

Balsam Mountain Preserve is a private housing community located just outside Sylva, NC in the Great Balsam mountains. The Preserve is approximately 4,400 acres in total; of this, approximately 3,300 acres are protected through a conservation easement with the North American Land Trust.

The elevation of the Preserve ranges from approximately 2700 to 5400 feet. Forest types represented include acidic and rich cove, northern hardwood, montane oak-hickory, high elevation red oak, chestnut oak, and boulderfield forests. Forest stands range in age from approximately 30 to just over 100 years old, with the majority in the 90-year range.

There are four primary streams on the Preserve (Dark Ridge, Sugarloaf, Cashie Branch, and Licklog Creek); of these, all but Dark Ridge have their headwaters on the Preserve. The Preserve is also home to three NC Natural Heritage Areas of special interest: Willits Hornblende Slope, Cold Springs Gap, and Licklog Falls. A trail and forest road system of approximately 42 miles provides access throughout the conservation easement lands.

The Balsam Mountain Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit conservation organization nestled within the Preserve. The Trust takes an active role in the stewardship of the Preserve and provides leadership in education, conservation, and scientific research. For more information about access and research opportunities, please contact Amy Duggins, BMT's Community Science Coordinator, at aduggins@bmtrust.org.

