CARPATHIA®

NewStories from the Făgăraș Mountains

October 2026

FOR COMMUNITIES FOR NATURE

carpathia.org



© Dan Dinu

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Forest Conservation and Management

©Ionut Cretu



Forests are among our most important natural allies in the fight against climate change.

≈ 10%

of the European Union’s annual greenhouse gas emissions are absorbed and stored in trees and forest soils, according to the European Environment Agency.

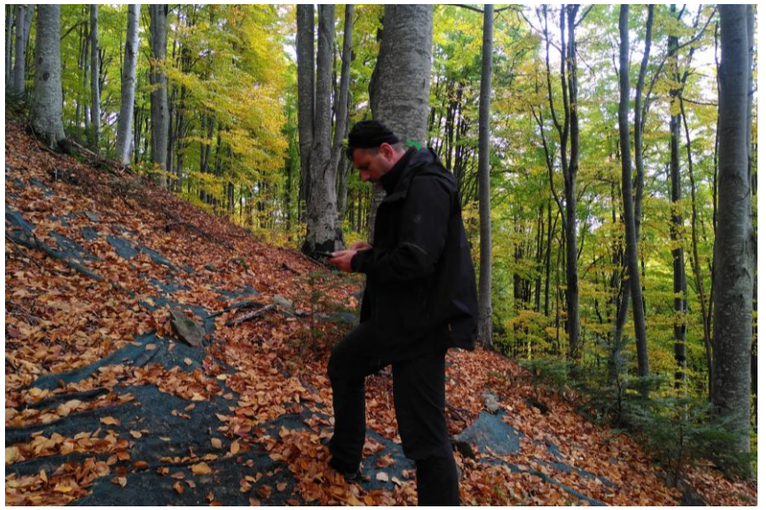
The forests we protect in the Făgăraș and Leaota Mountains help mitigate the effects of climate change, benefiting nature and the millions of people who depend on it.

In October, our colleagues continued patrolling and monitoring the forests.

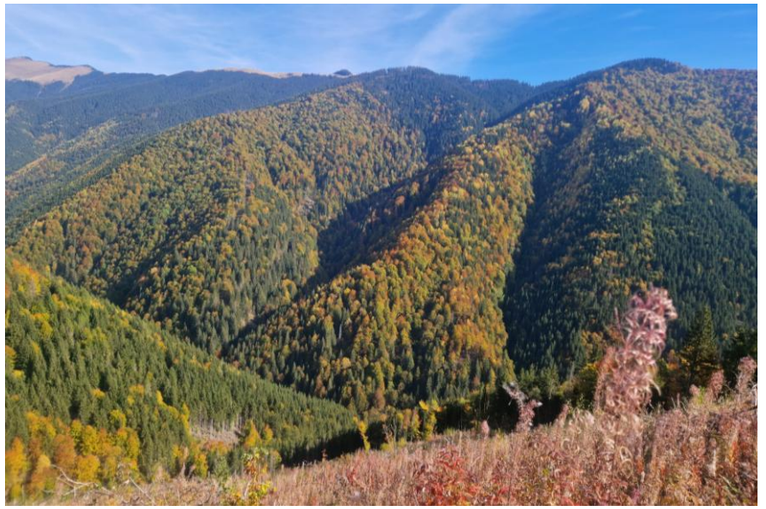
37 people

Foresters, forestry engineers and forest workers, most of them from local communities, look after the forests of the Făgăraș and Leaota Mountains every day.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









- We are preparing for situations where forests may be at risk.
- Over two days, some of our colleagues took part in a forest fire simulation exercise in Lerești, in the southern Făgăraș Mountains, organised by the Argeș County Inspectorate for Emergency Situations.

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Habitat Restoration



© Claudiu Țoanță





Before we plant

We assess how the forest regenerates naturally, analyse which species were previously present, and determine where and what we need to plant.

