

LOCAL INITIATIVES & VOLUNTARY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

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IN THE NEW RIVER BASIN

LOCAL INITIATIVES

The focus of this Section is to highlight some of the local initiatives that have been planned or implemented throughout this planning cycle. This Section also includes a list of watershed groups and natural resource agencies focused on improving water quality across the basin. There may be more of these groups and agencies active within the basin and as DWQ becomes aware of water quality improvement or protection activities, they will be updated within this Section. Please contact the [New River Basin Planner](#) to have your program/projects listed here.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL INITIATIVES

Local initiatives to protect water quality are essential to any community because local citizens make decisions that affect change in their own communities. There are a variety of limitations local initiatives can overcome including limited state government budgets and staff resources, minimal regulations for land use management, rulemaking processes and many others. Local organizations and agencies are able to combine professional expertise in a watershed, thus allowing groups to holistically understand the challenges and opportunities of different water quality efforts. Involving a wide array of people in water quality projects also brings together a wide range of knowledge and interests and encourages others to become involved and invested in these projects.

By working in coordination across jurisdictions and agency lines, more funding opportunities may be available. This will potentially allow local entities to do more work and be involved in more activities because their funding sources are diversified. The most important aspect of these local endeavors is that the more localized the project, the better the chances for success.

The collaboration of local efforts are key to water quality improvements. There are good examples of local agencies and groups using these cooperative strategies throughout the basin and specific groups and projects are discussed within each of the 10-digit watershed write ups in the three Subbasin Chapters. Some of these groups are listed below. DWQ applauds the foresight and proactive response of local watershed groups and local governments to address any number of water quality problems.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW RIVER

Land Protection

NCNR protects land critical for preserving important wildlife habitat, rare and endangered species, cornerstones of biodiversity, and working farmland along the New River and its tributaries, through voluntary acquisitions and conservation easements.

Restoration

NCNR works with private landowners to stabilize eroding stream banks, restore riparian buffers to preventing further erosion, and to create healthy riparian habitat for wildlife and aquatic life.

Advocacy

NCNR works to increase citizens' capacity to defend and protect the New River watershed, by working with local citizens to identify and address specific land and water use activities that threaten the New River's health, wildlife, and scenery.

New River Builder Program

The National Committee for the New River's New River Builder Program was begun in 1998 to establish or improve riparian buffers in the New River Basin. Under CWMTF 2007-407, 14.15 miles of streambank were planted with 112,870 livestakes and 1,060 trees and potted shrubs.

Sites are evaluated for suitability for planting. Severely eroded streambanks are not suitable as River Builder sites. All sites are planted with livestakes of native shrubs, potted native shrubs, and native trees. During a visit with the owner, type and location of shrubs and trees are discussed. River access points are marked and owner questions are addressed. Landowners sign an agreement for each site to leave the plantings undisturbed for 15 years. There is also a small cost share fee charged for each site. A test plot of 100 livestakes is marked at planting and survival monitoring is done at each site annually after the leaves have fallen, in autumn or winter.

To date NCNR has planted almost 70 miles of riparian buffer, including 600,000 livestakes and 18,000 trees and shrubs. Since 1998, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund has funded the River Builder Program almost continuously.

FIGURE 6-1: RESULTS OF THE NCNR'S NEW RIVER BUILDER PROGRAM (LEFT: 2005; RIGHT: 2009)



*Pictures Provided by NCNR's Lynn Caldwell

ALLEGHANY COUNTY/NRCS

Between 2008 and 2010, the Alleghany County Natural Resource Conservation Service has successfully spent over one million dollars of funding from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to protect water quality and improving animal health in Alleghany County. Listed below are some of the accomplishments the County has completed in those three years:

- 💧 20+ wells;
- 💧 5 waste storage structures;
- 💧 4 agricultural handling facilities;
- 💧 100+ watering tanks for live stock;
- 💧 Several miles of cattle exclusion fencing;
- 💧 Several miles of pipeline installed to place tanks away from streams;
- 💧 200+ acres of true Prescribed Grazing with stockpile winter forage;
- 💧 Several Stream Crossings;
- 💧 Heavy-Use areas protected;
- 💧 2500 feet of stream restoration; and
- 💧 Wetlands created and/or restored.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY ENVIROTHON

Alleghany County has been very active in the North West Envirothon competition since its inception in 1999. The first Alleghany County Envirothon was held March 2008 as a way to provide additional training and experience for local teams entering the thirteen county NW Envirothon Competition held each spring in Wilkes County. There are 52 teams registered for the 2011 regional event to be held March 31, 2011.

