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The Cradle of Forestry to Offer Songcatchers for 2021

Pisgah Forest, NC – FIND Outdoors, a 49-year old nonprofit in Pisgah Forest, NC and operator of the Cradle of Forestry with the US Forest Service, is excited to announce the return of the “Songcatchers Music Series” at the Cradle for the 2021 season.

“We’re so excited to bring music back to the Cradle of Forestry this season,” said Cradle of Forestry Manager Christy Ralston. “Songcatchers celebrates the southern Appalachians through music and gives our organization a great sense of pride.”

Nestled in the Pink Beds Valley within Pisgah National Forest, the Cradle of Forestry is known as the “birthplace of modern forestry in America” and offers visitors the chance to explore the past, present and future of environmental stewardship through exhibits, hiking and interpretive trails, and special events. As the pandemic brought Cradle programming to a halt in 2020, FIND staff had the opportunity to get creative in how they offered exciting new educational opportunities to the public. Staff developed free, digital events on YouTube and social media platforms, showcasing the natural history of Pisgah National Forest and allowing the public to continue enjoying outdoor education in a new format.

Based on the 2000 movie *Songcatchers*, about a couple travelling throughout the Appalachian Mountains researching, or “catching” the spirit of Appalachian folk music, much of the musical traditions in Appalachia were based on English and Scotch-Irish folk ballads passed on from generation to generation. Due to the inaccessibility of the area and few roads or rail lines, isolation between communities meant that there was very little assimilation of other musical cultures, preserving a truly unique sound.

The 2021 Songcatchers music series will serve as an all-important fundraiser for the Cradle of Forestry and its programs and events for the general public this year, such as Forest Festival

Day, Smoky Bear's Birthday and a series of children's programs called Woodsy Owl's Curiosity Club.

"It's so important for our visitors to realize that, like other nonprofits, we host major events to share our organization's amazing resources and to raise much-needed dollars to support our mission of education on public lands," stated VP of Development and Communications, Adam DeWitte of the fundraising opportunity. "It's a win-win for our visitors and our nonprofit!"

Performers for 2021 Songcatchers will include Chatham Rabbits on July 11th and Shay Martin Lovette on July 18th, both of which blend an eclectic mix of old-time sounds with folk and roots music that celebrates a bygone era. Hailing from Bynum, NC, Chatham Rabbits is comprised of Sarah and Austin McCombie, who have blended their own unique musical histories into a shared musical experience that pays respects to the musical stylings of North Carolina's three main regions and a string band from a century ago, The Chatham Rabbits.

Lovette's musical prowess and songwriting success has earned him performances at such esteemed music festivals such as Merlefest and Bristol Rhythm & Roots, while his sophomore recording, "Scatter & Gather", boasts a who's who of musical guests from the likes of Mipso and Mandolin Orange.

In addition to the main-stage acts, Songcatchers will also include a "community picking" session at 2:45pm and welcomes any budding musicians, young and old, to join in the fun. A local opening act will take stage next at 3:30pm, with the headliner promptly at 4:00pm. Tickets for this special event are \$20 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under and \$10 for Annual and Federal pass holders.

To purchase advance tickets, please visit www.cradleofforestry.com. Tickets available for purchase on-site each event weekend at the Cradle of Forestry and at the Pisgah Ranger District Visitor Center at the entrance to Pisgah National Forest. In the event of inclement weather, the first 70 ticket holders will be moved indoors, while the remaining tickets will be refunded. For general questions on Songcatchers or the Cradle of Forestry, please call 828-877-3130.

About FIND Outdoors

FIND Outdoors, formerly the Cradle of Forestry in America Interpretive Association, is a 49-year-old 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Pisgah Forest, NC. We serve over 850,000 visitors annually with a mission that promotes educational, recreational and interpretive opportunities about forest and water resources, natural history and the Cradle of Forestry in America. FIND Outdoors proudly manages campgrounds, visitor centers, sales outlets and educational facilities in four National Forests in North Carolina, Georgia and Indiana and the Northwest Trading Post on the Blue Ridge Parkway. FIND accomplishes its mission by providing exceptional outdoor experiences through partnership opportunities for the health, safety and education of all visitors to local and regional public and private lands.