84

sampling points

At the Basa ecological restoration site, we assessed natural regeneration and found spruce, rowan, willow, poplar and elder.

34

sample plots

In Valea Rea, we found pioneer species, such as birch and willow, which are among the first to appear during forest recovery. Beech, fir and spruce were found in only a few locations.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Identification and collection of mycorrhizal fungi, © Flavius Răuță



Soil sample collection © Flavius Răuță

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Testing innovative methods for future forests

In partnership with the Faculty of Biology, University of Bucharest

We collected fungi, soil samples and seedling roots to study mycorrhizae – natural associations between fungi and tree roots that help trees absorb water and nutrients from the soil.

6
Trial plots

2
Planting methods

In three trial plots, we will use the conventional planting method. In the other three, we will add humus containing mycorrhizal fungi to the seedlings' roots.

We want to find out whether this method helps the seedlings grow better.

##OurFieldTeam

Flavius Răuță, Nursery Operations Manager

Flavius speaks about forests with the love and respect of someone who has known them since childhood. He grew up in Dragoslavele, where forests were part of everyone's daily life.

By the age of 14, he had decided to become a forester, eager to understand the world of plants and how nature works.

For seven years now, he has been part of the Carpathia team, working with our nursery staff to grow generations of seedlings for the future forests of the Făgăraș Mountains.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



“At Carpathia, we are always looking for new solutions, experimenting and learning from nature. Just as we are now doing with mycorrhizal fungi.

“In our nurseries, we prepare seedlings for the harsh conditions of mountain life.”

It is demanding, often unseen work that requires passion, precision and care.

From the stories of local elders and historical accounts, he knows that people once prayed and asked forgiveness before cutting down a tree. He wonders when we became so disconnected from nature.

“In the past, people could build a house from just two trees. Today, we need an entire forest to build a single home.”

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Wildlife Reintroductions



©Călin Șerban

What have the griffon vultures been up to in the Făgăraș Mountains?

26 griffon vultures

are acclimatising on Mount Căpitanu, in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.

Our colleagues check on the birds in person every day, monitoring their health and taking care of their feeding.

6 monitoring cameras

help us observe their behaviour in the aviary.

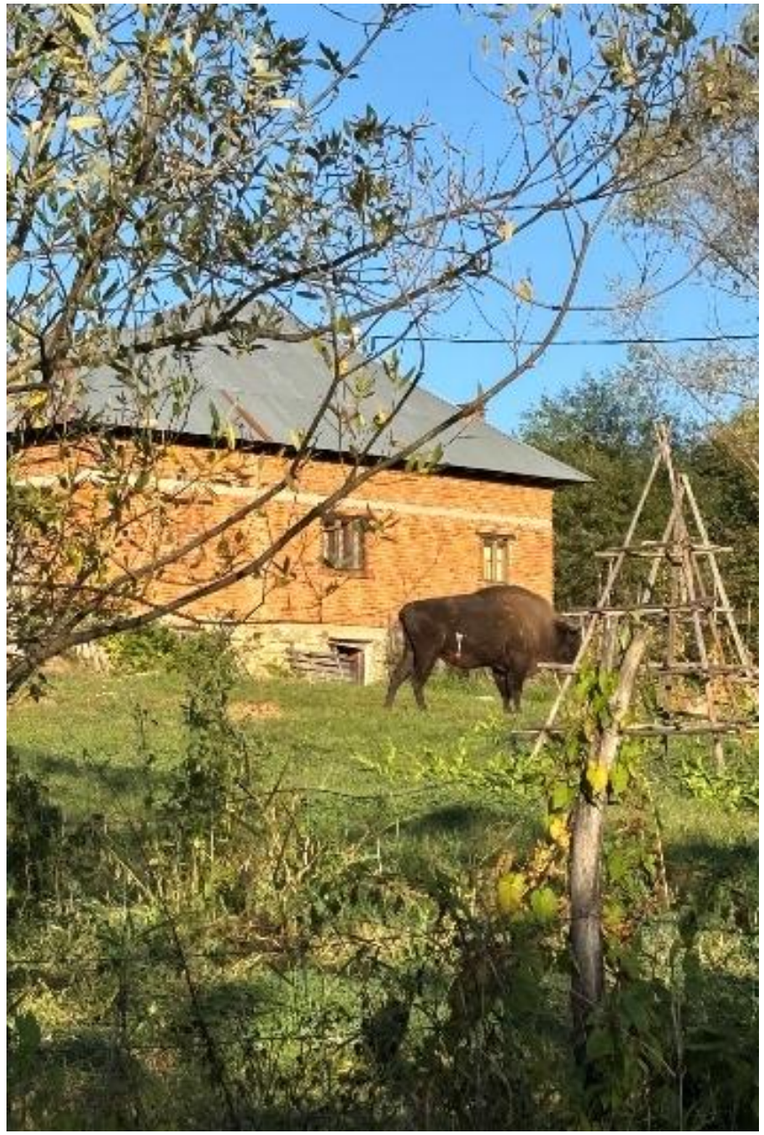
In October, we continued assessing potential feeding sites for vultures in the Făgăraș Mountains.





