



THE  
AMERICAN  
CHESTNUT  
FOUNDATION®



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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The mission of The American Chestnut Foundation is to *restore* the American chestnut tree to our eastern woodlands to *benefit* our *environment*, our *wildlife*, and our *society*.



Dear Friends,

In my role as Chairman of the Board of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), I help to navigate change within the organization. During 2014 the staff in our national office underwent a number of significant changes, including the hiring of a quantitative and molecular geneticist (Jared Westbrook, Ph.D.) and the hiring of a new CEO (Lisa Thomson). Disruptions to the status quo are difficult, and these and other events kept some of us on the board rather busy this past year. But bearing in mind that every great beginning is marked by change, we are looking for great things from our new staff members! Lisa and Jared began full-time responsibilities in January 2015.

A striking fact about the national search to fill these two positions is the quality of applicants that we attracted. This is a testament to both the achievements of our staff and volunteers and to the reputation of our program. I am truly humbled to help lead the incredibly talented and dedicated people who work and volunteer for The American Chestnut Foundation.

Our staff members dedicate themselves daily to the responsibilities defined in our mission and to the support of our volunteers, who are so absolutely essential to the success of TACF. In the past year alone, our chapters planted more than 90,000 chestnut trees at 114 separate locations. To date, more than 10,000 Restoration Chestnut Trees 1.0 have been planted in national forests in Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont. And with the annual progress at our research farms in Meadowview, Virginia, the genetic qualities of the Restoration Chestnut 1.0 trees continue to improve year by year.

Your essential partnership with TACF, through the generous sharing of your resources and energy, allows our research and development to continue and brings us closer to success in our mission. This publication is not simply an accounting of the foundation's work. It is a tribute to you and others who have made the achievements of TACF possible. As an organization, TACF thrives on the support of its members, volunteers, donors, and staff. Thank you for your loyalty and dedication.

I look forward to sharing more good news in coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Kim Steiner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kim Steiner, Ph.D.



# Loss of a Keystone Species

Up until the early 1900s, American chestnut was the dominant hardwood in the forests of the eastern United States. This species was an essential component of the ecosystem because it was late-flowering, reliable, productive, and unaffected by seasonal frosts. These qualities made it the single most important food source for a wide variety of wildlife from bears to birds. In addition, rural communities depended upon the annual nut harvest as a cash crop to feed livestock, and the chestnut lumber industry was a major sector of rural economies due to the wood's remarkable characteristics.

In 1904, chestnut blight was imported into the U.S. on Asian chestnut trees. This fungus, called *Cryphonectria parasitica*, is dispersed via spores in the air, raindrops, or animals. As a wound pathogen, it enters the tree through a flesh injury

in the tree's bark, spreading quickly into the bark and underlying vascular cambium and wood. These tissues are killed as the fungus advances, and the flow of nutrients is eventually choked off. By 1950, the American chestnut was effectively eliminated from our landscape.

In 1983, The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) was founded with a single mission: *Restore the American chestnut tree to our eastern woodlands to benefit our environment, our wildlife, and our society.* This tree was a critical component of our ecosystem, yet it has slowly disappeared from our collective memory and successive generations have a fading idea of its importance. TACF and its network of state chapters and volunteers are working to restore this keystone species so future generations will know the grandeur and beauty of these mighty giants.



## 4 BILLION

An estimated **4 billion** American chestnut trees thrived in the forests from Georgia to Maine at the turn of the 20th century.

## 100 FEET

Known as the "Redwood of the East," the American chestnut grew remarkably fast and often reached more than **100 feet tall** and **10 feet in diameter**.

## 50 TIMES

It was a prolific food source for humans, wildlife, and livestock — producing up to **50 times more edible mast** than its next nearest rival, the oak tree.

