



Governor's Advisory Committee on Western North Carolina Recovery

May 12, 2025 | 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Today's Agenda

Call to Order | *Mayor Manheimer, Co-Chair*

Welcome | *Dr. Heather Norris, Chancellor, Appalachian State University*

WNC Recovery Updates | *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program | *Will Ray, NC Emergency Management*

Landslides Mitigation | *Andy Miller & David Korte, NC Department of Environmental Quality*

Visit NC Tourism Plans for WNC | *Scott Peacock, Visit NC*

WNC Strong Updates | *Brian Skeens, NC Department of Transportation*

Next Steps | *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Adjourn



Updates from the Governor's Recovery Office for Western North Carolina

Director Matt Calabria

Major recovery efforts underway

Rebuilding Safe Housing

- Residents have received \$440M+ in FEMA Individual Assistance
- 6,000+ households have received temporary housing
- \$1.4 billion HUD action plan approved, unlocking funding for housing and other projects
- Partnering with volunteer organizations such as Baptists on Mission and Habitat for Humanity to jumpstart rebuilding efforts

Restoring our Infrastructure

- Right-of-way debris removal nearly complete
- Waterway debris removal underway
- >95% of WNC public roads have access restored
- State Private Roads & Bridges Program open for applications
- \$21.5M in FEMA funds already disbursed for private roads and bridges

Revitalizing our Economy and Communities

- \$55M in state and philanthropic funded small business grants fully disbursed, with more than 2,000 recipients
- About \$358M in small business loans offered
- \$37.8M+ in disaster unemployment assistance distributed
- \$32M+ in loans to local governments





Selected State Program Updates



Small Business Infrastructure Grant Program

\$55M allocated in SL2025-2

Purpose: "to assist small businesses by providing grants to local governments to expedite infrastructure repairs impacting the operation and patronage of small businesses in the affected area"

Status: The Rural Economic Development Division (REDD) of the Department of Commerce announced the launch of the program on April 29.

Timeline for Awards: There will be a continuously open grant window; awards will be announced on or before the following dates:

- June 30, 2025
- October 31, 2025
- February 28, 2026
- June 30, 2026

Eligibility: local governments impacted by Hurricane Helene and designated under a major disaster declaration as a result of Hurricane Helene. Special consideration will be given to local governments in Tier 1 and Tier 2 Counties.

Max Grant Award: \$1M

More information: commerce.nc.gov/SmBIZ



Volunteer Organizations Repair and Reconstruction Grant Program

\$10M available from NC Emergency Management

Eligible applicants are volunteer organizations that are actively involved in actual and ongoing repair and reconstruction projects from Tropical Storm Helene in NC

Applications due **May 15, 2025**, by 5 p.m. More info: www.ncdps.gov/node/9661

Key Target Dates

- April 15, 2025: NOFO Released
- April 25, 2025: Technical Assistance Workshop (10:00AM-11:00AM)
- April 28, 2025: Technical Assistance Workshop (10:00AM-11:00AM)
- **May 15, 2025: Application Deadline**
- June 15, 2025: NC Review Panel Scoring completed
- July 15, 2025: Applicant Notifications
- July-August 2025: Complete and Sign grant agreements

The Period of Performance (POP) is up to 36 months, starting on the date of the recipient's award. This process starts with the application referenced below.



North Carolina's Ag Disaster Crop Loss Program

State source of funding: The Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 – Part 1

- NCGA Appropriation: \$200m for a one-time assistance program
- Offers assistance to agricultural producers who suffered verifiable losses from any declared agricultural disaster in 2024
- Deadline for applications was May 4, but still accepting applications until May 19 under expectation that General Assembly will approve requested extension.
- Applications from WNC farmers lower than anticipated as compared to eastern North Carolina farmers

More information:

www.ncagr.gov/agdisaster



North Carolina Emergency Management is accepting interest forms for assistance with private roads and bridges

State source of funding:

- NCGA Appropriations: \$100m with requirement that NCEM seek federal reimbursement when possible

Program details:

- Works to make robust use of federal dollars
- Prioritizes repairs to private roads / bridges that are the **sole access for emergency services to residential properties** occupied by the property owner for over six months of the calendar year
- Prioritizes repairs to private roads / bridges **providing access to multiple residential homes, recreation or commercial facilities**



Residents can apply for NCEM's program at:
<https://www.ncdps.gov/Helene/PRB>



Selected Federal Program Updates

Trump Administration Approved Governor Stein's HUD Action Plan for Western North Carolina on April 25

Trump Administration Approves Governor Stein's Housing Recovery Action Plan for Western North Carolina

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development moves \$1.4 billion CDBG-DR grant forward for western North Carolina

RALEIGH, NC

Governor Josh Stein announced today that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has approved North Carolina's Action Plan for a \$1.4 billion grant to help western North Carolina rebuild following Hurricane Helene. When compared to other states' performance over the past decade, North Carolina submitted its Helene Action Plan to HUD in the shortest amount of time following a major hurricane.

CONTACT

✉ govpress@nc.gov

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved North Carolina's Action Plan for a \$1.4 billion grant to help western North Carolina rebuild following Hurricane Helene.
- North Carolina submitted its Helene Action Plan to HUD in one of the shortest amounts of time of any state following a major hurricane.
- Approving the Action Plan was the required next step for North Carolina to receive federal funds from the CDBG-DR grant award, which was first announced in January.
- Once HUD certifies the state's financial controls for the program, North Carolina can sign the grant agreement and begin committing these funds with a focus on housing and economic revitalization.



We will prioritize CDBG-DR investments to address Helene damage and needs across housing, infrastructure, and economy