The reintroduction of vultures to Romania is being carried out with the support of ING România, the Vulture Conservation Foundation, Milvus Group, the local consortium of the communes of Lerești, Rucăr and Valea Mare Pravăț, and the Argeș County Veterinary and Food Safety Directorate (DSVSA Argeș). The project is co-funded through the LIFE REFAG programme.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia





The Bison at Brăduleț

3 electric fences

Installed to protect local households.

A bison was relocated

to the enclosure at Dobroneagu (in the southern Făgăraș Mountains), following our team's quick response.

We assessed the damage and agreed with the owner on compensation.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

How do beavers prepare for winter?



They stock up on food
They collect branches and twigs, storing them underwater in a natural “pantry”.

They prepare their lodges
They reinforce them with branches and mud, insulating them with dry grass and moss.

Like any hardworking family, the beavers have been busy preparing for winter. Everyone has been pitching in, and this year's kits have been lending a helping... tail!

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

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Human-Wildlife Conflict Reduction



© Sebastian Mastahac

Prevention

5 electric fences

installed or maintained around households in areas vulnerable to human–wildlife conflict.

5.55 tonnes

of animal waste collected and sent for incineration to reduce attractants that draw bears close to communities.





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Interventions

- Responded to 16 emergency calls received through the 112 emergency service.
- 1 bear captured and relocated but subsequently removed after repeatedly returning to the village despite numerous attempts to deter it.
- 20 interventions to drive wild boar away from gardens.



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Research and Impact Monitoring



© Barbara&Christoph Promberger



Lynx Monitoring Study

In October, **we began the second round of checks** at our monitoring sites.

The images collected help us identify individual lynx and update our database.

Brown Bear Diet Study

In October, our colleagues surveyed 11 of the 13 transects for the diet study and collected 10 new samples.

135

The second year of the study has now reached a total of 135 samples.