## LIGHT, STRONG

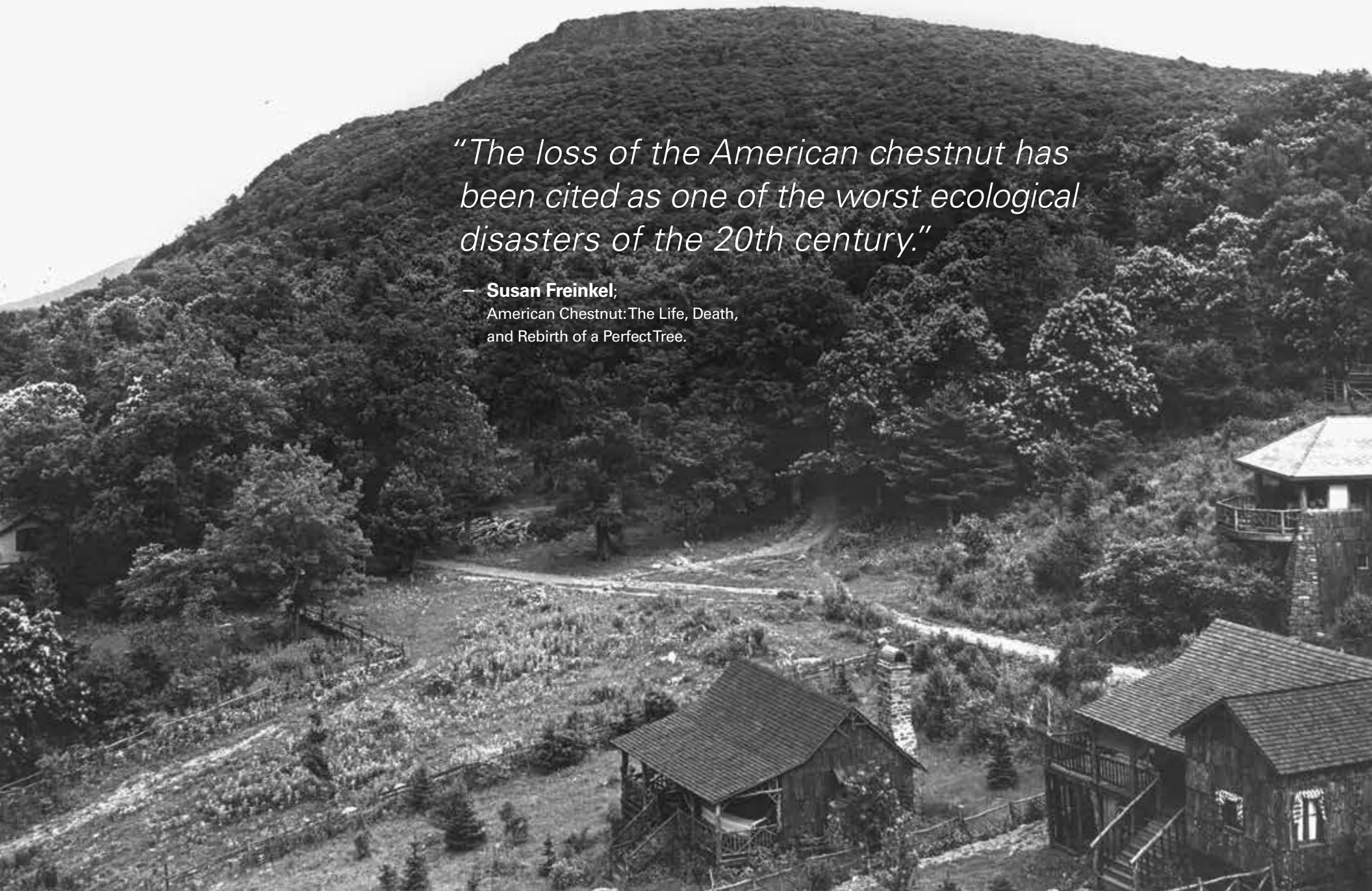
Its timber was **light, straight-grained**, and exceptionally rot-resistant, making it indispensable as building material.

Above: The Shelton Family with a large chestnut in Tremont Falls, TN, c1920. Photo courtesy of the Herbert M. Webster Photograph Collection, The University of Tennessee.

Right: Skyland Cabins from Oak Crest, Shenandoah National Park, George Freeman Pollock Glass Slide Collection.

*“The loss of the American chestnut has been cited as one of the worst ecological disasters of the 20th century.”*

– **Susan Freinkel;**  
American Chestnut: The Life, Death,  
and Rebirth of a Perfect Tree.





# Backcross Breeding Program

The American Chestnut Foundation's backcross breeding program begins by crossing an American chestnut and a Chinese chestnut. This is followed by three successive generations of crossing back to American chestnut trees to restore American characteristics. In between each breeding step, the trees are inoculated with blight fungus (*Cryphonectria parasitica*) and only those trees showing strong blight resistance and American characteristics are selected to breed additional generations. For the final two generations, trees with proven blight resistance are intercrossed with one another to eliminate genes for susceptibility to blight introduced from the American parents.

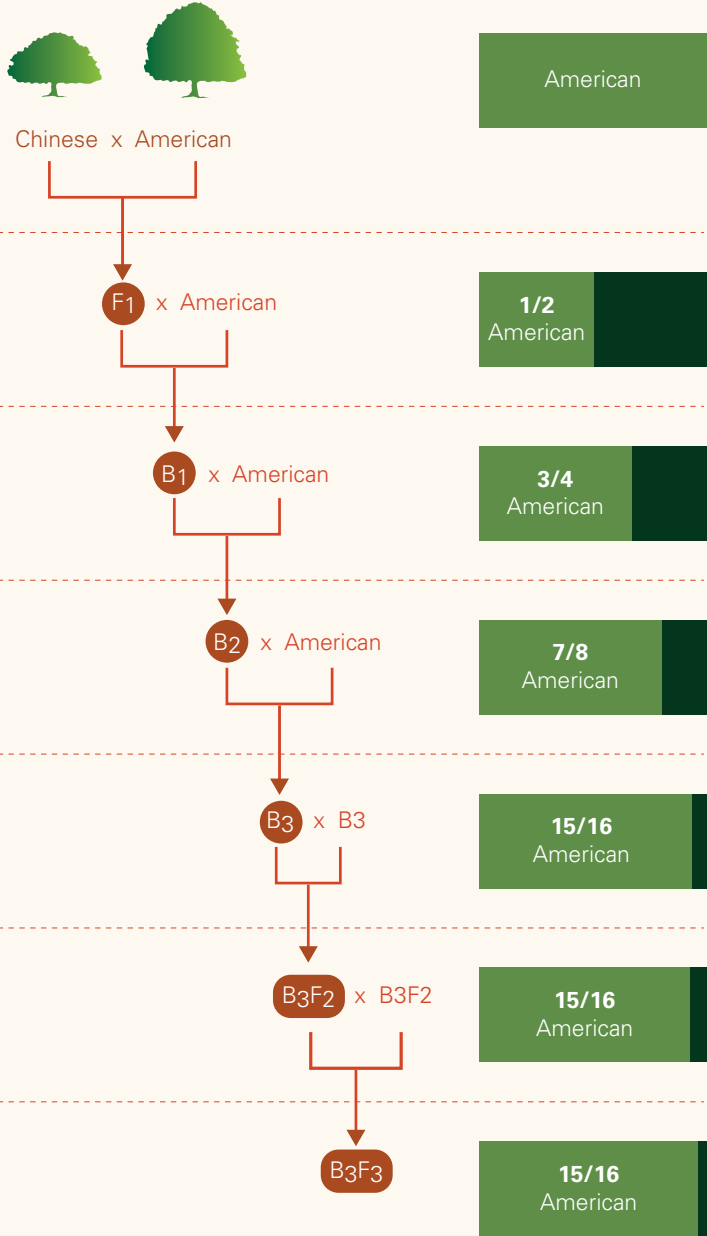






Each generation is inoculated with blight fungus and only those trees with the highest resistance are used to breed future generations.