The spirit of competition stimulates student's interests in environmental concerns and cultivates student's desire to learn more about our natural resources and environmental issues and motivates them to further develop their skills and grow into environmentally-aware, action-oriented adults. Teams are tested on their knowledge and understanding of local natural resource issues in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current issues.

The "Outdoor Masters" from Glade Creek Elementary and the "Green Machine" from Alleghany high school competed with 49 middle school and 51 high school teams in the North Carolina State Envirothon held April 23-24, 2010 at Cedarock Park in Alamance County. They moved on to the state level competition after winning one of the top seven seats in the Area 2 NW Envirothon competition held March 25, 2010 at the McGee Educational Resource Center in Wilkesboro, NC.

FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

CONSTRUCTION GRANTS & LOANS (CG&L)

The NC Construction Grants and Loans (CG&L) Section of DWQ provides grants and loans to local government agencies for the construction, upgrades and expansion of wastewater collection and treatment systems. As a financial resource, the section administers five major programs that assist local governments. Of these, two are federally funded programs administered by the state, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program and the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG). The STAG is a direct congressional appropriations for a specific "special needs" project within NC. The High Unit Cost Grant (SRG) Program, the State Emergency Loan (SEL) Program and the State Revolving Loan (SRL) Program are state funded programs, with the later two being below market revolving loan money. The Section also received an additional

Capitalization Grant authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 in the amount of \$70,729,100. These funds are administered according to existing SRF procedures. All projects must be eligible under title VI of the Clean Water Act. For more information, please see the [CG&L](#) website. No funds were awarded in the New River Basin between 2003 and 2010.

SECTION 319 - GRANT PROGRAM

Section 319 of the Clean Water Act provides grant money for nonpoint source demonstration and restoration projects. Through annual base funding, there is approximately \$450,000 available for demonstration and education projects across the state. An additional \$2 million is available annually through incremental funds for restoration projects statewide. All projects must provide non-federal matching funds of at least 40% of the project's total costs. Project proposals are reviewed and selected by the North Carolina Nonpoint Source Workgroup made up of state and federal agencies involved in regulation or research associated with nonpoint source pollution. Information on the North Carolina [Section 319 Grant Program](#) application process is available online. Descriptions of [current projects](#) and general Section 319 Program information are available online.

Many 319 projects are demonstration projects and educational programs that allow for the dissemination of information to the public through established programs at NC State University (NCSU) and the NC Cooperative Extension Service. Other projects fund stream restoration activities that improve water quality. Between 2003 and 2010, there were two projects in the New River basin funded through the Section 319 Program. Managed by NCSU, the goal of one project – Anaerobic Biotreatment of Acid Mine Drainage at Ore Knob Mine – was to develop a watershed restoration plan for a watershed impaired by acid mine drainage from an abandoned copper and zinc mine. The watershed characterization included surface water and groundwater monitoring and extensive characterization of the mine tailings pile. The project also evaluated several alternative approaches to the management and cleanup of the tailings pile and the acid mine drainage being released from the pile to achieve required pollutant load reductions.

The second 319 project was coordinated by the National Committee for the New River, which restored the headwaters of an unnamed tributary to the Little Phoenix River in Ashe County. The project successfully restored the stream dimension and profile to 315 linear feet of the tributary, allowing the sediment load to be properly transported through the stream reach during high flow events. This restoration included the replacement of a culvert with a steel beam and concrete bridge. Stream banks were stabilized to prevent further erosion, with a 99% survival rate observed at the end of the project period for the trees and shrubs that were planted. Benthic habitat in the stream was greatly improved through this restoration project, as indicated by monitoring conducted by the Division of Water Quality.

Table 6-1 list the most current 319 contracts in the New River Basin. More information can be found about these contracts and the [319 Grant Program](#) on their website.

