

Western Stream Initiative Grants Report

Statutory Authority: G.S. 143-215.72(d)(13)
Due Date: November 1, 2021

Receiving Entities:

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources
Fiscal Research Division

Submitting Entity:

NC Department of Environmental Quality

Department of Environmental Quality & Department of Natural & Cultural Resources
FY 20-21 Report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee
On Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources
As Required By Session Law 2020-18, Section 13

The North Carolina General Assembly has appropriated funds to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR). Funds appropriated to DEQ are administered by the NC Division of Water Resources through the Water Resources Development Grant Program (WRDGP). Funds appropriated to DNCR are administered through the North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF - formerly known as the Clean Water Management Trust Fund). Funds have been used to provide the state cost share of stream restoration projects funded through the Natural Resources Conservation's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) that are part of the Western North Carolina Stream Initiative (WNCSI). Session Law 2020-18, Section 13.(c) requires DEQ and DNCR to report the 10 performance management measures listed in Section 13.(a). This report is intended to address these specific measures.

Currently the NCLWF has two active contracts and one draft contract with the Resource Institute Inc. These contracts provide environmental services for the WNCSI portion of North Carolina's participation in the federal EQIP. The scope of work for these contracts is for the design and construction of stream restoration projects.

Unlike the majority of NCLWF's contracts for stream restoration the WNCSI initiative contracts were developed as "Regional Projects" prior to 2021. This meant that specific criteria were set to target streams for restoration, but specific project sites were not detailed in the contract. Lists of project sites were not fully developed until after NCLWF grants had been awarded. Regional projects allowed project managers the flexibility to approach multiple landowners and negotiate restoration options when seeking projects sites that would meet both NCLWF criteria and EQIP program needs. In effect, NCLWF approved WNCSI projects in general, based upon specific criteria, and then reviewed each project site upon receipt of requests for reimbursement of funds. In the 2021 NCLWF grant review cycle, Resource Institute Inc. did not request funding for a "regional" WNCSI project but instead submitted two applications for site specific stream restoration projects.

Currently the WRDGP has 11 active contracts with Resource Institute Inc. and BREC, PA to provide environmental services for the WNCSI portion of North Carolina's participation in EQIP. Fourteen contracts have been closed out since the preparation of last year's FY19-20 report in September 2020 and the performance measures for these projects are included as well. The scope of work for these contracts is for the administration, design and construction of stream restoration projects.

The WRDGP administers WNCSI projects on an individual project and contract basis, unlike the NCLWF's "Regional Projects" contracting model. Therefore, significant differences are apparent in some of these performance metrics. The most significant difference in WRDGP reporting is that Items 1-6 were reported as an average of the 25 contracted projects while Items 7-10 were reported individually for the fourteen projects that were completed after the preparation of last year's report. This was done because: 1.) estimating figures for incomplete projects would be speculative and inaccurate because estimated project costs can differ significantly from final project costs; and 2.) some of the performance measures requested are only provided to DEQ upon project completion.

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In summary, both agencies have improved coordination, implemented more robust performance measures and established policies that are consistent with Session Law 2020-18, Section 13. These actions ensure more accurate grant tracking, administration and implementation of WNCSI projects. Below is a summary table with data for each of the 10 required performance measures which includes footnotes for interpreting this information.

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Summary Table of Performance Measures

