

**N.C. Natural Heritage Trust Fund  
Spring 2008 Awards - Summary**

No.	Agency	Project Title	County	Award	Acres	Description
1	WRC	GMS Tract (Alligator River) - Final Phase	Tyrrell	\$2,000,000	2,025	The GMS Tract is located within the Alligator River watershed (part of the Pasquotank River Basin), of which a major portion is classified as an Outstanding Resources Water (ORW). Several of the major tributaries are identified as anadromous fish spawning areas and are designated as inland primary nursery sites by the WRC. Primary anadromous species include the blueback herring, alewife, hickory shad, American shad and striped bass. The annual economic return from these nationally important commercial and recreational fishery resources totals \$1 billion and plays a critical role in North Carolina's coastal economy. In addition, the tract supports red-cockaded woodpeckers, red wolves and black bears. The GMS Tract will be incorporated into the WRC's Alligator River Game Land Program. Total project is \$8.2 million with \$6.2 million confirmed (CWMTF \$4.2MM and NHTF \$1MM previously and Coastal Wetland Fish & Wildlife Grant \$1 MM) and large part of property already acquired with confirmed funds; this is the final phase. Total acreage will be 8,476 acres.
2	WRC	Chowan East (International Paper) Tract	Gates	\$1,114,222	715	Fee Simple acquisition of this significant natural area (former International Paper land) and incorporate into a much larger landscape wetland protection project that includes Chowan Swamp, Chowan River Aquatic Habitat, and Chowan Sand Ridge. Continue expanding protected land holdings along the Chowan River and associated State Natural Heritage Areas, while contributing acreage to the WRC Game Land Program. Matching funds for this final phase include CWMTF (\$2,876,506), NOAA-CELCP (\$3 million) and Environmental Defense litigation fund (\$100,000). Total project acreage for this phase is 6,449 acres. This is the final phase of the IP project.

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3	WRC	Diggs (Pee Dee Game Lands)	Richmond	\$400,000	1,062	<p>Permanently protect the Diggs tract through fee simple purchase. This tract was previously leased for years by WRC, but owner subsequently put tract on the market for sale. This tract will help to form one of the core areas for an envisioned network of ecological preserves along the Pee Dee river corridor. This property will be managed by WRC for wildlife conservation and recreation and will be open to the public for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, canoeing, wildlife research, and other outdoor uses. This project will permanently protect 625 acres of the Pee Dee River Marsh Ponds Significant Natural Heritage area. Nearly three miles of shoreline on the Pee Dee River will also be protected, benefiting several listed aquatic species and numerous rare plants and animals. This region has been identified as a very high priority by several conservation planning efforts and as evidenced by matching funds from Cole (private) Foundation (\$208,000), NAWACA (\$1 million) and proposed CWMTF (\$1.1 million). Total project acreage is 1,659 acres.</p>
4	WRC	Lutz Tract - Wilson Creek	Caldwell	\$2,280,720	188	<p>The 649 acre Lutz tract is long and narrow in shape and the property adjoins the Pisgah Game Lands (Pisgah National Forest) and is within the nationally designated Wilson Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor. This corridor is also a nationally significant natural heritage area. The tract spans or borders approximately 3.5 miles of Wilson Creek and 3.4 miles of named and unnamed perennial streams tributary to Wilson Creek, including portions of Phillips Branch, Harper Creek, Estes Mill Branch and Thorps Creek. Because of the tract's linear shape along Wilson Creek, protection of the uplands is necessary to maintain water quality and aquatic habitat conditions of its flowing waters. WRC would manage the property to protect the aquatic habitat and resources it contains. The tract would be open to the public for outdoor recreation, primarily fishing. Purchase of this tract would permanently protect the area from development. Land owner donation \$786,600 and proposed matching grant from CWMTF (\$4,857,255). Total acreage 649.</p>

