

# BAA-TANY GOAT PROJECT

## ADOPT A GOAT AND

### Help Save the Grassy Balds & Give a Goat a:

**Retirement Plan** – In 2008, Trudy, a goat owner in northern Virginia, donated 19 goats because she wanted to give them a retirement plan rather than send them to the meat market. These goats are dedicated for ecological restoration work and we will have to provide for them for the rest of their natural lives (it applies to the other goats also).

**Working Vacation** – goats will work for food and they love blackberries.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** The purpose of the **volunteer-based Baa-tany Goat Project** is to **restore Grassy Bald corridors** on Roan's western balds using goats as an experimental management tool. **Browsing rotation** and **vegetation sampling protocols** are being developed that can hopefully be applied elsewhere.

Roan's Grassy Balds are important habitats for many rare and endemic species such as Gray's Lily as well as species at or near the southern ends of their ranges. **The western balds are thought to be natural (predating European settlement).** These ecosystems have declined in quality and quantity and immediate actions are needed to halt and reverse this trend.

The **project area** (about 79 acres) is within the Pisgah and Cherokee National Forests along about 1 mile of the Appalachian Trail corridor from Jane Bald to Grassy Ridge.

**OBJECTIVES & METHODS:** Goats will selectively browse the invading woody plants rather than herbs. Canada Blackberry is the main target.

**Angora goats** (a fiber rather than a meat goat) are being used. They are more tolerant of these high elevation conditions (5700-6100ft). They will be sheared, treated for parasites, confined, and fed a seed-free food to flush their guts of unwanted and potentially invasive plant seeds prior to being moved to the project area. **Great Pyrenees** livestock guardian dogs are their protectors.

0.5 – 1+ acre moveable paddocks will be set up using solar-powered fencing. Browse levels will be monitored and the goats moved into the next paddock once they have achieved the desired results. Water will be carried by hand to the paddocks thus protecting sensitive wetland habitat. Volunteers will be onsite most of the time which will provide better browse level monitoring as well as additional protection for the goats.

At the end of the summer the goats will be going back to their home pasture in Shady Valley, TN, with the hopes that they will be back on Roan's Grassy Balds in future years.

An intensive **VEGETATION STUDY** is part of the project. This will allow us to:

- A. Assess the effectiveness of using goats for Grassy Bald restoration,
- B. Analyze data and distribute reports as well as make comparisons in vegetation changes over 20+ and 70+ year time spans,
- C. Determine effects on the rare Gray's Lily.

**FUNDING:** This is a volunteer-based project. In 2008 & 2009, we received a grant from the **North Carolina Appalachian Trail License Plate Fund** that paid for travel expenses and some equipment and supply needs. An anonymous donor also made significant contributions to the project. However, additional funds are needed for a proper and thorough multi-year implementation and evaluation of this project.

**PARTICIPANTS:** This is a collaborative project involving several agencies and organizations that have made "in kind" contributions to the project. However, most of

their contributions are in planning rather than funding for field implementation. **Participants include:**

Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
USDA Forest Service  
Friends of Roan Mountain  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
North Carolina Natural Heritage Program  
Tennessee Division of Natural Areas  
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy  
Tennessee [Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club](#)  
The Nature Conservancy  
Appalachian State University  
East Tennessee State University  
Wake Forest University

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:** Please consider joining our **GRASSY BALD RESTORATION MEMBERS' COOPERATIVE** by adopting a goat. This money will be dedicated for losses (possibly vandalism & / or "Acts of God"), excess expenses, and data management (reports, data entry, data analysis) during this third year. Follow-up vegetation sampling will be needed whether or not the goats are back on the mountain (but of course we hope they will be back on the mountain but that will depend on funding).

Consider giving an Adopted Baa-tany Goat to the Nature Lover in your life.

### WHAT YOU GET IF YOU ADOPT A GOAT:

1. An **adoption certificate, lock of mohair, and picture of your goat** letting you know how much it likes the blackberries and spending time in the Grassy Balds,
2. The chance to **name your adopted goat** (the goats only have numbered ear tags right now),
3. The satisfaction of knowing you are helping save a unique ecosystem by helping us further develop and refine a model protocol for using goats in Grassy Bald restoration.

**COST:** For 2010, we are planning on a 3 or 4 month field season (June to September). You may adopt a goat for 1 month, the entire 2010 summer season, and / or for the 2011 summer season (or longer).

\$20 per month;  
\$50 for the 2010 summer;  
\$50 for the 2011 summer.

If you cannot Adopt a Goat (or perhaps in addition to Adopting a Goat), then please consider volunteering your time and energy with onsite work such as:

1. Helping carry equipment to the project area and setting up paddocks (>1 mile from Carvers Gap),
2. Being a goat sitter for a weekend or two; we encourage low impact **Leave No Trace** ([www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org)) camping for 24 hour onsite protection of the goats,
3. Helping carry water from the nearby springs to the goat paddock, etc.

We will provide information and training for all volunteers participating in the onsite implementation of the project.

**Thank you for considering being part of this project.**

Jamey Donaldson, Project Leader & Goatherd  
Todd Eastin, Chief Coordinator of Caprine Conservationists

(printed on recycled paper)

**Adopt / Sponsor a Goat Form:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Goat Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Indicate:**

- New adoption  
 Renewal adoption  
 Gift adoption; indicate any special instructions

\$20 = 1 Month  
\$50 = 1 Summer  
\$100 = 2 Summers

**Amount Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

This is a **tax deductible contribution**, please make checks payable to the **Friends of Roan Mountain** and note on the check that it is for the Roan Goat Project:

**Friends of Roan Mountain**  
Anne Whittemore  
208 Mark Drive  
Johnson City, TN 37615

For more information about this project, Friends of Roan Mountain, and the Appalachian Trail, please contact:

<http://baatanygoatproject.blogspot.com>  
[www.FriendsofRoanMtn.org](http://www.FriendsofRoanMtn.org)  
and / or  
[jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jjudkins@appalachiantrail.org)  
828-254-3708  
[www.appalachiantrail.org](http://www.appalachiantrail.org)

**BAA-TANY GOAT PROJECT:  
A GRASSY BALD RESTORATION  
MEMBERS' COOPERATIVE**



**HELP SAVE THE GRASSY BALDS:**  
Roan has the world's premier examples of the globally rare Southern Appalachian Grassy Bald ecosystems (Global Rank 1 = "Extremely rare and critically imperiled", NatureServe.org).

These ancient **Grassy Balds are dying** due to a variety of factors, including changes in soils, climate change, and lack of large herbivores (plant eaters). This makes the balds more hospitable for woody plant invasion, especially from Canada Blackberry. In particular, the corridors linking the remaining Roan balds are closing in.