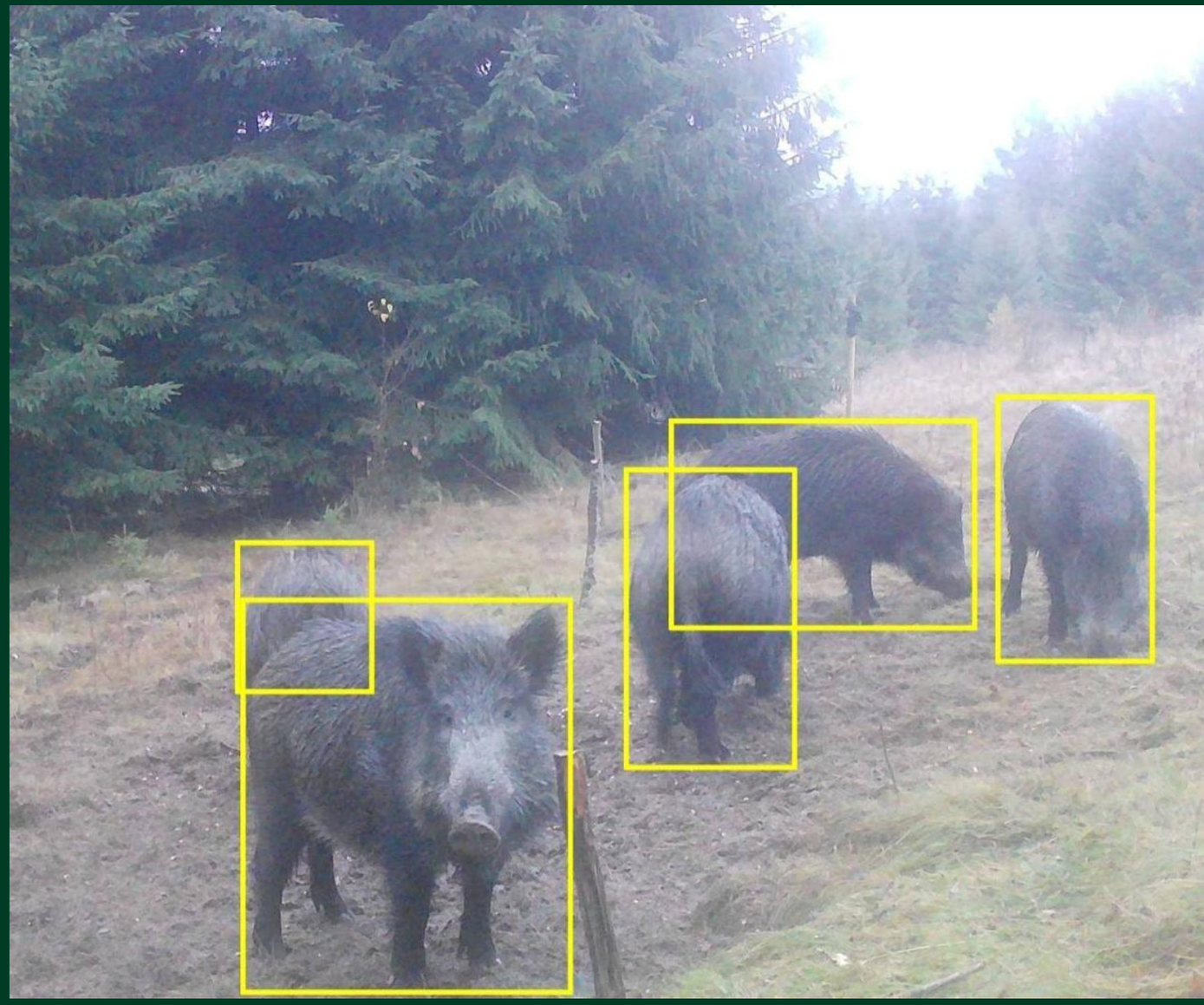


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Testing New Ways to Prevent Human–Wildlife Conflict

Together with our wildlife intervention teams, we have started testing an AI-powered deterrent system designed to identify bears, wild boar and red deer.

We want to find out how effective the system is and how animals respond to different types of deterrents, helping to keep them away from people.



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Human–Bear Relationships Are Not Just About Conflict

We attended the Tușnad Eco Bear Conference, which brought together **180 specialists from 12 countries**.

Andreea Rechițean, a student we worked with this spring, presented the findings of a study on human–bear conflicts, drawing in part on data from our project area.

The study also highlights the importance of positive interactions in understanding coexistence between humans and bears.





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Female Rangers on Our Team, Too!

Our colleague, ranger Ștefania Iancu, attended the European Female Ranger Workshop, held in Retezat National Park.