TABLE 6-1: 319 GRANT CONTRACTS IN THE NEW RIVER BASIN BETWEEN 2003 & 2008

FISCAL YEAR	CONTRACT NUMBER	NAME	DESCRIPTION	10-DIGIT HUC	AGENCY	FUNDING
2004	711	Little Phoenix Creek Stream Restoration	Stream Restoration	0505000101	National Committee for New River	\$65,400
2005	EW06045	Anaerobic Biotreatment of Acid Mine Drainage of Ore Knob Mine	Innovative BMP	0505000102	NCSU	\$153,194
Total Funded:						\$ 218,594

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

The [Division of Soil and Water Conservation](#) cooperates with federal and local partners to administer a comprehensive statewide program to protect and conserve the state's soil and water resources. The division serves as staff for the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Commission to help deliver conservation programs at the local level. The division provides leadership and assistance in locally-led conservation to the state's 96 local soil and water conservation districts and their state association by providing financial, technical and educational assistance to districts, landowners, agricultural producers and the general public. The division delivers programs in nonpoint source pollution management, cost share for agricultural best management practices, technical and engineering assistance, soil surveys, conservation easements, and environmental and conservation education.

Their mission is to provide programs, technical services and educational outreach promoting voluntary natural resource management and conservation on the private lands of North Carolina through a non-regulatory, incentive-driven approach.

Locally, the Alleghany Soil and Water Conservation District has allocated a total of \$618,757 in cost shared funding to improve water quality in the New River basin between 2006 and 2010 with the installation of several Agricultural Cost Share Program BMPs and Community Cost Share Program BMPs which are listed out below.

Agricultural Cost Share Program (ACSP)

The [ACSP](#) is a voluntary program to protect water quality by installing best management practices on agricultural lands. This approach is supported by financial incentives, technical and educational assistance, research, and regulatory programs provided to farmers by local soil and water conservation districts.

Alleghany County Soil & Water Conservation District

Conservation Cover BMPs:

- 💧 399 ac. BMPs to decrease erosion by improving ground cover (pasture renovation, cropland conversion, critical area stabilization, conservation tillage)

Stream Protection BMPs:

- 💧 21,435 ft livestock exclusion
- 💧 48 troughs or tanks with heavy use areas
- 💧 13 wells
- 💧 2365 ft agricultural road repair
- 💧 7 stream crossings
- 💧 7 spring developments

Waste Management BMPs:

- 💧 8 feed/waste storage structures with heavy use areas
- 💧 9 roof run off/stormwater management systems

Benefits include:

- 💧 2070 acres affected
- 💧 1632 tons of soil saved
- 💧 5386 lbs of nitrogen managed/saved
- 💧 3485 lbs of phosphorus managed/saved

Alleghany County adopted the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program in 2003 which is administered by the Soil & Water District. As of February 2011, the county has 9,932 acres of land enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program. The purpose of this program is to promote

the health, safety, rural agricultural values, and general welfare of the County, and more specifically, increase identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life; encourage the economic and financial health of farming; increase protection from undesirable, non-farm development; and increase the protection of farms from nuisance suits and other negative impacts on properly managed farms.

More information about this program can be found in the Alleghany County [Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Ordinance](#) online.

Community Conservation Assistance Program

CCAP is a voluntary, incentive-based program designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on urban, suburban and rural lands not directly involved with agriculture production. Eligible landowners may include homeowners, businesses, schools, parks and publicly owned lands. How rapid urbanization affects water quality becomes important as North Carolina's land use continues to change. CCAP can help educate landowners on water quality, stormwater management and retrofit practices to treat stormwater runoff.