Performance Measure #		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)			(5)	(6)	(7)				(8)	(9)	(10)	
Grant Program ¹	Grant #	Time to Issue & Act Upon Grant Application (Months)	Time to Process Requests For Payment ³	Cost Per Grant Administered	Applications Reviewed	Applications Approved	Applications Denied/Withdrawn	Administered Grants as of 9-24-21	Grant Dollars Administered	Permitting	Site Assessment, Design, Engineering	Management & Engineering	Construction ⁴	Total Project Costs ⁴	Total Linear Feet of Stream Restored In Each Year	Cost Per Linear Foot Of Restored Stream	Reduction In Sediment Loading Achieved (lbs./yr.)
NCLWF	2016-421 (Closed)	9	10 working days	\$814	1	1	0	1	\$450,000	\$10,000	\$40,000	\$21,737	\$225,000	\$900,000	9,412	\$42	3,188,235
NCLWF	2017-420	7	10 working days	\$814	1	1	0	1	\$500,000	\$5,000	\$143,058	\$23,942	N/A	\$2,170,000	11,765	\$42	4,287,582
NCLWF	2018-418	10	10 working days	\$814	1	1	0	1	\$425,000	\$10,000	\$120,000	\$28,000	N/A	\$1,416,667	10,000	\$42	3,612,500
NCLWF	2019-423 (Not Contracted)	8	N/A	N/A	1	0	1	0	\$0	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	NA	NA	NA
NCLWF	2020-422 (Not Contracted)	8	NA	\$840	1	1	0	1	\$400,000	\$25,000	\$200,000	\$12,500	N/A	\$1,049,216	5,500	\$73	4,454,545
NCLWF	2021-419 (Not Contracted)	9	NA	\$587	1	1	0	1	\$262,000	\$10,000	\$112,000	\$20,000	\$120,000	\$712,000	3,650	\$72	2,956,198
WRDG	All ²	4	30 calendar days	\$1,035	9	8	1	25	\$3,376,655	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
WRDG	76685	10	10 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$146,050	\$22,736	\$68,207	\$55,108	\$331,000	\$477,050	3,093	\$154	1,062,000
WRDG	7972	3	5 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$128,671	\$18,000	\$63,556	\$47,115	\$246,229	\$374,900	1,470	\$255	384,400
WRDG	7797	4	16 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$95,327	\$15,600	\$42,400	\$27,500	\$129,327	\$275,712	885	\$312	60,000
WRDG	7796	4	5 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$146,536	\$15,750	\$47,250	\$38,536	\$237,000	\$401,211	1,675	\$240	61,000
WRDG	7794	4	4 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$186,000	\$28,125	\$84,375	\$45,000	\$200,000	\$498,825	1,325	\$376	140,000
WRDG	7351	6	8 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$56,197	\$34,833	\$109,107	\$16,500	\$322,921	\$721,368	1,627	\$443	236,380
WRDG	7948	10	9 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$289,500	\$37,975	\$113,625	\$66,500	\$285,500	\$878,930	3,330	\$264	372,000
WRDG	7673	10	12 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$110,368	\$17,500	\$52,500	\$40,341	\$170,000	\$359,716	1,375	\$262	78,000
WRDG	7669	10	5 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$80,769	\$12,000	\$38,077	\$30,692	\$203,000	\$559,524	1,755	\$319	274,000
WRDG	7356	4	6 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$122,660	\$3,365	\$80,752	\$38,546	\$257,850	\$382,718	2,205	\$174	1,242,000
WRDG	7672	10	6 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$226,052	\$35,240	\$105,719	\$82,504	\$400,000	\$775,212	3,750	\$207	148,000
WRDG	7978	4	14 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$205,451	\$15,000	\$100,000	\$10,500	\$218,951	\$410,902	1,711	\$240	276,400
WRDG	7969	4	8 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$97,190	\$6,000	\$70,000	\$5,900	\$79,000	\$193,800	777	\$249	125,400
WRDG	7816	4	32 calendar days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$334,753	\$20,000	\$114,500	\$20,000	\$401,006	\$669,506	2,960	\$226	478,000
Footnotes																	
¹ Prior to 2021, NCLWF contracts were comprised of multiple project sites administered and aggregated on a regional basis.																	
² WRDG Performance Measures 1-6 are reported as aggregated values among active grants as of 6/12/20 ratification of SL 2020-18. Measures 7-10 are only reported for projects that were active on 6/12/20 but closed out after 9/28/20 (the date of the first FY19-20 report submission).																	
³ Calculated average based on when all required documents were received.																	
⁴ N/A (Not Applicable/Available) listed here because projects are ongoing and construction invoices have not been received.																	