21 participants from

8 countries

discussed and worked on solutions to improve working conditions and create more opportunities for female rangers.

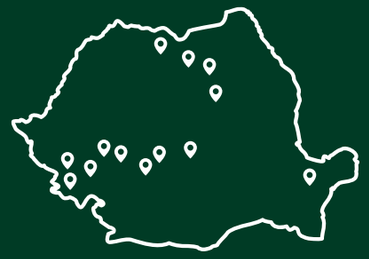


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Communication

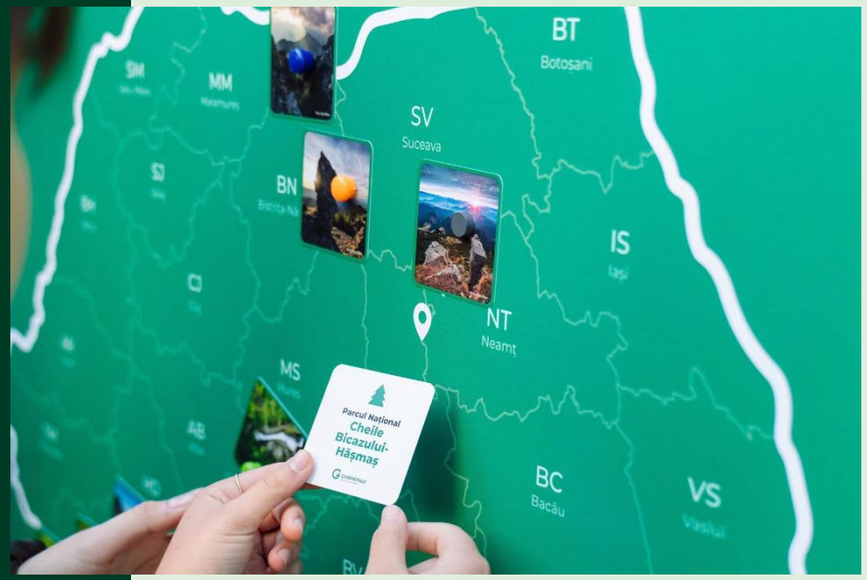


‘Parks for Generations’ Campaign

In Bucharest, we brought together representatives of national parks, public institutions and the media to discuss the importance of national parks for nature and local communities.

Discover Romania’s national parks at parcurinationale.ro and explore them with joy and respect for nature.





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia







© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

The Făgăraș Mountains Took Over the Bucharest Children's Comic Opera!

On 17th and 18th October, we brought the nature of the Făgăraș Mountains to the Comic Opera for Children in Bucharest through games, educational workshops and screenings of the documentary ‘Nature's Architects’.

~500
in the ‘Nature's Treasures’ treasure hunt

~800
at screenings of ‘Nature's Architects’

~50
at nature education workshops



Pedal and Explore the Făgăraș Mountains, Bike Tour – 1st Edition

60 km

of cycling with the Făgăraș Mountains alongside us and on the horizon.

200 cyclists

from across Romania, including the organising team.

We set off from Brukenthal Palace in Avrig, stopped at the Calendar Story in Porumbacu de Sus and visited the Badea Cârțan Museum in Cârțișoara.

The Cistercian Abbey in Cârța hosted our lunch, accompanied by local stories and a recital by a string quartet from the Sibiu State Philharmonic.

At the ‘Vatra Satului” Museum House in Săcădate, our hosts welcomed us with homemade treats and songs from the village grandmothers.

We finished the tour in Avrig, with the ‘Purtata Avrigului’ dance and a small market featuring local producers and craftspeople.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Cyclists: **150**

Distance cycled: **60 km**

Goulash portions served: **187**

Organisers: **37**

Places visited: **5**

The event was organised by Sibiu County Council and Foundation Conservation Carpathia, in partnership with Avrig Town Hall.