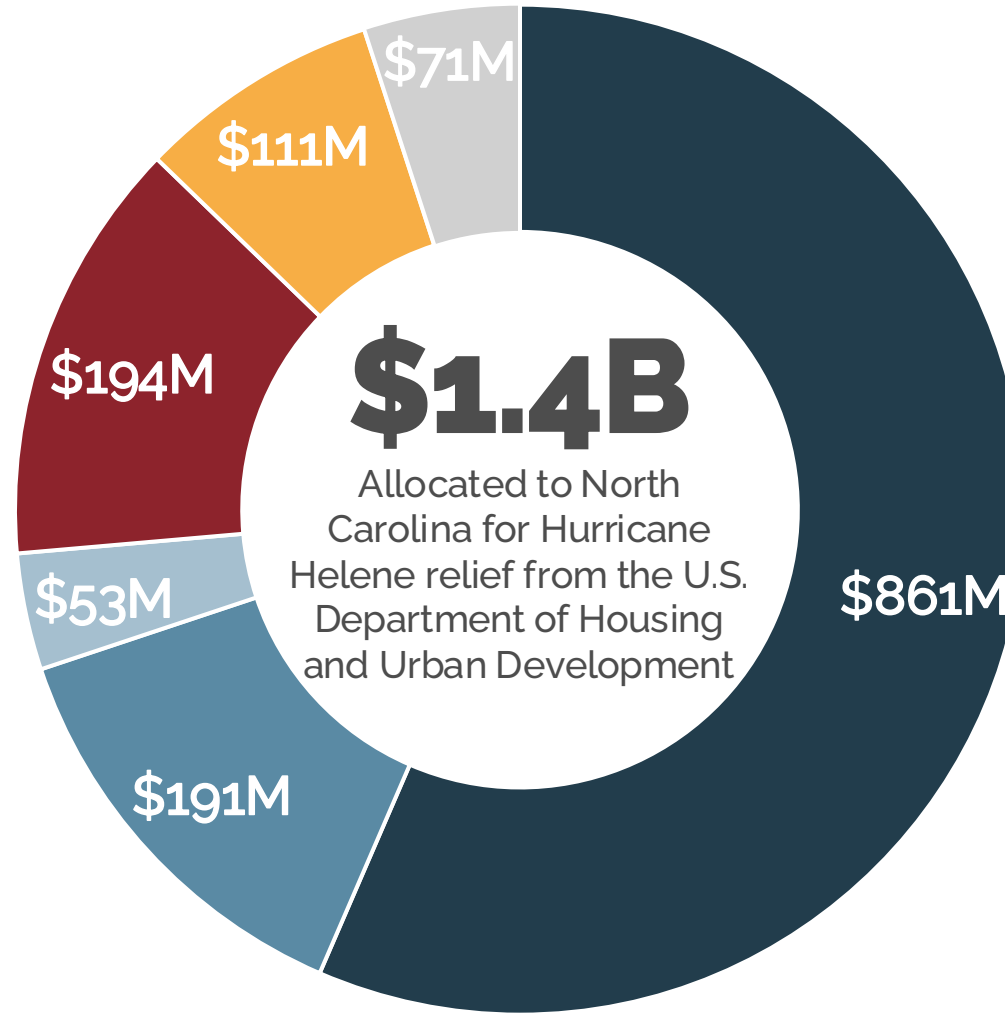
Revitalizing our economy

\$111M: Commercial District Revitalization



Restoring our infrastructure

\$194M: Community Infrastructure Program



Rebuilding safe and stable housing

\$861M: Reconstruction and Rehabilitation for Owner-Occupied Units

\$191M: Multifamily Construction Program

\$53M: Workforce Housing for Ownership



Administration

\$71M: Administration

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding

Source: [HUD disaster relief funding announcement](#); [NC Draft HUD Action Plan](#)

Governor Stein Appeals FEMA Decision Not to Renew 100% Match

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025

Governor Stein Appeals FEMA Decision to Not Renew 100% Match

RALEIGH, NC

Governor Stein today appealed to President Trump, asking him to overturn FEMA's [decision](#) not to extend its 100 percent match for eligible Helene costs.

"Hurricane Helene caused incredible damage to western North Carolina. President Trump, as you noted when you visited the region in January, we need a focus on debris removal to create a clean slate from which we can effectively rebuild," **wrote Governor Josh Stein.** "I therefore respectfully urge you to reconsider FEMA's regretful decision and extend our 100 percent cost share period for six months – failing that, then for three months. Doing so would allow us to continue to build on the momentum you have helped us achieve."

- FEMA denied North Carolina's request for a six-month extension of 100% cost-sharing for Hurricane Helene recovery efforts.
- The state appealed the decision on April 25, arguing the 100% reimbursement is crucial for debris removal and public works restoration.
- The state is now seeking a three-month extension if the six-month request is not granted.
- Without the extension, FEMA's match drops to 90 percent. **Preliminary estimates have projected a cost to the state of up to \$200 million.**
- Senator Tillis, Senator Budd, Rep. Murphy, Rep. McDowell, and Rep. Davis submitted a letter in support of North Carolina's appeal.

USDA Emergency Watershed Protection Program

Local governments may apply as a sponsor for the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service's (USDA-NRCS) Emergency Watershed Program (EWP).

This program is designed to relieve imminent hazards to life and structures/infrastructure caused by natural disasters. Project examples include debris removal from stream channels, road culverts, bridges, streambank restoration, drainage repair, and floodplain easements.

The non-federal match has been waived for project sponsors for Helene-impacted projects in NC.

A project sponsor can be a legal subdivision of the state, such as a state agency, county, city, town, soil and water conservation district, or an Indian Tribe or a Tribal organization.

- Click [here](#) for a EWP fact sheet, and [here](#) for more information about the EWP program.
- Click [here](#) to access a template letter to request EWP assistance.

Deadline for local governments to request assistance: May 30, 2025

Contact: Jim Kjelgaard - jim.kjelgaard@usda.gov and 919-873-2100

USDA Supplemental Disaster Assistance for Agricultural Producers

Timeline released on May 7 - [2023/2024 Supplemental Disaster Assistance | Farm Service Agency](#)

- **General Block Grant Authority**
 - NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services submitted initial proposal for more than \$500 million to USDA
 - NC should have fully executed agreement complete by June 30, 2025.
- **[Emergency Commodity Assistance Program \(ECAP\)](#)** provides economic loss assistance for covered commodities based on 2024 planted and prevented planted acres.

Deadline: **August 15, 2025**

- **Supplemental Disaster Relief Program** (for producers with indemnified losses)
Target date for sign-up to begin: **July 7, 2025**
- **Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) for Flooding**
Target date for sign-up to begin: **August 18, 2025**
- **Supplemental Disaster Relief Program** (for producers with uncovered/shallow losses)
Target date for sign-up to begin: **September 15, 2025**



Federal Cuts to Volunteer Programs

Programs Terminated:

- PRI Wellness Corps
- Conservation Trust for NC: Resilience Corps NC
- Duke University NC Literacy Corps
- East Carolina University CARE Corps
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Western North Carolina: Project MARS
- The Servant Center: Partnership to End Homelessness
- Conserving Carolina: AmeriCorps Project Conserve
- Communities In Schools of Buncombe Co: Project POWER

Total number of AmeriCorps NC members: 202

8 out of the 19 AmeriCorps NC programs are on the list of **terminations**.

25 members focused on conservation at **Conserving Carolina**.

14 members serving as Academic Enrichment Specialists or Community Resource Specialists in **Buncombe County**.

9 members building and maintaining community gardens in **Beaufort County**.

The cuts come after **52 AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps members focused on Helene recovery** were recalled earlier this month in North Carolina. Members were working with the United Way of Asheville Buncombe County, Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity and other organizations.

On April 29, State Attorney General Jeff Jackson **filed suit against AmeriCorps**, accusing it of unlawfully **halting grants** approved by Congress for **Hurricane Helene recovery**.



- **Dislocated Worker Grant Program:** \$10M appropriated by federal government; \$2M received, \$4M more obligated on May 1

News Release

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AWARDS \$4M IN FUNDING TO CONTINUE DISASTER-RELIEF JOBS, TRAINING FOR NORTH CAROLINIANS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE HELENE

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor today awarded incremental funding of \$4 million to support disaster-relief jobs and continue employment training for North Carolina residents harmed in September 2024 when Hurricane Helene brought the worst flooding in a century to the area.

In October 2024, the department's [Employment and Training Administration](#) responded by awarding a National Dislocated Worker Grant of up to \$10 million, [with an initial award of \\$2 million](#), to assist with cleanup and recovery activities in 25 North Carolina communities affected by the storm.

This [Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant](#) allows the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions to provide people with temporary jobs focused on cleanup and recovery efforts, as well as providing employment and training services to storm survivors.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program & NC Emergency Management Updates

**Will Ray, Director & Deputy Homeland Security Advisor,
NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency
Management**



Emergency Management
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Tropical Storm Helene Update





- Topics:
 - FEMA Cost Share Transition and Impacts
 - Debris Management Update
 - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Overview



Debris Options for TS Helene

1. Use of local staff to collect and dispose of debris
2. Locally procured contractor
3. Local utilization of the State's Pre-Procured Debris Contractor
4. ***State implementation of the Pre-Procured Debris Contractor on behalf of the local Jurisdiction***
5. Direct Federal Assistance through US Army Corps of Engineers



What is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)?

