

- WHEREAS, Craggy/Big Ivy is one of the most popular and ecologically important recreation destinations in Southern Appalachia, with prized trout streams, rare wildlife, waterfalls, swimming holes, rugged trails, and scenic overlooks that attract thousands of outdoor enthusiasts annually to Buncombe County; and
- WHEREAS, the Craggy/Big Ivy section of Pisgah National Forest in Buncombe County contains 3,000 acres of old-growth forest—one of the largest old-growth forests in the East; and
- WHEREAS, Craggy/Big Ivy’s pristine headwaters are home to native trout and part of the protected watershed of the Ivy River, an important tributary of the French Broad and drinking water source for the city of Weaverville and surrounding communities of Buncombe County; and
- WHEREAS, Craggy/Big Ivy’s wild forests shelter at least 44 rare plant and animal species and the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has identified over 3,000 acres of Big Ivy for highest priority protection, and it has been highlighted by The Nature Conservancy as one of the most important core forests in the Southern Blue Ridge.
- WHEREAS, Craggy/Big Ivy has globally significant botanical, zoological, geologic, scenic, and recreational resources that are currently underrepresented across the Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest; and
- WHEREAS, Craggy/Big Ivy offers some of the best opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude in Buncombe County and throughout the Pisgah National Forest with rugged, remote peaks and ridges that are surrounded by 100,000 acres of contiguous wildlands making Big Ivy an ideal location for wilderness; and
- WHEREAS, Buncombe County currently has no wilderness areas as do Haywood County, Jackson County, Macon County, Clay County, Graham County, and Burke County who have federally designated wilderness areas that are major drivers of outdoor recreation and tourism both regionally and nationally; and
- WHEREAS, local families have used Big Ivy to hunt, fish, hike, camp, and swim for over two centuries and the Craggy Mountain Wilderness in Big Ivy will safeguard traditional local uses of the land; and
- WHEREAS, Big Ivy’s expansion of wilderness and protection of its backcountry trail network are supported by a broad coalition of over 30 local, regional, and national organizations and dozens of Buncombe County businesses; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service is considering an expanded Craggy Mountain Wilderness Area for official congressional designation as part of its Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest Management Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the expanded Craggy Mountains Wilderness Study Area be recommended for designation as a wilderness area by the U.S. Forest Service and designated by the U.S. Congress.
2. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the U.S. Forest Service and our Congressional delegation.
3. That this resolution be effective upon its adoption.

Adopted this the 20th day of September, 2016.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

Kathy Hughes, Clerk

BY: _____
David Gantt, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

County Attorney