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5	WRC	Pond Mountain	Ashe	\$2,500,000	680	The Pond Mountain landscape offers the unique opportunity to manage for a host of state-listed and N.C. Wildlife Action Plan priority species that require habitat types which are rare in NC. Approximately 750 acres of the Pond Mountain tract is currently in grassy/shrubby habitat and Christmas tree production and offers an excellent opportunity to manage for high elevation early successional habitat. The remainder of the tract contains northern hardwood forest. The tract will further serve as a wildlife corridor from the adjacent National Forests in Tennessee and Virginia south to conservation areas in NC such as Three Top Mtn. The tract also serves as the headwaters of both Big Laurel and Big Horse Creeks and acquisition of the tract will be a significant step in protecting water quality in these drainages. The tract will be entered into the WRC Game Lands Program and will offer a variety of dispersed recreational opportunities to the public. Confirmed \$1 million private donation and proposed \$7,426,498 grant from CWMTF. Total acres 1,795.
6	WRC	Coweeta Creek	Macon	\$451,100	48	Protect 48 acres of rich, bottomland habitat in the Little Tennessee River Valley including nearly 5,200 feet of frontage along the Little Tennessee and 900 feet of frontage along Coweeta Creek. Also protect significant archeological resources (possible historic Cherokee outlying farmstead) on the tract as identified by the Archaeological Research Laboratory (University of Tennessee) and supported by the NC State Archaeologist (letter of support for project included). Provide and protect habitat and potential reintroduction sites for four (4) federally listed species, 16 state listed species, and federally designated Critical Habitat for the spotfin chub. Tracts would provide important stopover habitat for migratory birds. Establish a core area of conservation lands along the Little Tennessee River upstream of Franklin which is essential to providing water and habitat quality within the reach and as a foundation for additional cooperative conservation efforts in the upper river. Land Trust for the Little Tennessee bargain sale of land (\$212,720)

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7	WRC	Gull Island	Dare	\$470,400	73	<p>Insure through acquisition the protection of a 73.4 acre island that lies in the Pamlico Sound. According to the appraisal, 2.9 acres of this are developable. Aquisition would be part of a landscape approach to protect significant natural areas, wetlands and watersheds that contribute to species richness within the South Atlantic Coastal Plain. Contribute towards protecting colonial waterbird nesting habitat for thousands of gulls, terns, herons, egrets and pelicans through guidance of the NC Colonial Waterbird Management Plan. This sale represents a unique opportunity to protect remote, prime waterbird nesting habitat as true islands are neither plentiful nor readily available for purchase in our sounds. Will provide high quality waterfowl hunting habitat.</p>
8	WRC	Mullberry Mill Bog	Wilkes	\$253,130	40	<p>Acquire a 40-acre parcel of land in Wilkes County that contains one of the largest known populations of bog turtles (State Threatened; Federally Threatened due to similarity in appearance) in the state. The bog/wetland is approximately 3-5 acres. Over 20 bog turtles have been captured, identified, and monitored at this site over the past five (5) years by Project Bog Turtle. Ensure through acquisition, protection of a tributary of Mulberry Creek, an important travel corridor for bog turtles between this site and the larger metapopulation of two other known sites, one of which has the most bog turtles of any known site in the entire southern population (from Maryland to Georgia). This corridor is crucial to the species' persistence in the region. Acquisition and management of the property will protect bog turtle populations and provide an opportunity to protect water quality in a developing watershed in the Yadkin basin.</p>
9	WRC	Whitehurst Tract- Devils Garden (Neuse River Game Land)	Craven	\$3,298,800	461	<p>Through acquisition, protect pocosin and pine upland, which is critical black bear habitat and is part of Duck Creek Natural Area. Proximity to New Bern and Highway 55 make this large natural area highly threatened from impending urban development. This project is within the strategic landscape scale "Onslow Bight Conservation Design Plan" developed by a consortium of public and private organizations including the military. This land acquisition is part of the large natural area that serves as a corridor along the outer Coastal Plain between Croatan National Forest and areas north of the Neuse River. WRC will manage land through incorporating into Neuse River Game Land. Confirmed CWMTF grant (\$1,147,50) and confirmed Forest Legacy grant (\$1,000,000). Total acreage is 775.5 acres.</p>

