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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNTY OF BLAND DESIGNATED
APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY

(The County of Bland, Virginia) – October 20, 2011, the County of Bland, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the County of Bland Appalachian Trail Community Advisory Committee, are pleased to announce that the County of Bland has been designated as an Appalachian Trail Community.

The Bland County Appalachian Trail (AT) Community Advisory Committee began working in the late spring of 2011 with the goal of obtaining the AT Community Status for the County of Bland. The advisory committee is comprised of community and business leaders, educators, outdoor enthusiasts, hikers, and various state and federal agencies. The Bland County AT Community Advisory Committee is a collection of individuals and agencies working together with the common goal of promoting and protecting the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Appalachian Trail and the County of Bland.

The Appalachian Trail stretches over fifty-six miles of primarily woodlands in the County of Bland. Appalachian Trail Community Designation will increase the economic benefits that the AT offers by enticing a greater number of hikers to visit this area of southwest Virginia and promote the number of thru-hikers to stop in the County of Bland; thus hikers that will support many local businesses.

Appalachian Trail Community Designation will provide a means to promote the natural beauty of the County of Bland as well as entice visitors to explore and benefit from studying the abundant natural sciences inherent to the Appalachian Trail and consequently develop a deeper awareness of and appreciation for our local environment.

"The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is proud to welcome Bland County to the Appalachian Trail Community™ network," stated Angie Sheldon, Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in Virginia. "We're excited to see this new partnership continue to grow and work together to bring visitors to the area, enhancing sustainable economic development and help promote the Trail to local community members as a resource and asset to the County."