

# Chapter 13

## Local Initiatives

### Winyah Rivers Foundation

The mission of the Winyah Rivers Foundation is to protect, preserve, monitor, and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed, focusing on local activism through the Waccamaw Riverkeeper® program. The Waccamaw Riverkeeper® is licensed by the Waterkeeper Alliance, Inc. and housed within Coastal Carolina University's Center for Marine and Wetland Studies.

Currently the Waccamaw Riverkeeper® is engaged with stakeholders in North Carolina to implement two new programs. The first would expand an existing Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program upstream into North Carolina to include sampling locations along the Waccamaw River and in Lake Waccamaw. Proposed analyticals include conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature, turbidity, nutrients (ammonia, nitrate, nitrate) and bacteria (fecal coliform). Volunteer water monitors will be trained and then conduct semimonthly monitoring at identified locations in the river and lake. Data will be collated with South Carolina data in a publicly accessible database available through Coastal Carolina University's website. The second new program is to establish a Muddy Water Watch program to the Waccamaw River watershed in North Carolina. Volunteers will be trained to identify and report occurrences of erosion and sedimentation that are in violation of State law and that pose a threat to water quality. The Riverkeeper® is also working with stakeholder to establish a paddle trail on the river to promote recreation and awareness of water quality issues. More information can be obtained from <http://www.winyahrivers.org> and contacting the Waccamaw Riverkeeper®, Christine Ellis, at [wrk@coastal.edu](mailto:wrk@coastal.edu).

### Waccamaw Watershed Academy

In 2004, Coastal Carolina University established the Waccamaw Watershed Academy (WWA) under the aegis of the Center for Marine and Wetland Studies (CMWS) to meet local needs for expertise in the areas of watershed and wetland science and management. The mission of the academy is to deliver educational, research, and public outreach services to the university and the local region. For more information about the Waccamaw Watershed Academy visit <http://www.coastal.edu/wwa/>.

### Sand Hills Area Land Trust

The Sandhills Area Land Trust (SALT) is a community-based, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves Moore, Richmond, Scotland, Hoke, Cumberland, and Harnett counties in southeastern North Carolina. SALT works with private landowners to negotiate voluntary conservation agreements (Conservation Easements) on private property. In 2008, the organization was awarded a grant of \$661,000 to purchase a 209 acre conservation easement along Drowning Creek south of Pinebluff. In 2006, they received a grant from the CWMTF for \$153,000 to purchase a 50.8 acre easement along Naked Creek. For more information on the Sand Hills Area Land Trust and their conservation work in the basin visit <http://www.sandhillslandtrust.org/>.

### NC Coastal Land Trust

The North Carolina Coastal Land Trust is a non-profit organization formed in 1992 to help protect locally and regionally valuable natural areas and waters. Since its inception, the Coastal Land Trust has protected over 40,000 acres of barrier island beaches, riparian corridors, and other special natural areas. On September 9, 2008 the NC Coastal Land Trust purchased a landowner agreement for 296 acres in Columbus County along four miles of the Waccamaw River. This purchase was funded by the CWMTF and the Attorney General's Environmental Enhancement Grant Program. It will help to protect water quality and wildlife. For more information about the NC Coastal Land Trust visit <http://www.coastallandtrust.org/index.jsp>.

## The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy works around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. They administer several preserves throughout the Lumber Basin including over 18,000 acres along Juniper Creek and its tributaries recently purchased from International Paper, Inc., with help from a CWMTF Grant. This purchase doubled the amount of land protected by the Nature Conservancy in the basin to over 36,000 acres. These newly acquired lands help connect the Green Swamp Preserve to the Waccamaw River. For more information about the Nature Conservancy visit <http://www.nature.org/>.

## Friends of the Lake Waccamaw State Park

The Friends of Lake Waccamaw State Park (FLWSP) members and volunteers have been committed to the protection of water quality and the national significance for biological diversity on the park lands and in Lake Waccamaw as well as the Waccamaw River watershed since 1986. Initiatives include funding for projects to improve and support clean water in and around Lake Waccamaw and the Waccamaw River.

## Regional Councils of Government

Regional councils are multi-county planning and development agencies serving different areas of the state. Membership in these councils is voluntary. In North Carolina, 17 councils serve regions that share similar economic, physical and social characteristics. Their function is to aid, assist and improve the capabilities of local governments in administration, planning, fiscal management and development.

## Lumber River Council of Governments

The Lumber River Council of Governments services Bladen, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson, and Scotland counties and the 31 municipalities within them. For more information about the Lumber River COG visit <http://www.lrcog.dst.nc.us/>.

## Cape Fear Council of Governments

The Cape Fear Council of Governments services Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties. For more information about the Cape Fear COG visit <http://www.capefearcog.org/>.

## Cape Fear Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

The mission of the Cape Fear RC&D is to work cooperatively with individuals and groups to improve social, economic and environmental conditions, thereby enhancing the quality of life in Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties. In 2007 the Cape Fear RC&D conducted a debris removal project with a \$182,091 grant from the Division of Water Resources. For more information about the Cape Fear RC&D visit <http://www.capefearrcd.org>.

## Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaboration

Created in 2006, the Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaboration is a nonprofit partnership of organizations and individuals interested in protecting this region while balancing the needs of man and nature. Its mission is to develop and implement a community conservation vision to build awareness, protection and stewardship of the region's important natural resources. For more information about the Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaboration visit <http://www.capefeararch.org>.