- HMGP is focused at providing **post-disaster assistance** while simultaneously reducing risks to individuals and property from future disasters.
 - HMGP is only available after a Presidential Declaration
 - HMGP is normally offered statewide versus just restricted to disaster area
 - HMGP focus is to ensure governmental actions incorporate critical mitigation measures reducing risk during post-disaster reconstruction
 - Focused at breaking the cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damages
 - Specific Focus Areas:
 - Community-wide risk reduction projects
 - Improving resilience of key infrastructure and resource life-lines
 - Encouraging conservation of the floodplain
 - Increasing future mitigation planning



Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, and Flood Mitigation Assistance

Effective July 30, 2024
Version 2.0



Types of Hazard Mitigation Programs

Disaster Programs

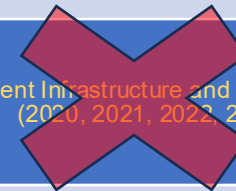
| |
|--------------------------|
| Hurricane Matthew |
| GSO / Rockingham Tornado |
| Hurricane Florence |
| Tropical Storm Michael |
| Hurricane Dorian |
| Severe Weather 2021 |
| Hurricane Isaias |
| Tropical Storm Eta |
| Tropical Storm Fred |
| COVID 19 |
| PTC-8 |
| TS Helene |

Non-Disaster Programs

Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant
(2019)

Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant (FMA)
(2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023)

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
(2020, 2021, 2022, 2023)





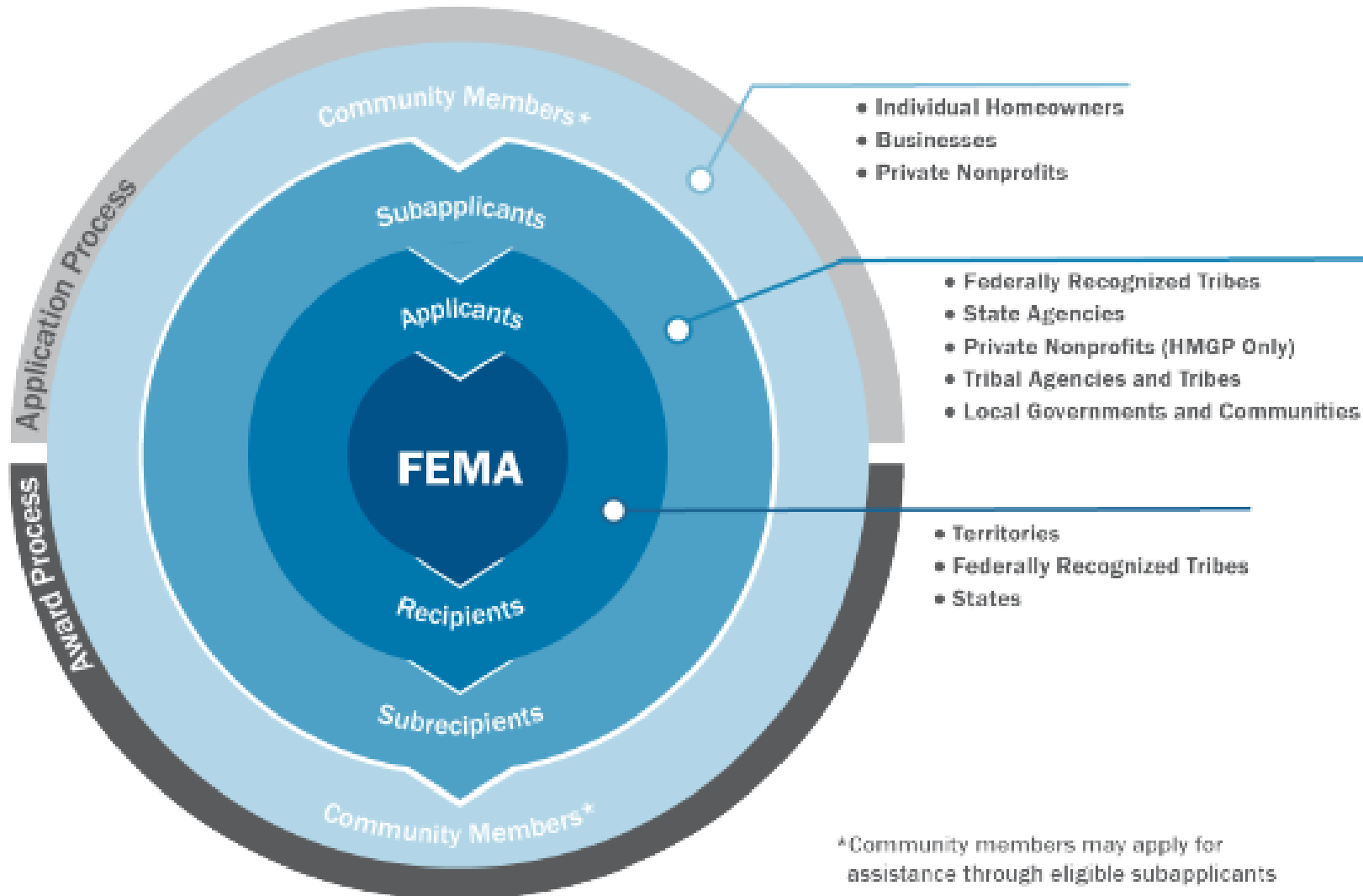
Eligibility for HMGP

- Unlike other federal assistance programs, individuals (property and business owners) or private nonprofits (with some exceptions) may not apply directly for HMGP funding. It is the role of the State or federally recognized tribe to apply for and manage implementation funding
- Eligible Sub-Applicants:
 - State agencies
 - Local governments
 - Federally recognized tribal governments
 - Private nonprofit organizations
- Project Application Requirements:
 - Applicants must have an active FEMA-approved and State ADOPTED hazard mitigation plan
 - Sub-Applicants must have an active FEMA-approved and local jurisdiction ADOPTED hazard mitigation plan
 - The mitigation project being proposed **MUST** be listed in the State's and local jurisdiction's active hazard mitigation plan
 - Have a beneficial impact in the designated disaster area
 - Conform to 44 CFR part 9. Floodplain Management and other environmental and historic preservation laws
 - Solve a problem independently
 - Be Cost effective (achieve a Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1 or greater)





Eligibility for HMGP





Available Funding and Funding Use

- Amount of Funding for HMGP is based on amount of the aggregate grant amount made for the major disaster
- NC is an Enhanced State and therefore receives 20% of the aggregate grant amount
- Final HMGP total budget for the State is 20% of the aggregate amount calculated on the 1-year anniversary of the incident date
- FEMA will issue a lock-in letter that informs the State of the overall HMGP amount and breaks down the amount for project funds, planning funds and initiative funds.
- Management and sub-recipient costs are also made available, which increases overall award amount by 15% (10% to State and 5% to each sub-applicant).
- Funding is broken down into 3 categories
 - Project Funds – 88% of the total HMGP funding amount (Can be used for allowable projects, must have a BCR)
 - Planning Funds – 7% of the total HMGP funding amount (Supports plan development like Hazard Mitigation Plans)
 - Initiative Funds – 5% of the total HMGP funding amount (typically used for projects that would NOT be able to pass the required BCR of 1 or greater)
 - Example:
 - Total Storm Value - \$1,000,000.00
 - HMGP Total Value (NC) - \$200,000
 - Project Funds - \$176,000
 - Planning Funds - \$14,000
 - Initiative Funds - \$10,000
- Planning and Initiative funds can be moved to the project fund category if not needed/utilized, but planning and initiative funds can not exceed 7% or 5% respectively.