American and Chinese chestnuts are first crossed to help increase blight resistance.



F1 is the **first cross** to the American chestnut

B1 is the **first backcross** to the American chestnut

B2 is the **second backcross** to the American chestnut

B3 is the **third backcross** to the American chestnut

B3F2 is the **first intercross** to the American chestnut

B3F3 This is the **second intercross** to the American chestnut

Breeding, testing and evaluation continues. TACF's breeding program will continue to integrate additional sources of blight resistance into the breeding populations.

# Meadowview Research Farms Celebrates 25 Years

of groundbreaking research, genetic breeding, and  
process innovation

|  |   |                      |                     |                               |                              |  |   |
|--|---|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| 1989   | 1993  | 1994                 | 1995                | 1999                          | 2001                         | 2002   | 2005  |
| Planted seedlings on Wagner Farm, initiated B2 crosses | Encouraging data from canker measurements of F2s and other crosses, including B2s | Initiated B3 crosses | Acquired Price Farm | Measured first cankers on B3s | Harvested first B3F2 crosses | Established Legacy Seed Orchard on Duncan Farm | Harvested first B3F3 crosses (Restoration Chestnuts 1.0); Acquired Bryan Farm |



### Meadowview Research Farms celebrated a major milestone in 2014

– 25 years of groundbreaking research, genetic breeding, and process innovation. This facility is the epicenter of the Foundation’s scientific research and breeding programs. In fact, TACF wouldn’t be in the process of restoring the American chestnut without Meadowview.

Beginning in 1989, TACF established the Wagner Research Farm to execute the backcross breeding program developed by Philip Rutter and the late Dr. Charles Burnham. Chestnut trees have been planted, crossed, and grown on the Wagner Research Farm since its inception.

In 1995, the Wagner Farm was filled to capacity with more than 5,800 chestnut trees at various stages of backcrossing. A generous donation during that year allowed for the purchase of nearby land. This property is now known as the Glenn C. Price Research Farm. Subsequently, a third farm was purchased in 2002 and a fourth farm in 2006.

Today, Meadowview Research Farms encompasses 166 acres with more than 50,000 trees at various stages of breeding. TACF researchers develop advanced breeding lines at Meadowview and care for the Legacy Tree orchards, which produce Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 – our most blight-resistant American chestnuts to date. In addition, Meadowview is responsible for TACF’s chapter breeding program. As a result, this facility will be the major source of Restoration Chestnut 1.0 seed production for decades.

For all of these reasons and more, Meadowview’s 25-year celebration was a remarkable event. Hosted by TACF’s Southwest Virginia Restoration Branch, this wonderful tribute acknowledged the development and success of the breeding program, as well as the many people who have contributed to the restoration effort throughout the years. More than 200 people attended, and Dr. Fred Hebard was recognized for his efforts in implementing the breeding program.

All photos by Ruth Gregory Goodridge



Dave Thomas prepared chestnuts for roasting.



Chestnuts roasted throughout the day.



Marilyn Thomas served warm chestnuts to the masses.



Dr. Fred Hebard spoke to guests on TACF’s research history.



Guests enjoyed the celebration with food, music, and activities for all ages.

## 2007

Measured first cankers on B3F3s

## 2008

Planted trees on Matthews State Forest; Procured modern lab equipment and instruments

## 2009

Organized Southwest Virginia Restoration Branch; Planted first B3F3s in forests

## 2010

Dedicated Glenn C. Price Laboratory at 1st Restoration Celebration

## 2011

Showed resistance in measurements of large numbers of B3F3s

## 2013

Firm evidence of PRR resistance in Graves’ B3-F3s with a plan to fix it in a genetically diverse population

## 2014

Firm evidence that most B3-F3s grow as fast as American chestnut

## 2015

Completion of the Graves and Clapper seed orchards at the Wagner and Duncan Farms; Preparation for next phase of crosses



# Our Research Continues

## Glenn C. Price Laboratory at Meadowview Research Farms

The Glenn C. Price Laboratory, built in 2009, is outfitted with the latest scientific equipment to move our research forward. TACF scientists are working to better understand how the blight fungus attacks the American chestnut and how the tree responds. Research is also underway to identify and adapt DNA markers that will allow us to identify trees that will breed true for blight resistance, thereby speeding up the breeding process. These scientific breakthroughs will advance our efforts to help the American chestnut resist disease and to eventually restore the species.

## Phytophthora Resistance

The soil pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (also known as ink disease, root rot or PRR) is a major obstacle to chestnut establishment in the south. This pathogen is highly virulent, killing chestnuts at the roots and leading to significant mortality. Because it does not tolerate cold temperatures, *Phytophthora* currently affects chestnuts in lower elevations of the southeast. Since 2004, TACF has been screening its breeding stock for resistance to PRR through a screening program conducted at Chestnut Returns Farm in Seneca, SC. The foundation also began an additional screening program in 2014 at North Carolina State University.

After a decade of research and collaboration, TACF continues to make significant progress to further its understanding of both the pathogen and the genetics of host resistance. Some accomplishments include: screening hundreds of seeds for PRR resistance, representing dozens of mixed Meadowview and chapter genotypes; and genomic sequencing of American and Chinese genomes to help determine the genetic basis of PRR resistance (how many genes are involved) and develop markers to aid in selection.