Alleghany County

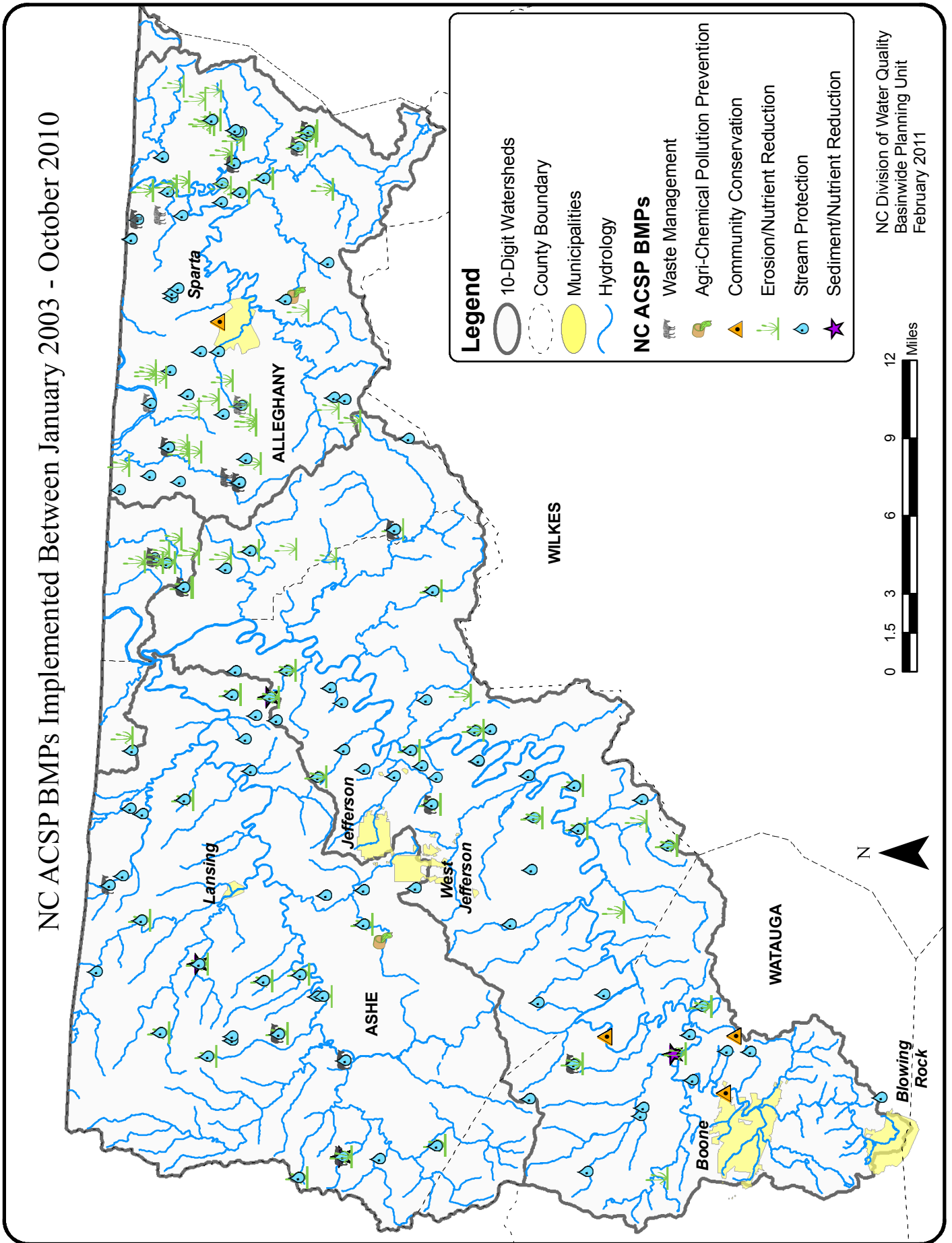
Through the Community Conservation Assistance Program the district is helping to treat stormwater runoff on 1,826,850 sq/ft of impervious surface in the Bledsoe Creek priority watershed with BMPs like critical area stabilization and a stormwater wetland project through partnering with the Town of Sparta to complete. These practices will affect 500 people in the Town of Sparta by reducing N and P from the stream. The Alleghany district is also assisting in installation of pet waste receptacles in the Sparta Town Park to further protect Bledsoe Creek/Little River/New River.

The district is partnering with the local high school shop class to convert 55 gallon barrels used by local businesses into rain barrels for homeowners. This will help by treating the roof runoff and keeping the plastic barrels out of the landfill and out of the river, where they sometimes end up.

The Alleghany District also partnered with the Ecosystems Enhancement Program to find stream restoration projects on several sub-watersheds in the county. Projects on Crab Creek, Glade Creek and Little Pine Creek are currently under construction or near completion. The district is working with EEP to find willing landowners for a new project in one of the priority areas identified in the Bledsoe Creek Watershed Management Plan which was completed in 2007. (More information on projects such as benefits, acres of easement, etc. should be available through EEP.)

The district has acquired a conservation easement on a farm on the New River and hopes to hold more easements that will allow for protection of the New River watershed.

FIGURE 6-2: NC ACSP BMPs IMPLEMENTED IN THE NEW RIVER BASIN BETWEEN 1-2003 & 10-2010



CLEAN WATER MANAGEMENT TRUST FUND (CWMTF)

Created in 1996, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) makes grants to local governments, state agencies and conservation non-profits to help finance projects that specifically address water pollution problems. The fund has made several investments in the New River Basin. Table 6-2 includes a list of recent (2003-2009) projects and their cost. These projects include several land acquisitions and restoration funding.