HMGP Project Types and Time Expectations

- The HMGP possess the capability to carry out a multitude of projects
- The HMGP program timeline is NOT fast, due to size/scope/number of the projects and federal; review/approval process
- General HMGP Timeline is:
 - Application period (for State's applications) – 15 months
 - Period of Performance (POP)– 48 months from close of application period; extendable up to 36 months
- The bigger the project(s) (i.e. the more homes to be completed) the longer residents may wait to see the actual work performed on their home

| |
|--|
| Property Acquisition |
| Structure Elevation |
| Mitigation Reconstruction |
| Localized Flood Risk Reduction |
| Non-Localized Flood Risk Reduction |
| Stabilization |
| Dry Floodproofing Non-Residential Building |
| Tsunami Vertical Evacuation |
| Safe Room |
| Wildfire Mitigation |
| Retrofit |
| Secondary Power Source |
| Warning System (excluding earthquake early warning system) |
| Earthquake Early Warning System |
| Aquifer Recharge, Storage and Recovery |
| Innovative Mitigation Project†† |



Program Implementation Methods

Traditional

- Used for Disaster and Non-Disaster Programs
- The sub-recipient is normally a County or a City
- The sub-recipient is responsible for hiring a contractor, doing the work, reporting on the work, expending the funds, and closing out the project
- NCEM provides technical assistance, subject matter expertise, and program oversight

State Centric

- Post Florence, proposed to FEMA to create a new method of delivery to minimize the financial and administrative burden on local jurisdictions
- Jurisdictions can opt in and State executes work on behalf of jurisdiction
- City or County maintains communications with the homeowners and allowed to draw management costs
- Allows NCEM to complete the project work on behalf of the sub-recipient directly (elevation, acquisition, generator.)
- Concept only available for limited storms at this time, not non-disaster programs



NCEM State Centric Program

- Intended as full-service support to all State sub-applicants; Sub-Applicants choice to Opt-In or self-perform the awarded application.
- NCEM assists in preparing sub-applicant applications to FEMA – requires Chairman, Board of Commissioners or City Council, or designated agent (DA) to sign the final application
- NCEM contracts and oversees approved applications, expending State funds and pulling down Federal reimbursement (no local funds committed)
- NCEM closes out approved awards with FEMA and provides notification to jurisdiction project closed
- NCEM acts on behalf of the county to process/get approved any Land Leases of acquired properties



STATE CENTRIC PLAN

As of 21 May 2021

PURPOSE

To Provide the State's Framework and Guidance in managing all Disaster Hazard Mitigation Grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency





Current Grant Utilization Plan: Open Applications

- TS Helene HMGP:
 - Prioritizes Declared Counties
 - Remaining open Statewide
- TS Helene Swift Current:
 - Submit Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Properties in Declared Counties
- PTC-8 HMGP:
 - Prioritizes Declared Counties
 - Remaining open Statewide
- PTC-8 Swift Current:
 - Submit SRL Properties in Declared Counties

- BRIC 2024 Application:
 - Prioritizes NOFO criteria for the 2mil NC Set Aside. Second priority is for multi-phase scoping projects.
 - NOFO has been recalled and is being edited by FEMA
- FMA 2024 Application:
 - Focused on Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) in Eastern NC. Competitive nationwide. (ex. Rodanthe)
 - NOFO has been recalled and is being edited by FEMA



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State Emergency Response Team
20240924 Tropical System Helene
Executive Summary #107
6 May 2025 1000



DR-4827 Tropical System Helene Application Submissions

| County/City | Project Type | Number of Properties | Status | Date Submitted to FEMA |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------|
| Buncombe County #1 | Acquisition | 23 | Application Submitted to FEMA | 2/21/25 |
| Buncombe County #2 | Acquisition | 26 | Application being reviewed by County | -- |
| Buncombe County #3 | Acquisition | 25 | Property list being finalized by HM | -- |
| Transylvania County | Acquisition | 11 | Application Submitted to FEMA | 5/5/25 |
| Henderson County | Acquisition | 28 | Application Submitted to FEMA | 3/10/25 |
| Madison County | Acquisition | 5 | Application Submitted to FEMA | 4/10/25 |
| Yancey County | Acquisition | 34 | Application has been signed by County | -- |
| Polk County | Acquisition | 6 | Application Submitted to FEMA | 4/10/25 |
| Rutherford County | Acquisition | 28 | Application is being reviewed by County | -- |
| McDowell County | Acquisition | 25 | Property list being finalized by HM | -- |
| Mecklenburg County | Acquisition | 77 | Property list being finalized by HM | -- |
| Town of Clyde | Advance Assistance | — | Application Submitted to FEMA | 3/12/25 |
| City of Greenville | Advance Assistance | — | Application Submitted to FEMA | 3/28/25 |





Emergency Management
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Questions



Landslides Mitigation: NC Department of Environmental Quality

**Andy Miller, Deputy Secretary for
Infrastructure/Environmental Assistance**

**David Korte, Geologist – Regional Geological Survey
Supervisor**

North Carolina Geological Survey - Landslide Hazards Program

Primary Tasks:

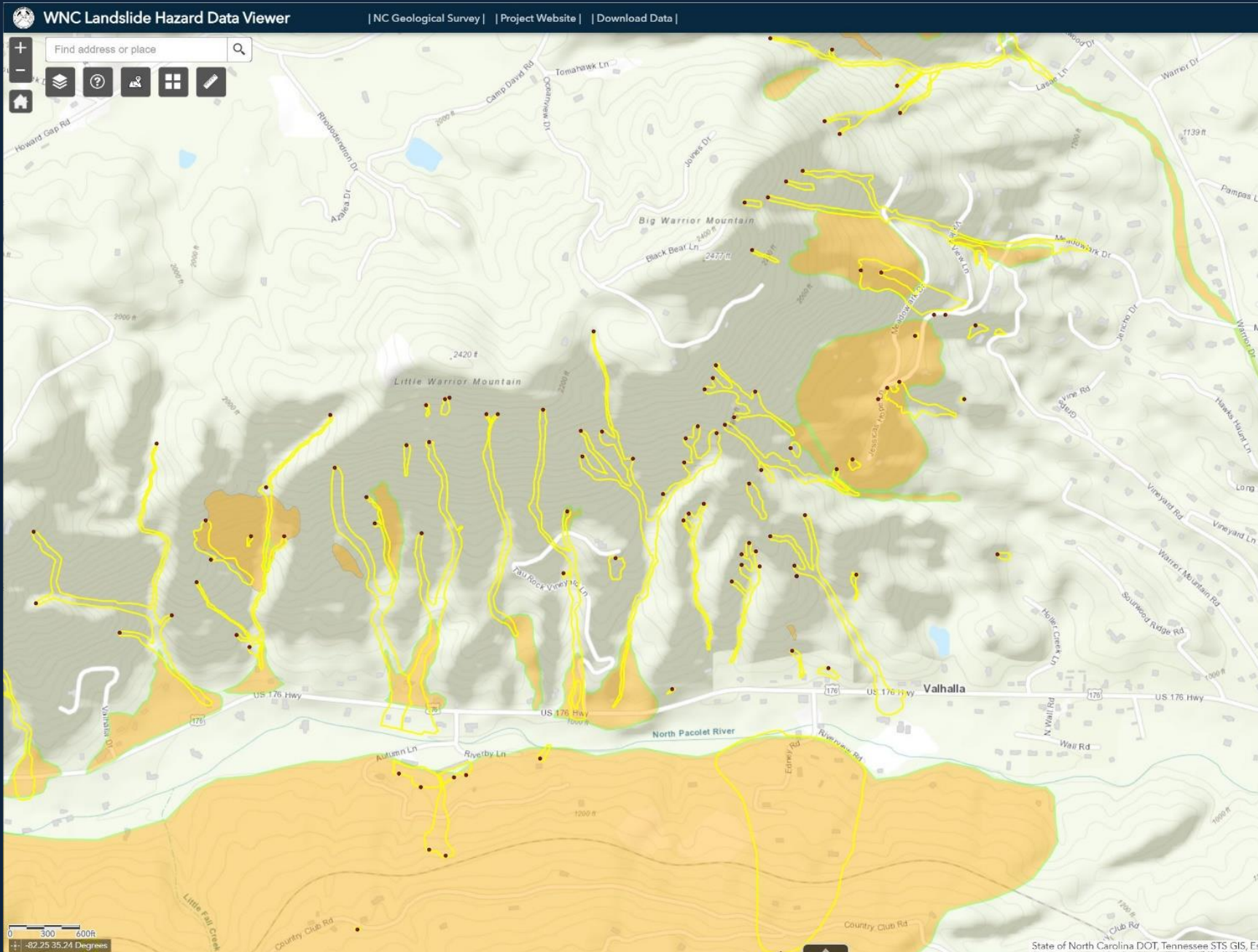
- Landslide Inventory
 - Landslide Susceptibility
 - Landslide Response
-
- Interconnect geoscience, weather and climate, and history in landslide hazard studies
 - Build multi-disciplinary partnerships in applied geology and research
 - Communicate with stakeholders about landslide hazards
 - Use lidar and drones (UAS) for landslide mapping and in emergency landslide responses