Currently, TACF is creating and implementing a Chapter breeding strategy designed to incorporate PRR-resistance into the current backcross breeding program, with the ultimate goal of breeding a chestnut that is resistant to the *Phytophthora* pathogen and the chestnut blight.



Early signs of *Phytophthora* include chlorosis (yellowing), wilting of foliage, and distinctive black streaking which is visible by examining the tissue near the base of the tree, just under the bark.



## Progress towards a disease-resistant American-type chestnut

TACF is pleased to report that its Restoration Chestnut 1.0 trees are currently intermediary in blight resistance between Chinese and American chestnut. This evaluation is based on test results for the 2008, 2009, and 2010 crops. As TACF completes culling the Restoration Chestnut 1.0 seed orchards from their current level of 10,000 trees to the target of 500, our researchers expect the blight resistance of Restoration Chestnut 1.0 to increase significantly. That's great news!

An important note in this process is that current Restoration Chestnut 1.0 trees have sufficient blight resistance to flower for extended periods in the forest. This is a huge step towards species restoration, and as stated previously, blight-resistance in the Restoration Chestnut 1.0 is only getting better.

The majority of Restoration Chestnut 1.0 seeds have also shown rapid growth rates – an American chestnut trait that represents a key objective of the TACF breeding program.



The Glenn C. Price Laboratory at Meadowview Research Farms is the hub of TACF's research.

Spring 2014 was favorable for pollination, which led to a large harvest in fall of 2014.

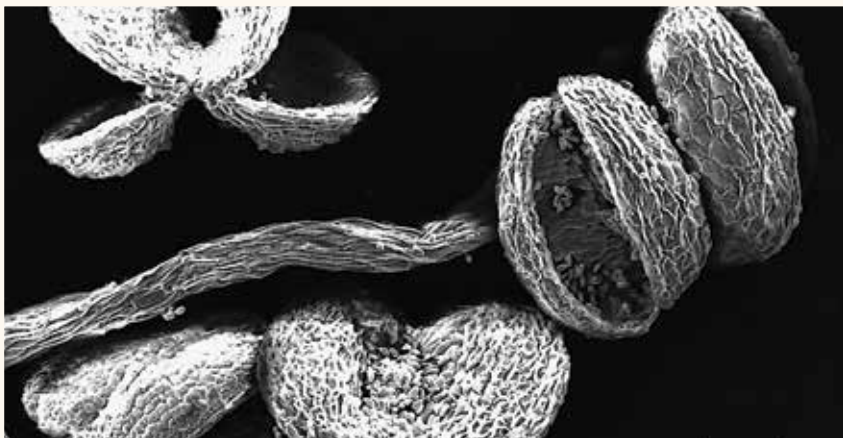
### HIGHLIGHTS:


- 66,685 nuts harvested in fall 2013, including 45,069 Restoration Chestnuts 1.0
- 8,247 chestnuts were planted into the Farms' orchards
- 10,000 Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 were planted into the Farms' container nursery
- 13,000 nuts were planted in state-run nurseries in VA, PA, and IN
- 5,764 trees were inoculated to test for blight resistance

### BIOTECHNOLOGY APPROACH TO BLIGHT RESISTANCE

After 24 years of research, the New York Chapter of TACF and research teams led by State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) scientists Dr. William Powell and Dr. Chuck Maynard have significantly enhanced blight resistance in American chestnuts. There is still work needed to obtain federal regulatory approval to allow these trees to be made available to the public. There is also the need to stack additional genes through breeding or transformations to ensure a sustainable level of blight resistance and to enhance resistance to *Phytophthora* root rot.

Left: American chestnut anthers from a tree at TACF's Meadowview Research Farm (SEM, 100x). Specimen provided by Charlotte Zampini. Photo by Peter Bradley.





# Testing our Restoration Chestnuts 1.0

## From the Laboratory to the Forests

TACF assesses the blight resistance and American characteristics of our trees in progeny tests, which are an essential part of our breeding program. A progeny test is a planting with a prescribed layout that includes multiple family lines of our Restoration Chestnuts 1.0, as well as pure American and Chinese chestnuts as controls. These tests allow us to evaluate trees in our breeding program and determine which mother trees should be culled. Progeny tests are established in orchards at Meadowview Research Farms and on private and public lands, including national forests, throughout the native range.

### Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 planted in progeny tests in 2013-2014:

- 4,360 at Meadowview Research Farms
- 4,435 in NJ, PA, OH, KY, and NC
- 550 in national forests



## A RETURN TO OUR NATIONAL FORESTS

TACF has partnered with the USDA Forest Service for the past 25 years. They are one of our largest, long-term funders, as well as providing the use of national forest land and the assistance of personnel to help restore the American chestnut.

To date, more than 10,000 Restoration Chestnut 1.0 trees have been planted in national forests in Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont. These plantings allow TACF to test and evaluate the Restoration Chestnut 1.0 in real forest environments and also fulfill an important goal of the USDA Forest Service to restore native trees to our forests.

Where feasible, we invite the public to participate in these progeny test plantings. Through hands-on events, partially funded by the National Forest Foundation, citizens develop a deeper connection to our national forests while participating in an historic restoration project.

Restoring American chestnuts to our national forests will benefit forest health by providing a nutritious food for wildlife and creating more diverse ecosystems.



TACF scientists and volunteers conduct progeny tests with the USDA Forest Service at Fays Meadow in Green Mountain National Forest near Goshen, VT.



Joe Gomola, Marienville District Vegetation Management Team Leader and local volunteer Alexandra Patton plant seedlings.