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<b>10</b>	WRC	Odom Tract (Sandhills Game Land)	Richmond	\$411,500	161	Acquisition of an important inholding of the Sandhills Game Land will protect valuable foraging and potential expansion habitat for two groups of red-cockaded woodpeckers, and increase available public wildlife recreational opportunities. Management objectives for the property include: providing additional protected foraging habitat for the two red-cockaded woodpecker groups adjacent to the property, reintroduce regular fire to the property, and convert as much of the mixed loblolly/longleaf pine uplands to a more site appropriate longleaf pine canopy. US Fish&Wildlife Service (Section 6, Endangered Species) grant of \$249,000 confirmed. Total acreage 260.
<b>11</b>	WRC	Tuckertown Tract	Davidson	\$2,000,000	1,345	The acquisition of the Alcoa Tuckertown tracts will protect and maintain 6 SNHAs, freshwater resources, provide public recreational opportunities including fishing and hunting, provide public access to the Pee Dee River for canoeing and boating and establish state-owned game lands in the rapidly growing piedmont region of NC. Size of the tract and its location along the Tuckertown Reservoir make it highly valuable for conservation. WRC plans future acquisition of additional land from Progress Energy and other private industrial forest land owners along the Yadkin/Pee Dee River to help establish a network of public-owned game lands in the region. The Tuckertown Reservoir land has been made available for acquisition through Alcoa's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission settlement agreement. Alcoa is donating 1,085 acres to the State Park. Total acreage of this phase of acquisition from Alcoa is 2420, but a future 2311 acres is also being pursued for a second phase to this project. Pending grant with CWMTF for matching funds of \$3,200,000.
<b>12</b>	WRC	Leggett Tract (Caswell Game Land)	Caswell	\$210,000	77	The Leggett Tract is almost completely forested with the exception of a small pond and associated beaver dams that create a wetland area at the confluence of two unnamed tributaries of Country Line Creek. The tract contains a wide variety of wildlife habitats and is well suited to support a wide range of public uses. Without future security, degradation of this tract and its surrounding watersheds could contribute to devastating impacts to sensitive downstream vertebrate and invertebrate faunal assemblages. Country Line Creek and the Dan River into which it eventually flows are known to contain populations or posses potential habitat for three listed mollusk and two listed fish species. This project will contribute an additional 77 acres to the roughly 17,788 acres already permanently protected at Caswell Game Land by the WRC.

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13	WRC	Wilkes Tract (Sandhills Game Land)	Scotland	\$170,000	115	Protection of the Leonard Wilkes Tract in Scotland County will help maintain freshwater resources and preserve high quality habitat along Drowning Creek on property directly across from the number one land conservation priority in the NC Sandhills, the Blue Farm. The Wilkes tract touches existing Sandhills Game Lands and is an acquisition priority for WRC and the Sandhills Conservation Partnership, as it links into a system of wildlife corridors connecting the Sandhills Game Lands to Fort Bragg. It is also shares a ¼ mile boundary with a 95-acre property on which The Nature Conservancy is currently negotiating the purchase of a Conservation Easement. \$50,000 confirmed funding from Army Compatible Use Buffer Program.
	<b>WRC</b>	<b>WRC</b>	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,559,872</b>	<b>6,990</b>	<b>\$2,226</b>
I-1	DENR/NHP	Continuation of County and Protection-focused Natural Area Inventories	Madison, Alleghany, Macon, Stanly, Anson, Robeson and other counties to be announced.	\$500,000	N/A	The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program of the Office of Natural Resource Conservation & Planning requests funds to support county-wide, protection-focused natural area inventories. Funds will be used to support inventory staff from 2008-2010, and to contract with local land trusts or other partners. This allows us to conduct several inventories per year and provide targeted visits to numerous other sites to support conservation actions.
I-2	DENR/NHP	Inventory of Aquatic Significant Natural Areas and Federally Listed Aquatic Species	Statewide	\$421,000	N/A	The Natural Heritage Program of the Office of Natural Resource Planning & Conservation, in partnership with the Wildlife Resources Commission, requests funding of \$421,000 over three years to fund the inventory and conservation planning of North Carolina's aquatic natural areas, including surveys of high priority populations of federally listed and candidate species of mussels and fish in historic and potential habitats. Both Natural Heritage Program and Wildlife Resources Commission staff will work together to obtain information that will contribute to the conservation of those streams and rivers identified as Aquatic Significant Natural Heritage Areas.