The screenshot shows the homepage of the "Landslides in Western North Carolina" website. At the top is the North Carolina Geological Survey logo and the title "Landslides in Western North Carolina". Below the title is a subtitle: "Explore current and historical information about landslides across the region, and access resources to help you plan for and build resilience to landslide hazards." A navigation bar includes links for "Home", "Data Tour Guide", "Learn More", "Downloads", and "About". The main content area features three large horizontal banners: "Explore Data in a Map Viewer" with a map of the region, "Data Tour Guide" with a map, and "Learn More" with a photo of people. Below these are four circular image thumbnails with corresponding titles and descriptions: "Historical Landslides in WNC" (waterfall), "The Great Flood of 1916" (flooded house), "Old Wine in New Bottles" (mountain landscape), and "Sparta Earthquake" (mountain landscape). The "Sparta Earthquake" section includes the text "Coming soon..." and "CGS 2018".

<https://landslidesncgs.org>

Landslide Inventory



Landslide Points

- Red dots
Approximate initiation point of landslides

Landslide Outlines

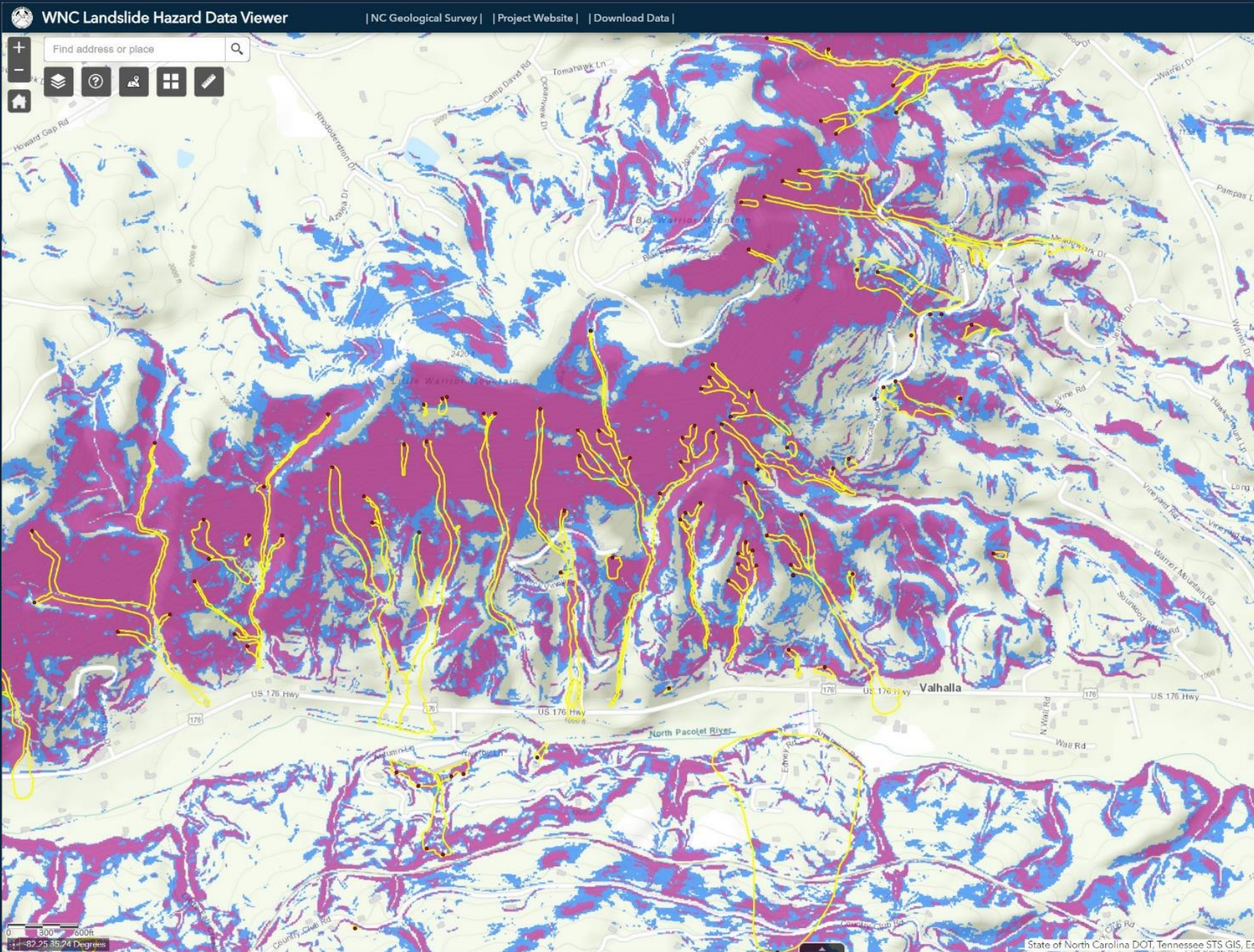
- Yellow outlines
Approximate areal extent of relatively recent landslides

Landslide Deposits

- Orange polygons
Approximate areal extent of past debris flows/slides



Landslide Susceptibility



Where Debris Flows and Debris Slides Might Start on Forested Slopes

Probability of Sliding

- High (> 50%)
- Moderate (25% - 50%)