TABLE 6-2: CLEAN WATER MANAGEMENT TRUST FUND PROJECTS BETWEEN 2003 - 2009

ID	APPLICANT NAME	PURPOSE	AMOUNT FUNDED	TOTAL COST
2010D-010	Blue Ridge Conservancy - donated/ Long Branch Cr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$314,794
2010D-007	Blue Ridge Conservancy - donated/ Old Orchard	Mini-grant- Donated	\$19,000	\$68,500
2010D-005	National Committee for the New River - donated/ ,MacConnell Tract	Mini-grant- Donated	\$20,100	\$182,650
2010D-001	National Committee for the New River - donated/ Gentry Tract	Mini-grant- Donated	\$22,225	\$435,675
2010-414	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ Old Field Creek Stream Restoration	Restoration	\$95,100	\$208,165
2010-413	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ River Builder Project, New River	Restoration	\$285,852	\$307,000
2010-035	National Committee for the New River - Acq/ Darnell Tract,New River State Park, Roan Creek	Acquisition-Buffers	\$416,000	\$931,710
2010-004	Blue Ridge Conservancy - Acq/ Braun Tract, Big Laurel Creek	Acquisition-Buffers	\$1,621,000	\$3,819,713
2009D-017	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Tobin Tr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$24,975	\$278,384
2009D-015	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Black Tr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$23,800	\$205,350
2009D-014	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Baldrige Farm	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$86,750
2008S-003	West Jefferson, Town of - Storm Minigrant/ Planning/Little Buffalo Creek	Mini-grant- Stormwater	\$50,000	\$55,000
2008G-010	Watauga County - Mini/Greenway/Planning/ New River	Mini-grant- Greenway	\$35,000	\$42,000
2008G-005	Sparta, Town of - Greenway Planning Minigrant/ Bledsoe Cr	Other	\$35,000	\$44,000
2008D-014	Piedmont Land Conservancy - Donated Minigrant/ Davis Chapel Tr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$480,000
2008D-012	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Baldwin Tr/ Helton Cr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$20,700	\$406,600
2008D-004	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Black Tract/ UT Prathers Cr	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$1,385,000
2008-812	National Committee for the New River - Plan/ Rest/ Old Field Creek Restoration (Withdrawn)	Planning	\$24,000	\$34,400
2008-811	National Committee for the New River - Plan/ Rest/ Lambert-Leight Tracts, North Fork New River (Withdrawn)	Planning	\$25,000	\$45,800
2008-810	National Committee for the New River - Plan/ Rest/ Boone Greenway Restoration	Restoration	\$25,000	\$75,000