# Research Funded Through TACF

TACF funds research projects that provide critical knowledge to help us understand the complex ecology of the chestnut and its interactions with the natural world. In October 2013, the Foundation awarded \$20,000 in grants to external organizations to conduct chestnut research.

Pictured is the research planting at West Virginia University being studied as part of the TACF-funded project "Assessing the Integration of Host Resistance and Hypovirulence." This project evaluates the potential for hypovirulence (a phenomenon whereby a virus reduces the ability of the blight fungus to produce lethal cankers on American chestnut) to aid in the successful establishment of backcross trees.



| RESEARCH PROJECTS   | ORGANIZATIONS                                  |
|---|--|
| Increasing the Utility of Existing Chestnut DNA and RNA Sequence Data through Bioinformatic Analysis    | Clemson University, University of Tennessee    |
| Maintaining a Backcross Orchard Planting to Assess the Integration of Host Resistance and Hypovirulence | West Virginia University                       |
| Habitat Preferences of American Chestnut in an Appalachian Cove Forest                                  | James Madison University                       |
| Nutrient Media for Determination of Sexual Compatibility of <i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i> Isolates    | Alfred State College                           |
| American Chestnut Research in the Southern Region   | USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station |

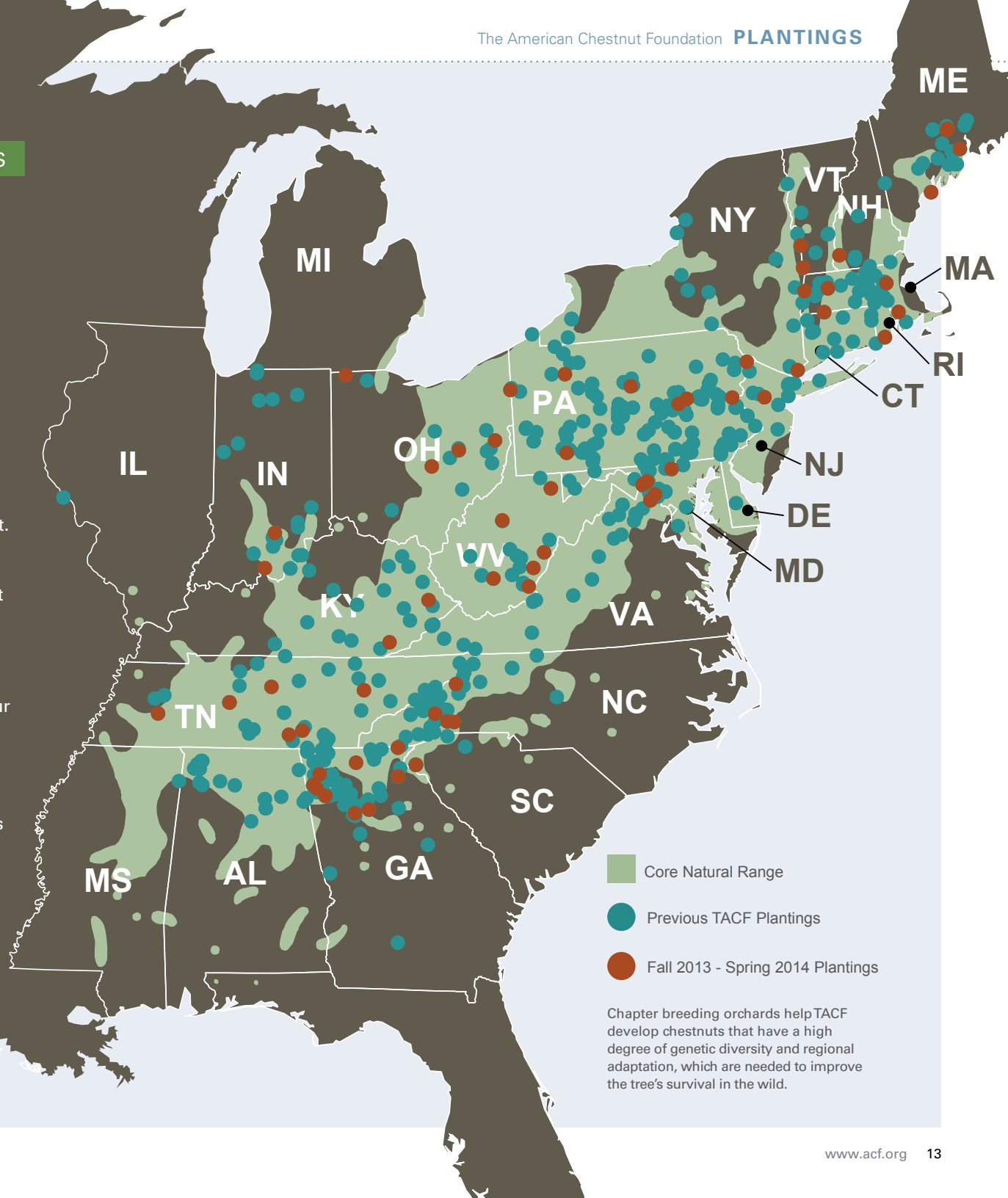


### REGIONAL BREEDING ORCHARDS

Two factors are critical to breeding an American chestnut that can flourish in the harsh environment of the eastern forests: regional adaptation and genetic diversity.

Early in TACF's history, our scientists realized the tremendous benefit of establishing local breeding orchards within each state located in the chestnut's native range. These orchards will allow TACF to complete the final breeding generations of the process initiated at Meadowview Research Farms. Local breeding orchards enable growers to produce trees that are regionally adapted – that have a genetic predisposition to thrive in the local environment. This method also allows states to consistently include new genetic material from local surviving American chestnuts, adding important genetic diversity to the breeding population.