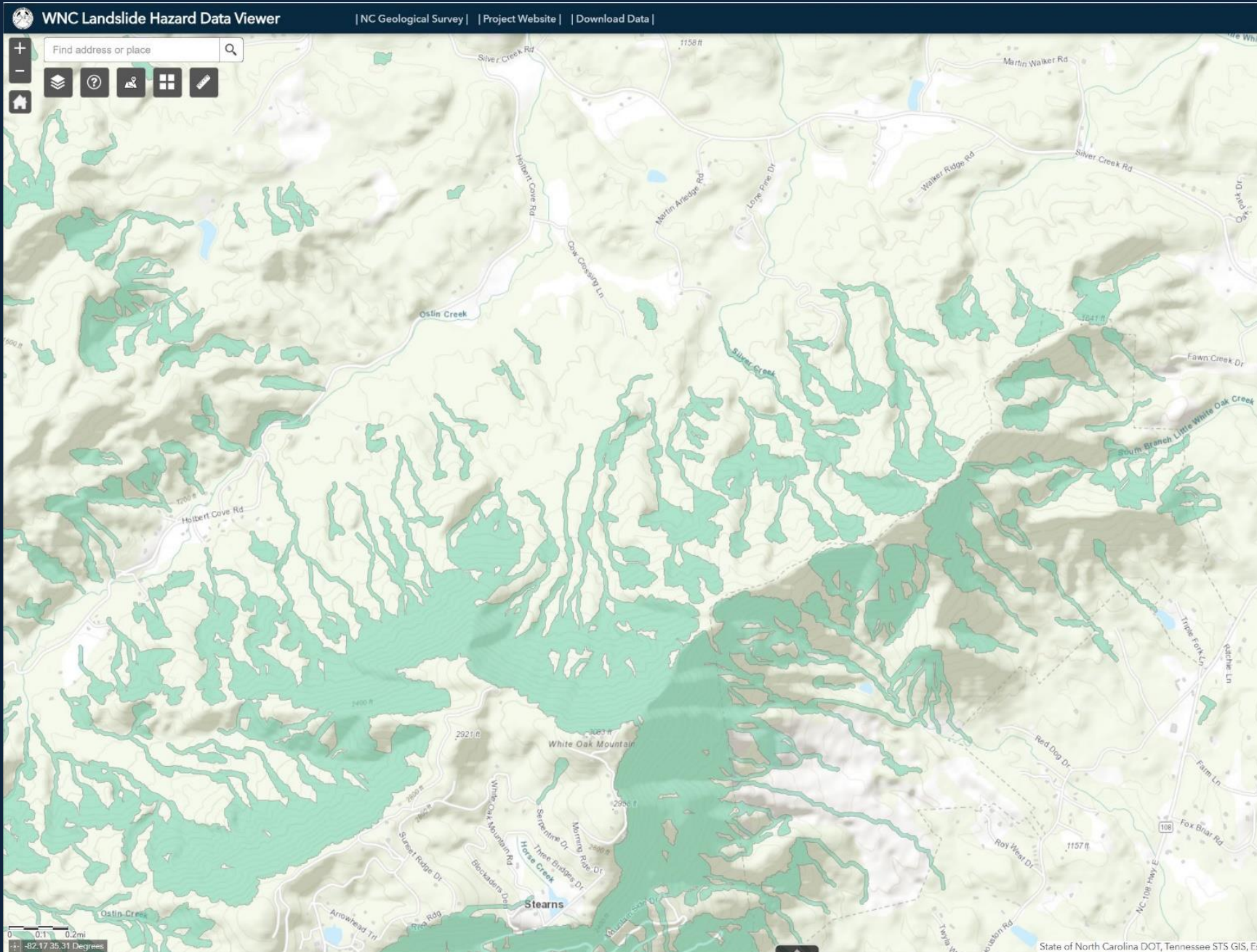
5 inches or more
precipitation within 24
hours

Probabilistic Infinite Slope Model

Probability distributions for material properties and water table height



Landslide Susceptibility



Where Debris Flows and Debris Slides Might Go

Potential Debris Flow Pathways

General area that could potentially be affected by future debris flows and/or debris slides

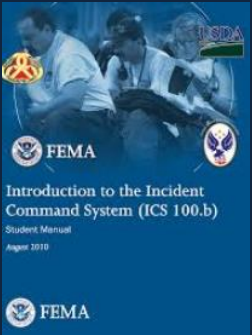
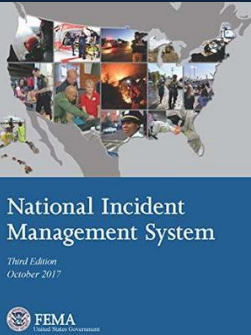
Flow model initiated from high susceptibility area $> 1,000 \text{ m}^2$ (1/4 acre)