It is part of Sibiu County's strategy to develop sustainable, slow and green tourism and was implemented through the Slowdown project, funded by the Interreg Europe Programme 2021–2027.









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Nature's Role in Europe's Economy and Infrastructure

At **Climate Change Summit 2026**, together with Social Innovation Solutions, we organised a roundtable on nature as essential infrastructure for Europe.

Christoph Promberger, our Executive Director, and Mihai Zotta, our Conservation Director, discussed the benefits of nature conservation for people and communities with over 80 participants.







© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



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Community Relations

Good Things Happen When Communities Come Together!

2 applications under review



for the subsidised-interest loan programme supporting local entrepreneurs.

4 professional certifications



Through the '*MeșterEȘTI pentru comunitate programme*', which helps local craftspeople gain official recognition of their skills. More certifications are in progress.

30 participants



At the screening of 'Nature's Architects' in Galeșu, Brăduleț, Argeș County. Beyond major events, we are bringing the documentary to small villages, creating opportunities for dialogue with and within local communities.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Grants for Beekeepers in the Făgăraș Mountains

Together with Zentiva Romania, we support traditional and organic beekeeping in the Făgăraș Mountains.

4 grants × € 4,000

for equipment, upgrading beehives, organic certification and promoting bee products.

Application deadline: 27th November 2026

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Nature education

Nature Education Workshops at the Children's Comic Opera in Bucharest

50 children explored the nature of the Făgăraș Mountains through games and activities during four nature education workshops.

Junior Ranger

15 children from the programme explored the Šumava National Park in Czechia, learnt more about nature conservation and visited information and education centres. The trip also included a day in the Bavarian Forest National Park in Germany.

812 Curious Children Exploring Nature During Alternative School Week

- **187 children** at the ASTRA Museum in just 3 days
- **20 students** from Honterus High School in Brașov
- **550 children** at our visitor centres
- **55 children** from the school in Perișani, Vâlcea County

In November and December, we'll continue meeting more curious children and exploring nature together.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



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Conservation Enterprise Programme



TRAVEL CARPATHIA

Autumn is a time for stories from the Făgăraș Mountains

30

guests explored the Făgăraș Mountains on our guided tours in October.

46

visitors stayed with us at Equus Silvania.



©Diana Alexe



The last guests of the season have returned from the wildlife hides, but the stories from the trails remain.

We also took time for a trip of our own, bringing the whole Travel Carpathia team together at Comisu. And we're already preparing for the next season.



What Do Animal Tracks Tell Us About Life in the Forest?

A bear's paw print or a deer's hoofprint can reveal a great deal about life in the forest.

10 participants learnt how to read and interpret these clues during the Track & Sign workshop organised by Travel Carpathia at the Richita Educational Centre.

The workshop was open to nature guides and wildlife enthusiasts alike.

The workshop was led by David Wege, a certified Level 4 CyberTracker specialist.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia













© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

From Village Pantries to the 💚 of the City

In **October**, Roadele Munților Făgăraș brought local products to Bucharest at:

The Children's Comic Opera

The Climate Change Summit – local products at the **Community Breakfast**

The German Unity Day – Carpathia beer, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic

Meanwhile, a new Local Gastronomic Point was authorised through our programme in Mărunți, Lerești, in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









Roadele Munților Făgăraș brings people together around the table.

Good food. Goodwill. Well-being.

Discover our Christmas gifts!

© Fundația Conservation Carpathia

Results

4,913,229

trees planted

79,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

353 people from local communities

earn income from CARPATHIA project activities

28,679 ha

of forest under permanent protection and safeguarded for future generations

10,839

students and teachers involved in environmental education projects

>30

local producers are part of the Roadele Munților Făgăraș initiative

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CARPATHIA®

FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION CARPATHIA

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How can you help?

Get in touch and let's discuss ways that you can get involved, as an individual and/or as a company.

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