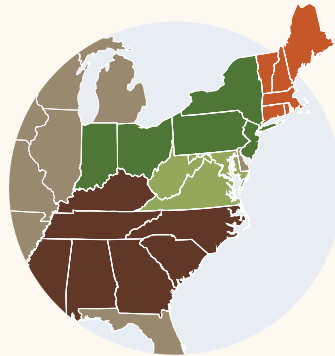
TACF is comprised of 16 state chapters with more than 5,000 members located throughout the native range. Chapter volunteers, working with our regional scientists, have established more than 600 orchard plantings with 90,000+ Restoration Chestnut 1.0 trees. In the past year alone, our chapters have planted chestnut trees at 114 new, regional locations. This type of regional planting is used as public outreach to effectively spread the story of the American chestnut and to educate the next generation of American chestnut caretakers.



Chapter breeding orchards help TACF develop chestnuts that have a high degree of genetic diversity and regional adaptation, which are needed to improve the tree's survival in the wild.

# TACF Regional Accomplishments

TACF and its network of state chapters and volunteers have been working to restore this keystone species so future generations will know the grandeur and beauty of these mighty giants.



Cub Scout Pack 428 works with Eric Evans of the Maine Chapter at the Weisendanger seed orchard in Winthrop, ME.



## NEW ENGLAND REGION

### STATE CHAPTERS

Connecticut, Massachusetts/Rhode Island, Maine, Vermont/New Hampshire

### REGIONAL STATS

- Approximately 46,000 chestnuts harvested in 2013
- Approximately 16,500 chestnuts planted in 2014
- 16 new plantings established
- 38 outreach activities, serving 5,877 individuals
- 108 new members enrolled

### NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 3 new breeding or seed orchards established in 2014, and 1000s of nuts planted in existing orchards;
- Several demonstration plantings established regionally, as well as 2 new research plantings/partnerships;
- CT and VT/NH Chapters conducted their first breeding orchard inoculations in June.



Dr. Martin Cipollini of the Georgia Chapter pollinates trees every summer with students from Berry College as part of TACF's Father Tree program.





Tour group at a TACF orchard at the Penn State University Arboretum examines leaves.



## NORTH CENTRAL REGION

### STATE CHAPTERS

Indiana, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey

### REGIONAL STATS

- Approximately 25,000 chestnuts harvested in 2013
- Approximately 4,500 chestnuts planted in 2014
- 10 new plantings established
- 40 outreach activities, serving 2,400 individuals
- 227 new members enrolled

### NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- First presidential transition in NY with Herb Darling retiring on October 11 and passing the torch to Allen Nichols;
- Transgenic lines showcasing highly in blight-resistance assays, even higher than Chinese chestnuts in some;
- 2 new test plantings in State Parks including Harrison Crawford State Forest and Jackson Washington State Forest.



Virginia chapter president Cathy Mayes shows students how to "mud-pack" a canker to help prevent spread of the blight at Prince William Forest Park.



## MID-ATLANTIC REGION

### STATE CHAPTERS

Maryland, Virginia\*, West Virginia

### REGIONAL STATS

- Approximately 11,000 chestnuts harvested in 2013
- Approximately 800 chestnuts planted in 2014
- 13 new plantings established
- 19 outreach activities, serving 564 individuals
- 157 new members enrolled

### NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established 4 Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 test/demonstration plantings at USFS, USACE, BSA, and WMREC;
- Planted additional Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 at 2 partner organization site plantings (Georgia Pacific and US Army Fort Detrick);
- Established several new Ceremonial Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 plantings including Catoctin Creek Nature Center, Virginia Tech, Waterford Foundation, Georgia Pacific, and Blue Ridge Heritage Foundation.

\*Virginia Chapter statistics not available at time of printing



TACF Carolinas member Paul Sisco demonstrates bark identification to students at Olympic B3 summer camp at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte.



## SOUTHERN REGION

### STATE CHAPTERS

Alabama, Carolinas, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee

### REGIONAL STATS

- Approximately 9,800 chestnuts harvested in 2013
- Approximately 4,000 chestnuts planted in 2014
- 16 new plantings established
- 41 outreach activities, serving 4,375 individuals
- 192 new members enrolled

### NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- More than thirty lines were screened and selected throughout the southern region and several new intercrosses were made leading to hundreds of BC3F2s, which will go into regional seed orchards next spring;
- Planted a new Germplasm Conservation Orchard at Shawnee Waters in Tennessee;
- Made significant advances in the *Phytophthora* resistance breeding program by adding several new cooperators, new screening programs and several new *Phytophthora* resistance backcross breeding orchards, including one at Biltmore Estates and one at Walnut Creek Preserve in North Carolina.



# Education

**The American Chestnut Foundation is committed to providing educational opportunities for our nation's youth and to strengthening the bond between communities and forests. Below are TACF's educational initiatives over the past year:**

- Meadowview Teacher Training – TACF staff trained teachers from southwestern Virginia on how to incorporate the American chestnut story into their classrooms using the American Chestnut Learning Box.
- 24 American Chestnut Learning Boxes were distributed to schools and community organizations.
- Volunteers and staff presented at schools, summer science camps, educational centers, civic groups.
- Presented at an Eco/Geo/Bio summer camp for middle school students at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute.
- Introduced TACF's backcross breeding program to high school students at the Olympic B3 Science Summer camp.
- Internships – TACF provides immersive educational opportunities for current students or recent graduates interested in the field of forest health.

## AMERICAN CHESTNUT LEARNING BOX



A curriculum for elementary and middle school students that integrates math, science, and social studies into hands-on activities based upon the saga of the American chestnut tree. Students are able to learn about TACF's goal to restore the American chestnut tree to its native woodlands and about the responsibility of forest stewardship through various biological samples, photos, graphics, and activities provided in the box. It brings together a collection of natural objects to facilitate discussion in environments where it is not possible to encounter American chestnuts in the natural world.







