

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RECOMMENDATION AND DESIGNATION OF  
CRAGGY MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS AND NATIONAL SCENIC AREA IN  
BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

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- WHEREAS, the Craggy-Big Ivy section of Pisgah National Forest in Buncombe County 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 tens of thousands of outdoor enthusiasts annually to Buncombe County; and
- WHEREAS, the Craggy-Big Ivy section of Pisgah National Forest contains 4,000 acres of old-growth forest—one of the largest old-growth forests in the East; and
- WHEREAS, Craggy-Big Ivy protects the viewshed from Craggy Gardens, the most visited destination and most photographed spot on the Blue Ridge Parkway,
- WHEREAS, Craggy-Big Ivy includes one of the most popular stretches of the 1,175-mile Mountains to Sea Trail, North Carolina’s state trail and one of the country’s iconic hiking footpaths; 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 is adjacent to both the Asheville Watershed and Woodfin Watershed, providing an important buffer and zone of protection for drinking water for 100,000 people; 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; and
- 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 world-class recreation opportunities, including mountain biking, fly fishing, hiking, horseback riding, rock climbing, and trail running, and all trails in Craggy-Big Ivy will remain open to all current uses; and
- WHEREAS, Craggy-Big Ivy’s proposed 8,693-acre wilderness and 16,000-acre National Scenic Area are supported by a broad coalition of over 100 local, regional, and national organizations, dozens of Buncombe County businesses, and thousands of public comments submitted to the U.S. Forest Service; 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, A Craggy Mountain Wilderness and National Scenic Area located less than 19 miles from downtown Asheville would provide significant recreation and tourism benefits to the county and the region; and

WHEREAS, local families have used Craggy-Big Ivy to hunt, fish, hike, camp, and swim for over two centuries and the Craggy Mountain Wilderness and National Scenic Area will safeguard traditional local uses of the land; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service has recommended an expanded Craggy Mountain Wilderness Area for official congressional designation as part of its draft Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest Management Plan and expanded protections for the Craggy-Big Ivy area.

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

1. That the expanded 8,693-acre Craggy Mountains Wilderness Study Area and 16,000-acre Craggy Mountain National Scenic Area be recommended for designation 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 on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2020.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE  
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

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LAMAR JOYNER, CLERK

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BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN