

Governor Michael F. Easley  
Office of the Governor  
20201 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-0301

Dear Governor Easley:

Thank you for your support of the \$15,000,000 special appropriation for land purchases related to the Hickory Nut Gorge State Park! As a public servant working for the City of Charlotte Engineering Department, I too can understand the effort it took to keep that money in the budget and the commitment on your part to protect our valuable wilderness resources of the Hickory Nut Gorge.

The most outstanding tract of the entire Gorge, however, still hangs in the balance. Chimney Rock Park, as you are well aware, is on the market and at risk of falling into private ownership. As a past Carolina Mountain Club Maintainer for the Appalachian Trail, I am writing to urge you to get personally involved in keeping the State and the present park owners at the bargaining table until an agreement is reached to buy and preserve the park for future generations of North Carolina children.

Please consider all options on this very important opportunity, such as a public-private partnership, or some other venture that would ensure the integrity of the park is not compromised. Direct park preservation by the people of North Carolina, however, would ensure a permanent legacy for you, as it did for Teddy Roosevelt with the acquisition of several of our National Parks!

Hickory Nut Gorge State Park with the addition of the centerpiece of Chimney Rock would undoubtedly become one of the most recognizable natural landmarks for our state, and could be included on our State's advertising to draw in business opportunities for our local merchants and the tourist industry!

Please find the time in your busy schedule to work directly with the Morse family to reach a solution that we can all look back on and take pride in.

I personally appreciate your time and thank you for any attention you can give to this irreplaceable part of North Carolina history.

Regards,

John T. Campbell, II