# Outreach

## Appalachian Trail MEGA-Transect Chestnut Project

The Appalachian Trail (AT) MEGA-Transect Chestnut Project is a collaboration between TACF and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club to train citizen scientists to collect data on American chestnut trees growing along the AT.

- Four trainings were offered during the past data collection season and 40 new volunteers were trained to collect data.
- Data collectors have now hiked more than 900 miles of trail while collecting data, and nearly 800 of the roughly 2,000 miles of the AT have been counted.
- More than 25,000 living trees of three feet or more in height have been counted within 15 feet of the trail. Data collectors have recorded observations on 187 large trees of 13 or more inches in circumference along the AT.
- Information gathered through the AT MEGA-Transect Chestnut Project will help scientists better understand the preferred site requirements for American chestnut by evaluating where they still continue to grow.

During a summer learning camp, high school students assisted in field plantings at Pyor's Orchard in Maryland. Photo by Jennifer Williams.



Bill Scholten, Mireya Pasa, and Kris Stewart participate in MEGA-Transect Training lead by Kathy Marmet.

## ENGAGING CITIZEN SCIENTISTS

The term “citizen science” typically refers to research collaborations between scientists and volunteers to expand opportunities for scientific data collection and to provide access to scientific information for community members. TACF’s chapter program is about engaging citizen scientists to help preserve the regional diversity of American chestnut throughout its original range. TACF volunteers work diligently toward this effort through a wide variety of activities. Chapters maximize resources at the local level, develop programs uniquely designed to each region, and promote our mission.





## Reclaimed Mine Lands

One of TACF's ongoing projects since 2004 is our work with Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) and Green Forests Work (GFW) to restore the American chestnut on reclaimed mine sites throughout Appalachia. In 2014, together with ARRI and GFW, TACF facilitated 34 planting events in Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. With the help of approximately 1,900 volunteers, we planted more than 200,000 trees onto 350 acres of land. Approximately 7,500 of these trees were chestnuts. The Norfolk Southern Foundation provided funding for the chestnuts used in these plantings and has been an ardent supporter of our efforts to reforest mined lands.

One important component of these reforestation events is education. Each volunteer planting event educates landowners, students, and the public on the need for better reforestation of mined lands, the benefits of native species and reforestation efforts, American chestnut restoration, as well as the technical skills required to properly plant trees.





## Expansion of the Conservation Innovation Grant

When TACF received a Conservation Innovation Grant in 2011 from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, it greatly increased our capacity to restore mined lands. We are now in the third year of this three-year grant to establish mixed chestnut/hardwood plantings on twelve reclaimed mine sites in five states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky). This year, TACF successfully installed five 30-acre restoration plantings as part of this grant.



Boy Scouts of America Blue Grass Counsel from Lexington, Kentucky learn about chestnut restoration and mined land reforestation from Tim Brown, Kentucky Division of Forestry, and Michael French of TACF at a reclaimed surface mine in Pike County, KY. Photo by Michael French.

Left: A 2-year-old pure American chestnut grown as an experiment to test direct-seeding vs. containerized seedlings on a surface mine that implemented the Forestry Reclamation Approach in Pike County, KY. Photo by Michael French.

## Planting Trees of Renewal at the Flight 93 National Memorial

TACF is proud to announce its third year supporting the reforestation efforts of the National Park Service at the Flight 93 National Memorial. Planting Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 is part of a much larger reforestation effort that is taking place at the memorial site to honor victims of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The memorial was constructed on a reclaimed coal mine surrounding the crash site of United Airlines Flight 93 near Stoystown, PA.

In 2014 TACF planted 1,383 Restoration Chestnuts 1.0 on approximately 30 acres of land at the Memorial. Overall, 550 volunteers from all walks of life worked in unison to plant trees on the Memorial. Each volunteer had the opportunity to plant a chestnut and hopefully heal in some small way through the experience.



Chet Edwards of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement instructs volunteers on the proper way to plant seedlings at Flight 93.



Volunteers share in family bonding while planting seedlings at the Memorial site. Photos by Michael French



TACF partnered with many organizations on this project such as the National Park Service, Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative, Arbor Day Foundation, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial, Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining, Rosebud Mining Company and more.



The Richard King Mellon Foundation generously supported TACF's participation in this program.

## Our Donors: FY 2014 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014)

### MAJOR GOVERNMENT, FOUNDATION, & CORPORATE DONORS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Allegheny Foundation   | National Forest Foundation                   |
| Ballyshannon Fund in the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation | The Neil and Anna Rasmussen Foundation       |
| The Archie W. and Grace Berry Foundation                           | Norfolk Southern Foundation                  |
| The Betterment Fund  | Sordoni Foundation, Inc.                     |
| Colcom Foundation  | The Tucker Foundation                        |
| David Greenwalt Charitable Trust                                   | USDA Forest Service                          |
| Dun Foundation   | USDA Forest Service, Southern Region         |
| Indera Mills Company   | USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| The Manton Foundation  | WestWind Foundation                          |
| Richard King Mellon Foundation                                     |  |

#### \$25,000 +

Brad Stanback and Shelli Lodge-Stanback  
Timothy Sweeney  
Richard and Carol Will

#### \$10,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous  
Robert Dunlap  
George M. Knebel, Jr.  
William McCoy  
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stanback  
TACF - Virginia Chapter  
W. Duane Waddell

#### \$5,000- \$9,000

Ailene Phillips Trust  
John and Deborah Lee Evangelakos  
Amy Goldman-Fowler  
GE Foundation  
Dwight Harley, Sr.  
Harry Howton  
Dr. Joe and Sandra James  
Carolyn Keiffer and Philip Tinne  
Kathleen and Rob Marmet  
Jack McKee  
Jay and Jennifer Mills  
Monadnock Conservancy  
George Ohrstrom II  
Nicholas Skinner

#### \$1,000- \$4,000

Carl and Becky Absher  
Charles and Deena Akre  
Steve Antoline  
Arnot Sportsmen Club, Inc.  
Connor Bachmann  
Bailey Nurseries Foundation  
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Thank you for everything you make possible!

