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## The Cliffs at Mountain Park, the Carolinas

Ever since developer Jim Anthony founded the Cliffs Communities in 1991, his high-end private developments between Asheville, N.C., and Greenville, S.C., have been a true leader in sustainable development. Spread across an area called the Carolina Preserve, the Cliffs' eight low-density communities feature 30 miles of completed/groomed trails and more than 1,300 acres of dedicated open space and conservancy areas, not to mention numerous other eco-conscious measures. Of course, this green-friendly philosophy befits the Cliffs, which is surrounded by more than 1 million acres of protected land, including four national forests and 14 state parks.

Now, one of Anthony's newest developments, the Cliffs at Mountain Park, is positioned to take the company's green initiatives to its greatest heights yet with several unique endeavors. Partnered with renowned golfer Gary Player's new real estate group, Mountain Park calls for just 1,500 homes within the 5,000-acre property, including up to 1,000 acres of green space connected by a managed trail system, a nine-acre organic farm that serves all Cliffs communities and a "Green House"—an environmentally friendly home built by local experts Johnston Design Group that will serve as a model for members building at Mountain Park. Lots in the Gary Player Estates are expected to start in the mid-\$300,000s.

Once the Green House opens, an environmental services coordinator will be based there to educate Cliffs owners, members and prospective buyers on living green. It will also be used as a resource for all Mountain Park owners who wish to build their own green homes.



However, one of the most exciting measures introduced by Mountain Park is the Cliffs Center for Environmental Golf Research. Unveiled in October in conjunction with dozens of private-sector turfgrass companies and Clemson University, the new research center is the first-of-its-kind "living laboratory" located adjacent to the future Gary Player-designed golf course. Its goal: produce an environmentally friendly golf course and establish green space management and maintenance practices within the Cliffs' communities and beyond, setting an example for golf course development.

Located in Travelers Rest, S.C., the 5.6-acre research center includes laboratories, two experimental organic par-3 golf holes grown with both warm- and cool-season grasses, 40,000 square feet of turfgrass research plots, and office, meeting and living space for administrators and students.

One of Mountain Park's more ambitious projects is the ongoing restoration of the Saluda River, which borders the golf course. Entailing some 11,813 linear feet of creek, the \$5 million project will be South Carolina's largest creek restoration, according to Daniel Brazinski, who oversees maintenance for the Cliffs' eight championship courses.

"In five years, I'd like this center's findings to prove that, with a team of highly trained professionals, a golf course can be managed in a way that actually serves to enhance the environment," Brazinski says. "It is our hope to share the knowledge that we uncover along the way with those who are interested in using these new techniques to improve their property management practices, whether they be golf courses, athletic fields, green spaces or private lawns."

*The Cliffs at Mountain Park, 877.254.3371, [www.cliffscommunities.com](http://www.cliffscommunities.com)*