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14	DENR/ DPR	Haw River State Park Land Acquisition	Guilford and Rockingham	\$1,000,000	64	The property acquisition would protect about 3,500 feet along the Haw River and upland natural communities adjacent to the Summit Environmental Education Center (SEEC). The main route of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail goes through this tract. The upper Haw River was included on the New Parks for a New Century list for the extensive area of wildlife habitat along the river. Several rare species are in the project area. The hardwood natural communities in the Piedmont, and the project area in particular, are threatened by residential development; part of this tract has already been subdivided for development. These areas include the Mesic Mixed Hardwood natural communities on the north facing slopes and the Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest natural communities on the upland flats. The Piedmont Alluvial Forest natural communities are excellent examples in the project area and critical to the movement and healthy populations of wildlife in the region. This property is key to the environmental education effort at the SEEC. \$3,260,000 to be funded by PARTF. Total acreage is 140.
15	DENR/ DPR	Elk Knob State Park (Snake Mountain Tracts) – Land Acquisition	Northern Watauga County, north of Boone, NC	\$2,325,000	129	The proposed acquisitions would help protect the ridge of Snake Mountain (5,518 feet). These three properties support at least four different natural communities, including the rare Grassy Bald and Northern Hardwood Forest, and at least eight rare species, including the Federal Species of Concern Gray's Lily. These tracts will be part of Elk Knob State Park which is managed for the protection of significant natural resources and to provide interpretation of its ecosystems and low impact outdoor recreation. These tracts will help connect Elk Knob State Park to adjacent conservation lands including Tater Hill (managed by the Plant Conservation Program) and conservation land which High Country Conservancy currently owns but plans to donate to the State. This project will help provide the land base for a hiking trail from Elk Knob to Tater Hill and protect the undeveloped western views from the summit of Elk Knob. Confirmed \$2,523,600 PARTF and proposed \$2,016,000 CWMTF matching grants. Total acreage 370.

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16	DENR/ DPR	Elk Knob State Park/Long Hope Valley – Land Acquisition	Ashe and Watauga counties, north of Boone, NC	\$14,100,000	2,269	The proposed acquisition would protect Long Hope Valley and the slopes of the peaks surrounding it including Elk Knob (5,520') and Rittle Knob (4,860'). This project would preserve a globally significant natural heritage area and a rare hanging valley ecosystem. As part of the Amphibolite Mountain macrosite, Elk Knob State Park is part of a larger conservation effort that extends from Tater Hill to Mount Jefferson State Natural Area. The property in this request supports at least 10 high quality natural communities, 37 rare plant species, and eight rare animal species. The property includes 23 examples of Southern Appalachian bogs, the highest concentration in any area. The property in this request is owned by a family trust. The State and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have been working on permanently protecting this property for many years. Matching grant from PARTF \$15,100,000 (confirmed) and TNC \$13,000,000 planned. Total acreage is 4,538.
17	DENR/ DPR	Boiling Spring Lakes, Section 14 (Pretty Pond Limesink Complex)	Brunswick	\$365,000	8	Project area is located in the northeastern section of the City of Boiling Spring Lakes. It is immediately adjacent to the privately managed Orton Plantation (5,000 acres) and a 135-acre conservation easement held by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Site contains undeveloped upland longleaf and pocosin habitat within the Pretty Pond Limesink Complex, a SNHA. Acquisition will protect habitat for current populations of the Federal and State endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker ( <i>Picoides borealis</i> ) and probable populations of the Federal species of concern Venus flytrap ( <i>Dionaea muscipula</i> ). It will complement the 7,000 acres of land previously protected in the Boiling Spring Lakes Plant Conservation Program Preserve and establish a core base for essential land management activities in the vicinity. The tracts will provide buffer for the privately held conservation lands, opportunity for passive recreation, and offer ecological research opportunities. NHP plans to manage the property through a management agreement with TNC.

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18	DENR/ DPR	Pettigrew State Park (Scuppernong River Section)	Tyrrell County	\$483,000	537	The Scuppernong River corridor is part of a Nationally Significant Natural Heritage Area. The project area includes several rare and/or high quality natural communities: Peatland Atlantic White Cedar, Nonriverine Swamp Forest, and Cypress-Gum Swamp (Blackwater subtype). The tracts in this request contain two rare species and there are seven others documented in the project area, including the federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bald Eagle. The State-owned tracts will help connect existing tracts already in conservation ownership by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Acquisition of these tracts will protect 4.6 miles of Scuppernong River frontage. The property will become part of Pettigrew State Park. Confirmed matching grants from PARTF (\$108,000) and CWMTF (\$483,000). Total acreage is 1,082.
19	DENR/Z OO	Bachelor Creek Nature Preserve	SE Randolph County, northeast of Seagrove on Old NC Hwy 13	\$1,039,745	184	This proposed project will preserve the 335-acre Ward tract, .75 mi. south of the North Carolina Zoological Park (Zoo). This project is sponsored by the Zoo in partnership with the Piedmont Land Conservancy for long-term protection of a biologically significant site linking the Zoo to other natural lands in an increasingly fragmented landscape. Funding is requested from NHTF for 184 acres of forested uplands, complementing a 151-acre riparian buffer acquisition request submitted to CWMTF (\$931,889). Zoo contribution (\$4,400). Request reduced at Board meeting because some tracts were unavailable.
20	DENR/ DCM	Town of Kure Beach Oceanfront Park	New Hanover	\$500,000	0	Funding requested to assist the Town of Kure Beach in the debt service on the purchase price of 20,000 square feet of oceanfront property. A perpetual long-term conservation easement will be provided to the DENR/DCM as well as a detailed property management agreement. The Oceanfront Park faces the Atlantic Ocean and is the intended site of a local and regional public park. The park will expand public access to recreational opportunities, the beach, and the ocean. It will preserve open space and public access along the coast. New Hanover County confirmed grant of \$500,000. Funding for remainder of \$3.6 million project proposed to CWMTF, PARTF, DENR/DCM, DENR/DWR and Federal Appropriations.