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A sunset sky with a green bar containing the text "A LEGACY TREE". The sky is filled with soft, golden light from the setting sun on the right, with scattered clouds catching the light. The bottom of the image shows a dark silhouette of a forest line.

A LEGACY TREE

# The Promise of a Hundred Future Forests

Legacy Trees represent one of the most advanced stages of TACF's breeding process, and at Meadowview Research Farms they form our core seed orchard. The Restoration Chestnut 1.0 seeds produced in this orchard contain the greatest level of American chestnut characteristics and the most blight resistance that we have achieved to date.

Trees in the Legacy Tree orchard are sponsored by individuals - either in their own name, the name of a company or organization, or in honor of a friend or relative. These sponsors have made a significant donation to help fund our scientific research and hands-on restoration efforts. In effect, each tree in this orchard is a living legacy to the work of TACF's scientists and volunteers, and each Restoration Chestnut 1.0 seed that is harvested holds, as Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "the promise of a hundred future forests."



## Our Legacy Tree Sponsors

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Trees in the Legacy Tree orchard are sponsored by individuals - either in their own name, the name of a company or organization, or in honor of a friend or relative. Each of these trees is a living legacy to the work of TACF's scientists and volunteers.





## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

# Five-year Trend of Financial Growth

Operating revenues rose from \$1,881,336 (FY 2010) to \$3,239,611 (FY 2014). In addition, operating expenses for the same time period rose from \$1,869,134 to \$2,197,756 in large part due to increased payroll costs (including salaries, taxes, and benefits) as the Foundation ramped up its research/out-planting efforts. Net equity over the same five-year time period increased from \$3,154,158 (FY 2010) to \$5,038,179 (FY 2014) leaving the Foundation in a strong financial position to continue its critical efforts in restoring the American chestnut.

The financial results shown here are derived from The American Chestnut Foundation's audited statements of June 30, 2014, which contain an unqualified audit opinion. TACF's audited financial may be obtained online at [acf.org/annual](http://acf.org/annual) or by calling (828) 281-0047.

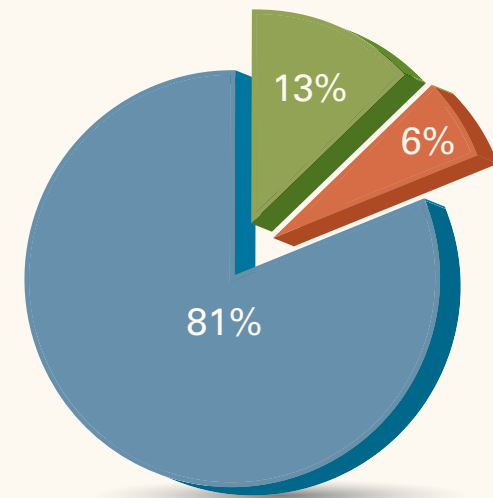


**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

| PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE                  | UNRESTRICTED     | PERMANENTLY<br>RESTRICTED | TOTAL            |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Contributions and foundation grants*        | \$ 2,470,974     | –                         | \$ 2,470,974     |
| Federal grants                              | 400,016          | –                         | 400,016          |
| Membership dues                             | 350,770          | –                         | 350,770          |
| Investment income (loss)                    | 455,699          | 2,340                     | 458,039          |
| Merchandise sales (net of cost of \$10,332) | 17,130           | –                         | 17,130           |
| Donated services                            | 263,500          | –                         | 263,500          |
| Other support and revenue                   | 721              | –                         | 721              |
| <b>TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>     | <b>3,958,810</b> | <b>2,340</b>              | <b>3,961,150</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>                             |                  |                           |                  |
| Program services                            | 2,052,785        | –                         | 2,052,785        |
| Management and general                      | 318,553          | –                         | 318,553          |
| Fundraising                                 | 154,321          | –                         | 154,321          |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                       | <b>2,525,659</b> | <b>–</b>                  | <b>2,525,659</b> |
| Change in Net Assets                        | 1,443,151        | 2,340                     | 1,435,491        |
| Net Assets, beginning of year               | 3,579,062        | 23,262                    | 3,602,668        |
| <b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>              | <b>5,012,213</b> | <b>25,966</b>             | <b>5,038,179</b> |

(July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014)

\* Contributions and foundations grants figure reflects a one-time gift to the foundation.



- Program Services
- Management and General Expenses
- Fundraising

As of June 30, 2014, according to Cusack & Co. Complete audited financials and TACF's 990 are available at <http://www.acf.org/annual.php> or by calling (828) 281-0047. Chart reflects expenditures for fiscal year ending June 30, 2014.



In 2014, The American Chestnut Foundation earned its ninth 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, the premier charity rating company.







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 (276) 944-4631

#### North Central Regional Office

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 206 Forest Resources Lab  
 University Park, PA 16802  
 (814) 863-7192

#### New England Regional Office

Northern Research Station  
 Forest Service, U.S.  
 Department of Agriculture  
 705 Spear Street  
 South Burlington, VT 05403  
 (802) 999-8706

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 900 Natural Resources Drive  
 Charlottesville, VA 22903  
 (434) 906-9312

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