Flow ends at 3° slope or 500-year flood plain



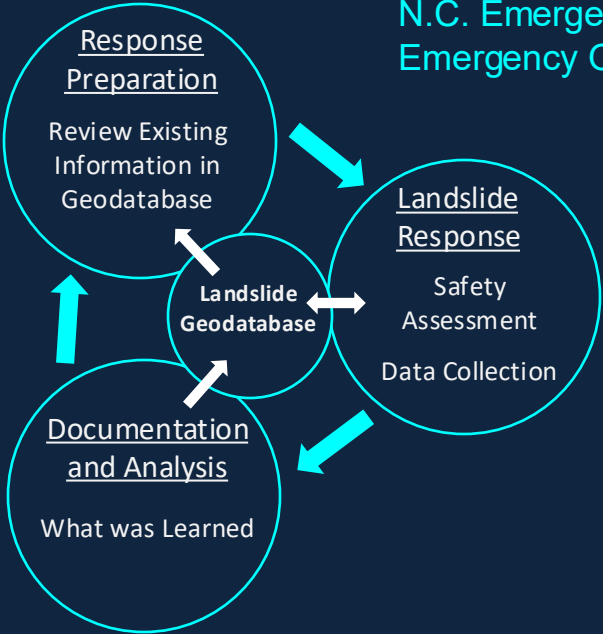
NCGS Emergency Landslide Response

Certification: FEMA National Incident Mgmt. System and Incident Command System



- Chain of Communications
- Safety
- Objectives

N.C. Emergency Management
Emergency Operations Center



Preloaded Field Computers

- Ls Geodatabase
- Lidar DEMs
- Orthophotography

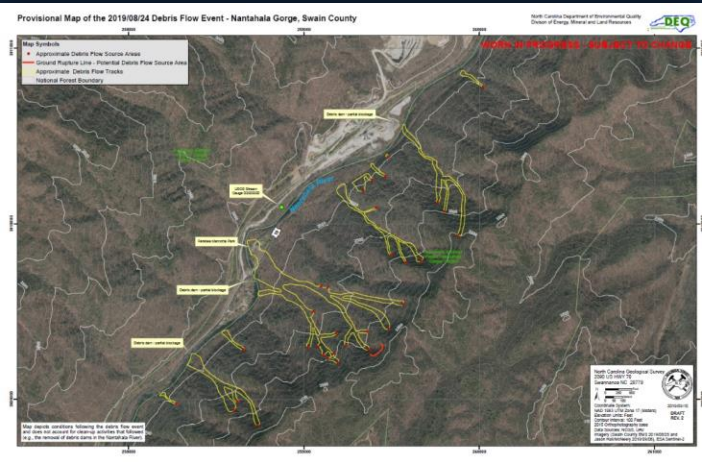
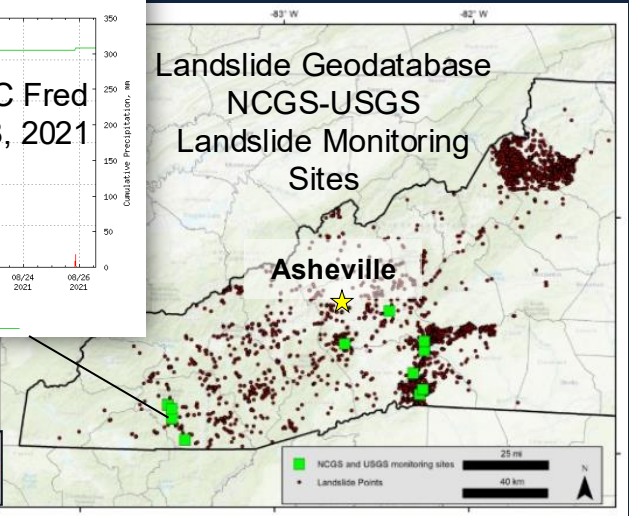
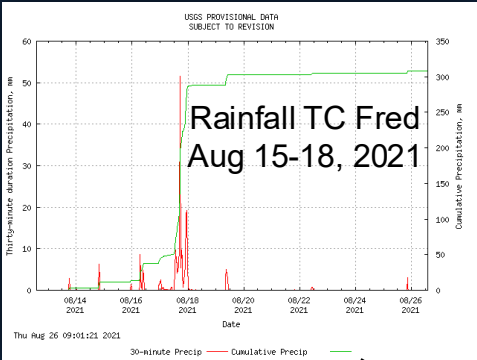


Situational Awareness

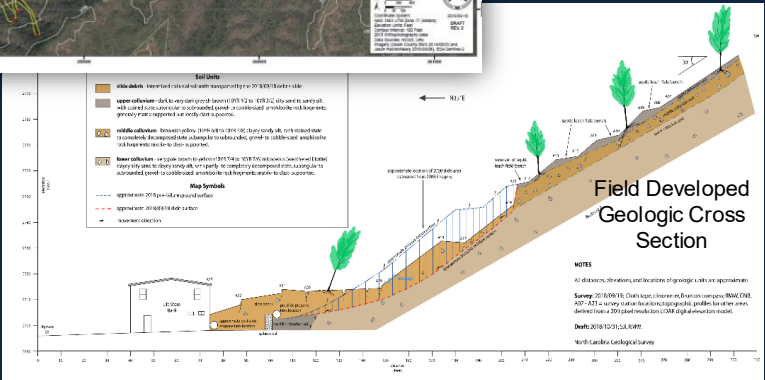
Data Collection



Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS)



Maps - GIS
data layers



Landslides and Storm Events in Western North Carolina

1876-2024 148 years

- **6 events: 100s of landslides**
Avg. Frequency = 24.7 years
- **3 events: 1,000s of landslides**
Avg. Frequency = 36 years
- **9 events: 100s-1,000s of landslides**
Avg. Frequency = 16.4 years
- **Back-to-Back Storm Events**
2-12 days apart 1916, 1940, 2004, 2018, 2024
- **6 Events - Multi-state Impacts**

Rainfall Thresholds for Landslide Activity

- **≥3 inches / 24 hours:**
Landslides on some constructed slopes with high antecedent moisture
- **≥5 inches / 24 hours:**
Scattered landslides on constructed and forested slopes
- **≥10 inches / 24 hours:**
Widespread landslides on constructed and forested slopes

Landslides in Western North Carolina

Since 1879 and prior to Helene

- 84 landslide fatalities - 22 injuries
- > 84 homes destroyed - condemned
- > 60 homes damaged
- >> \$53+ million in direct losses
- Ongoing threats – damage to regional infrastructure



Helene Only

- 24 landslide fatalities – unknown # of injuries
- > 350 homes destroyed - condemned
- Unknown number of homes damaged
- \$60+ Billion in total direct losses, \$2+ Billion from landslides
- Ongoing threats – damage to regional infrastructure



Helene Landslides - Preliminary Statistics

| Type | | Damage | |
|------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Debris Flow | 1,043 | Structures | 350 |
| Debris/Rockslide | 1,294 | Road | 615 |
| Rockfall | 1 | Road & Structure | 26 |
| Other | 41 | River/Stream | 185 |
| Uncertain | 200 | Uncertain | 361 |
| Total | 2,579 | Total | 1,537 |
| Responses 241 | | Fatalities 24 | |

More from Helene

- 230 fatalities – 107 in NC (81 flood and falling trees, 24 landslide)
- >800,000 acres forestland flattened throughout 17 NC counties
- 20% of the State's National Forest destroyed
- 50% forest in Mitchell County, 30% forest in Ashe and Watauga Counties, 17% forest in Buncombe County destroyed
- US 19W, \$1B repair
- I40, \$1B repair
- > 1,400 roads closed, \$5B repair



