



PINECREST HIGH SCHOOL

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Advanced Placement Program

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for the work of the Little Nine Conservancy (LiNC) and its efforts to protect the 100 acres of land owned by the Southern Pines Elks Club known as the "Little Nine." In addition to the obvious environmental benefit of establishing a conservancy on this property, preserving the property as a natural 'greenspace' allows Pinecrest High School to continue to use it as a critical training ground for the youth distance running community in



Moore County. Specifically, we fully support the proposal for funding under the North Carolina Attorney General's 2020 Environmental Enhancement Grants' Land Acquisitions and Conservation Easements program submitted by the Little Nine Conservancy, Inc. ("LiNC"), a local 501(c)(3) non-profit conservation organization. We also fully support the proposed LiNC use of funds obtained under the EEG program to assist with its purchase of a conservation easement on approximately 100 acres of land owned by Elks Lodge 1692 at 280 Country Club Circle, Southern Pines in Moore County.

Hundreds of athletes from Pinecrest High School and its feeder schools, both public and private, use the property to train and compete every summer and fall in the sport of Cross-Country. As a sport, Cross-Country is not just about the running (though we do a lot of that!), it's the kind of sport where young men and women learn to develop healthy relationships with their bodies, with competition and with each other. We use the Little Nine as our 'classroom' for 7 months of the year to develop young men and women into healthy, confident and competent adults.

The Little Nine property has been a critical element of success over the past 20 years and helped us win 40 conference championships, 12 regional championships and a NC State Championship title. The number of athletes that have passed through our program, trained at the Little Nine and grown into outstanding adults' numbers in the thousands! Additionally, the property protected by LiNC's conservation easement would supplement an already robust collection of protected natural, agricultural and recreational land either adjoining or near to LiNC's project - Aberdeen's Ray's Mill Park, the 64-acre historic McDonald Farm, and the Paint Hill Annex to the Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve.

LiNC's EEG grant request presents a unique opportunity to both protect the environment and enhance opportunities for residents to enjoy nature. Consequently, the Pinecrest High School Cross-Country / Track & Field programs urge the EEG program to fund LiNC's 2020 grant request. We are 100% in support of the work of the LiNC and have committed to helping care for the property and look forward to it being a part of our future successes!

Very Respectfully,

Michael Devine

Head Coach

Mens' Cross-Country / Track and Field