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21	DENR/ DPR	Dutch Creek Cove/ Bear Paw Natural Area - Land Acquisition	Watauga	\$3,852,600	241	These acquisitions would help protect the Nationally Significant Hanging Rock Mountain SNHA and the cove forests containing the headwaters of Dutch Creek, a tributary of the Watauga River. These properties support at least four different natural communities, including the rare High Elevation Rocky Summit, and at least nine rare species including the Federally Endangered Big-eared Bat. These tracts will be managed as Dutch Creek Conservation Land until authorization of the State Natural Area which is proposed for the 2008 session of the General Assembly. Acquisition of these tracts will help protect a widely recognizable and visible peak and ridge and contribute to the connectivity of protected sites including nearby Grandfather Mountain. Confirmed private donation \$1,314,000. Total acreage 341.
22	DENR/ DPR	Chimney Rock State Park–Bottomless Pools/Bat Cave/Round Top	Western Rutherford County	\$4,488,000	212	This 212 acre project is part of a larger conservation effort including TNC's Bat Cave and Rumbling Bald Preserves. The site hosts distinctive geological features and a large diversity of natural community types. World's Edge contains a number of rock houses and small fissure caves as well as extensive, high quality examples of several community types, including low elevation rocky summit, low elevation granitic dome, and a unique community described as a semi-exfoliated basic glade. At least nine significantly rare plants have been documented on or very near the subject properties, two of which are federally endangered, and four rare, special concern animals have been found in close proximity to the project area and have the potential to be found on site as well. The tracts in this project are within the following SNHAs: Cane Creek Mountain (national significance); Chimney Rock (national significance) and Bottomless Pools (regional significance). Once acquired, these properties will be part of Chimney Rock State Park. Matching funds from PARTF \$4,489,500. Total project acreage 423.

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23	DENR/ DPR	South Mountains State Park - West Side II	Burke	\$605,000	323	This 683 total acre project will help protect the Hall Knob SNHA included within the South Mountains Macrosite and the South Mountains/ Foothills Megasite. The tracts in this request contain at least six rare species, including the federally endangered White Irisette. The broader project area is known to contain at least four additional rare species. South Mountains State Park is part of a broader conservation effort including South Mountains Game Lands. This project will add to the nearly 40,000 acres of contiguous State-owned conservation land. Conservation of these tract will also help protect undeveloped viewsheds for visitors approaching the state park and game lands from the west side. This area of the park is likely to see increased visitation following the development of facilities at the Clear Creek access area. Once acquired, the project area will be part of South Mountains State Park. Matching funds include PARTF (\$648,309 confirmed), CWMTF (\$932,140 proposed) and bargain sale donation (\$81,966 confirmed).
	<b>DENR</b>	<b>DENR</b>	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,679,345</b>	<b>3,968</b>	<b>\$7,480</b>
26	DCR	Historic Bethania Land Acquisition	Forsyth	\$1,465,000	69	Purchase of one of the few large, contiguous natural tracts of land remaining in Bethania will complement the 7 projects of nearly 100 acres previously protected by DCR. This project would completely protect "Bottom II," one of the bottomlands in Black Walnut Bottoms marked on the original survey of Bethania in 1768 by Christian Reuter. This historic area now holds the only remaining example of a European style "open field" agricultural village in North Carolina. A cell phone tower company has approached the landowner concerning the installation of a cell tower on the top of the ridgeline. Such a tower would significantly diminish the experience of visitors to Bethania. A management plan will be developed to provide guidance that is consistent with Bethania's Moravian culture and traditions and potentially restore the agricultural uses of the fertile bottomlands along Muddy Creek. Piedmont Land Conservancy is donating overhead costs and has applied for grants that could reduce the request to NHTF by as much as \$200,000.