ID	APPLICANT NAME	PURPOSE	AMOUNT FUNDED	TOTAL COST
2008-711	Pilot View RC&D, Inc - Storm/ Town of Sparta BMPs and Master Plan	Stormwater	\$297,250	\$397,424
2008-420	Resource Institute, Inc - Rest/ Pine Orchard Creek Creek Restoration	Restoration	\$374,000	\$446,612
2008-409	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ NRSP Oliver Tract, South Fork New River	Restoration	\$152,000	\$165,700
2008-408	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ Jimmy Smith Park, Boone Creek	Restoration	\$55,000	\$73,040
2008-401	Appalachian State University - Rest/ Boone Creek Restoration	Restoration	\$422,400	\$1,067,727
2008-1011	National Committee for the New River - InnovSW/ Kraut Cr Urban SW Demo	Innovative Stormwater	\$136,000	\$148,000
2008-069	Sparta, Town of - Acq/ Bledsoe Creek Greenway	Acquisition-Buffers	\$200,000	\$240,491
2008-052	NC Wildlife Resources Commission - Acq/ Miller-Hufnagel Tracts, Ben Bolen Creek (Withdrawn)	Acquisition-Buffers	\$316,000	\$872,880
2008-047	NC Div Parks & Recreation - Acq/ Snake Mountain Tract, North Fork New River (Withdrawn)	Acquisition-Buffers	\$603,000	\$3,645,370
2008-022	High Country Conservancy - Acq/ Bluff Mountain, Buffalo Creek	Acquisition-Buffers	\$710,000	\$1,402,550
2008-002	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Acq/ Pond Mountain Tract, Big Horse Creek	Acquisition-Buffers	\$5,000,000	\$13,800,000
2007S-003	Boone, Town of - SStorm Minigrant/ South Fork New River	Mini-grant-Stormwater	\$50,000	\$62,000
2007D-005	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Peak Tract, S. Fork New River	Mini-grant- Donated	\$21,453	\$162,553
2007D-004	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Arrendell Tract, N. Fork New River	Mini-grant- Donated	\$21,607	\$165,607
2007D-003	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Earnhardt Tract, Grassy Creek (Withdrawn)	Mini-grant- Donated	\$22,334	\$412,834
2007D-002	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Caldwell Tract, S. Fork New River	Mini-grant- Donated	\$22,172	\$200,992
2007D-001	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Langer Tract, S. Fork New River	Mini-grant- Donated	\$23,241	\$326,241
2007-703	Boone, Town of - Storm/ Constructed Wetlands and Retrofits, South Fork New River	Stormwater	\$178,000	\$280,000
2007-418	Resource Institute, Inc - Rest/ Pine Orchard Creek Restoration	Restoration	\$146,000	\$236,000
2007-407	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ River Builder Program, New River Tributaries	Restoration	\$238,000	\$253,336
2007-406	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ East Fork New River Restoration	Restoration	\$189,962	\$233,307
2007-405	National Committee for the New River - Rest/ Boone Creek Restoration	Restoration	\$27,000	\$35,912
2006D-033	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Old Fields Farm, Elk Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$1,415,000

ID	APPLICANT NAME	PURPOSE	AMOUNT FUNDED	TOTAL COST
2006D-032	High Country Conservancy - Donated Minigrant/ Reninger Tract, Winkler Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$415,000
2006D-023	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Koontz Farm, Stillhouse Branch	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$1,480,000
2006B-014	National Committee for the New River - Acq/ Main Tracts, North Fork New River and Mine Branch (Transferred to Div of Parks and Rec	Acquisition-Buffers	\$116,000	\$358,415
2006A-819	Sparta, Town of - Stormwater Minigrant/ Stormwater Drainage Study, Bledsoe Creek	Mini-grant- Stormwater	\$27,000	\$30,000
2005D-021	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Coffey Tract, Aho Branch	Mini-grant- Donated	\$20,000	\$300,000
2005D-017	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Tobin Farm, South Beaver Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$325,000
2005D-015	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Tate Farm II, Ripshin Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$565,000
2005D-007	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Smith Farm	Mini-grant- Donated	\$20,300	\$151,300
2005D-006	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Kemp Tract, North Fork New River	Mini-grant- Donated	\$18,000	\$39,000
2005D-004	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Davis Tract, Little Horse Creek *	Mini-grant- Donated	\$24,000	\$124,000
2005D-003	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Clark/Burleson Tract, Little Horse Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$24,000	\$174,000
2005D-001	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Almond Farm, Piney Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$15,000	\$235,000
2005B-028	NC Div Parks & Recreation - Acq/ Bower and Darnell Tracts, South Fork New River	Acquisition-Buffers	\$2,270,000	\$6,561,000
2005A-805	National Committee for the New River - Plan/ Rest/ Boone Creek Greenway and Restoration Plan	Planning	\$30,000	\$54,000
2004D-013	High Country Conservancy - Donated Minigrant/ Horseshoe Farm Tract	Mini-grant- Donated	\$24,052	\$361,552
2004D-009	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ McCarthy Tract, Little Glade Creek *	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$207,000
2004D-005	National Committee for the New River - Donated Minigrant/ Joyner Tract, Big Horse Creek	Mini-grant- Donated	\$23,200	\$99,200
2004D-002	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Chanlett Tract, Stillhouse Branch	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$308,000
2004D-001	Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust - Donated Minigrant/ Stack Tract	Mini-grant- Donated	\$25,000	\$348,000
2004B-027	Nature Conservancy, The - Acq/ Trout Club Tract, Long Hope Creek	Acquisition-Buffers	\$2,967,000	\$3,418,000
2003A-016	National Committee for the New River - Acq/ New River Heights Tract, South Fork (Withdrawn)	Acquisition-Buffers	\$396,000	\$714,050
Total Amounts			\$18,222,723	\$51,717,584