Craigtown-Garren Creek, Buncombe County

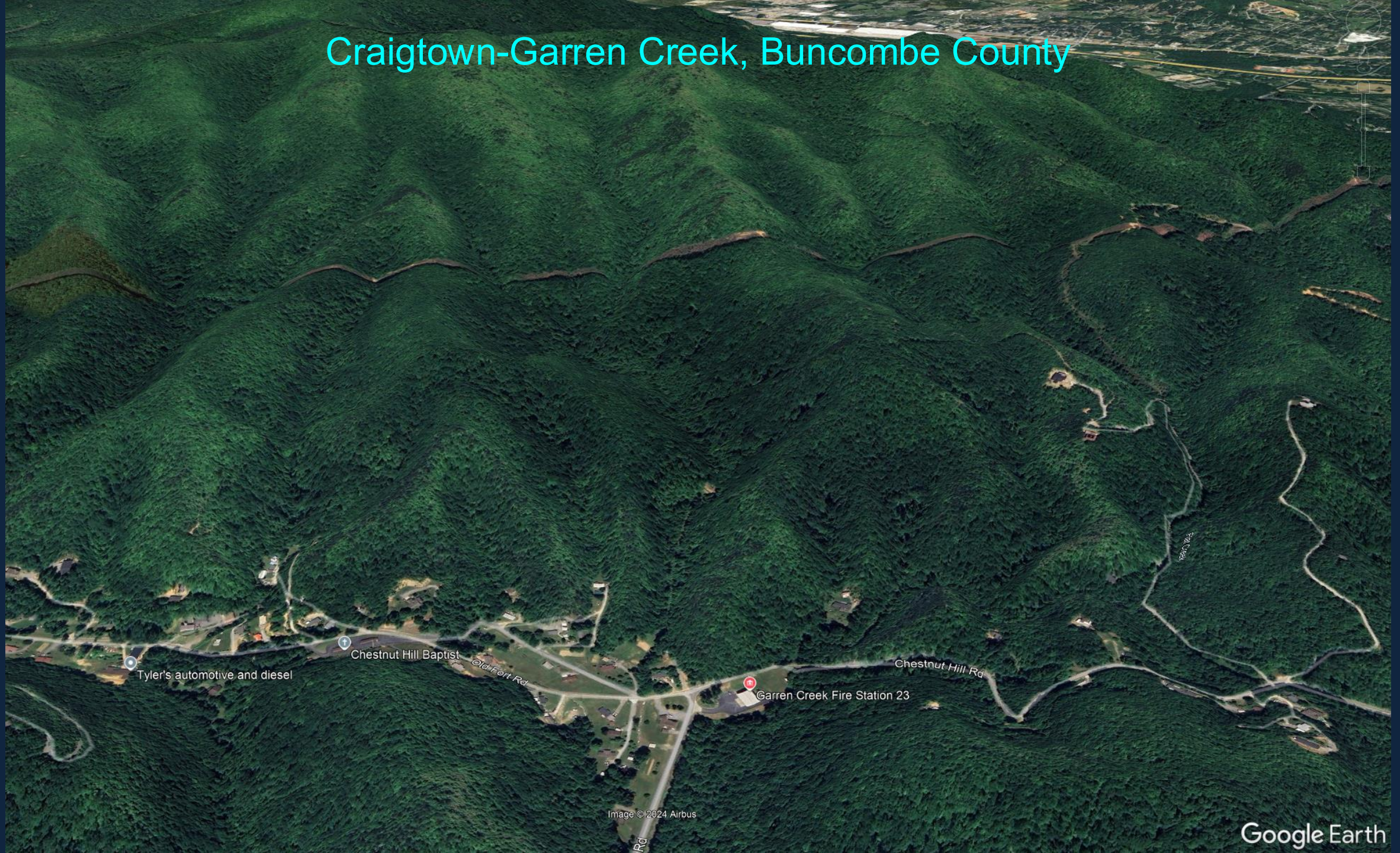


Image © 2024 Airbus

Google Earth

~4180 ft

~1.5 miles

~2800 ft

Tyler's automotive and diesel

Chestnut Hill Baptist

Old Fort Rd

Garren Creek Fire Station 23

Chestnut Hill Rd

Image © 2024 Airbus

Google Earth







Landslide Hazards Program – Issues

➤ Issues

1. Not enough resources to quickly map, model, and respond to landslides immediately after events
2. Landslide mappers are not formally trained for emergency response
3. Landslide mappers not formally trained in assessing immediate vulnerability or remediation
4. Required rainfall thresholds are not used when looking directly at susceptibility maps
5. No dynamic and time relative susceptibility maps with precipitation forecast and antecedent soil moisture

Landslide Hazards Program – Solutions

➤ Solutions

1. Landslide Mapping Program Expansion

➤ 4 teams of 3 members

- Landslide Emergency Response Team trained in first response
- Landslide Assessment Team (Geotechnical Engineers) to address inquiries and support Emergency Response Team
- 2 dedicated Landslide mapping and modeling teams
 - i. Response and Assessment teams map landslides when not responding to events
 - ii. All teams perform outreach and education

Landslide Hazards Program – Solutions

➤ Solutions

2. WNC Landslide Early Warning System

- Required rainfall amounts for landslide initiation added to susceptibility maps
- Dynamic and time relative susceptibility maps with precipitation forecast and antecedent soil moisture
- v.1 in one year with project funding approval
- Project completed with AI automation in 3 years
- ✓ Increased trust in the warning system by reducing false positive advisories

Landslide Hazards Program – Resilience

➤ Actions

1. All WNC County susceptibility models completed within 2 years, landslide inventory mapping continues as long as storms and gravity occur.
2. Every WNC County Planning, Development, Public Relations, and Safety department, educated on how to use landslide inventory and susceptibility maps in 2 years. This will be continuous and in perpetuity.
 - During Helene: County entities did not know how to use existing landslide hazard maps
 - Ordinances: Some Counties have steep slope ordinances, none have mountain stream setbacks
 - Critical Infrastructure: Current hazards to, and future placement of, critical infrastructure, schools, hospitals, power, water, etc.
3. WNC Structural (buildings) landslide vulnerability and risk assessment completed within 2 years.
 - Dynamically determine landslide risk to critical infrastructure during storm events

Landslide Hazards Program – Resilience

➤ Actions

4. Emergency Management/Services focus resources and notices to high susceptibility areas that include required precipitation.
 - Increase map comprehension
 - Reduce response time
 - ✓ Increased public trust in advisories by reducing false positives
5. Counties/Municipalities can, as the weather situation changes, dynamically:
 - i. Safeguard critical infrastructure
 - ii. Issue evacuation/recall notices
 - iii. Establish escape/recall routes

North Carolina Geological Survey - Landslide Hazards Program

Landslide Inventory

Landslide Susceptibility

Landslide Response

Thank you!

Questions?

<https://landslidesncgs.org>

<https://resilienceexchange.nc.gov>



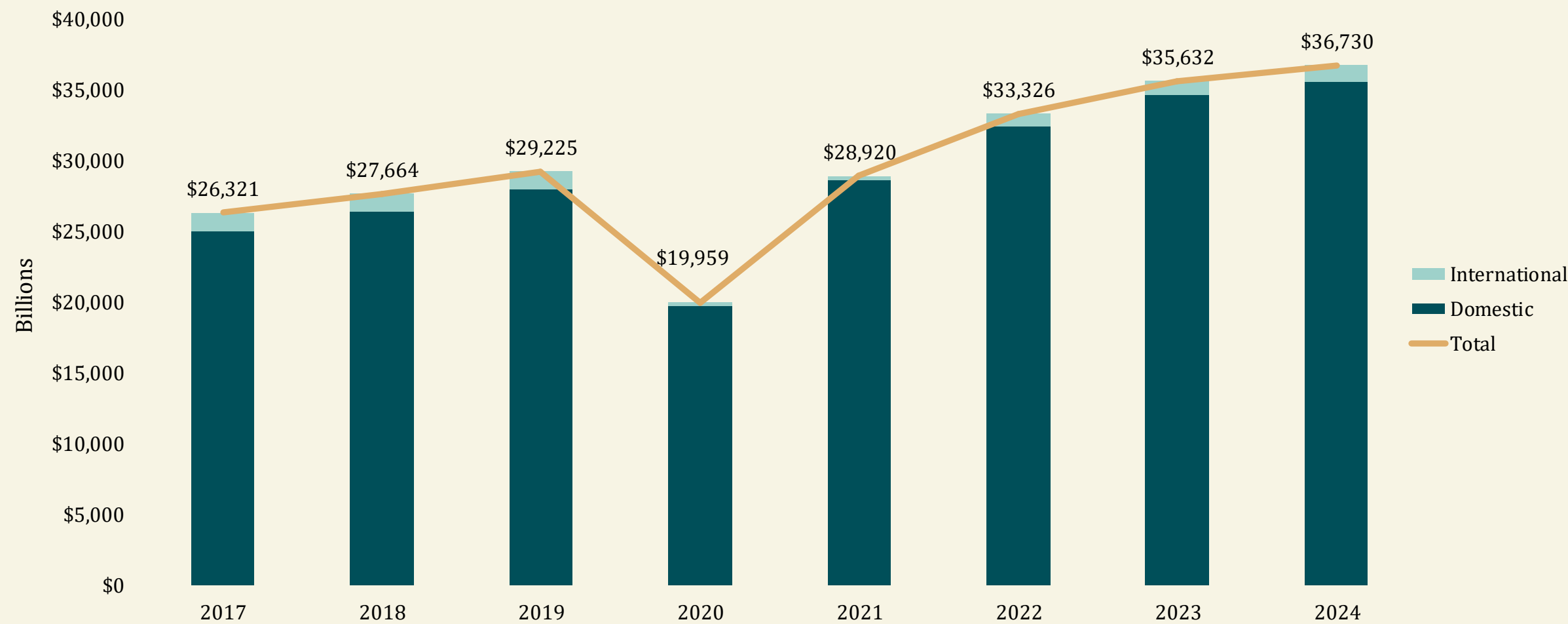
Visit NC Tourism Plans for Western North Carolina

Scott Peacock, Director, Tourism Marketing & Communications, Visit NC, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina

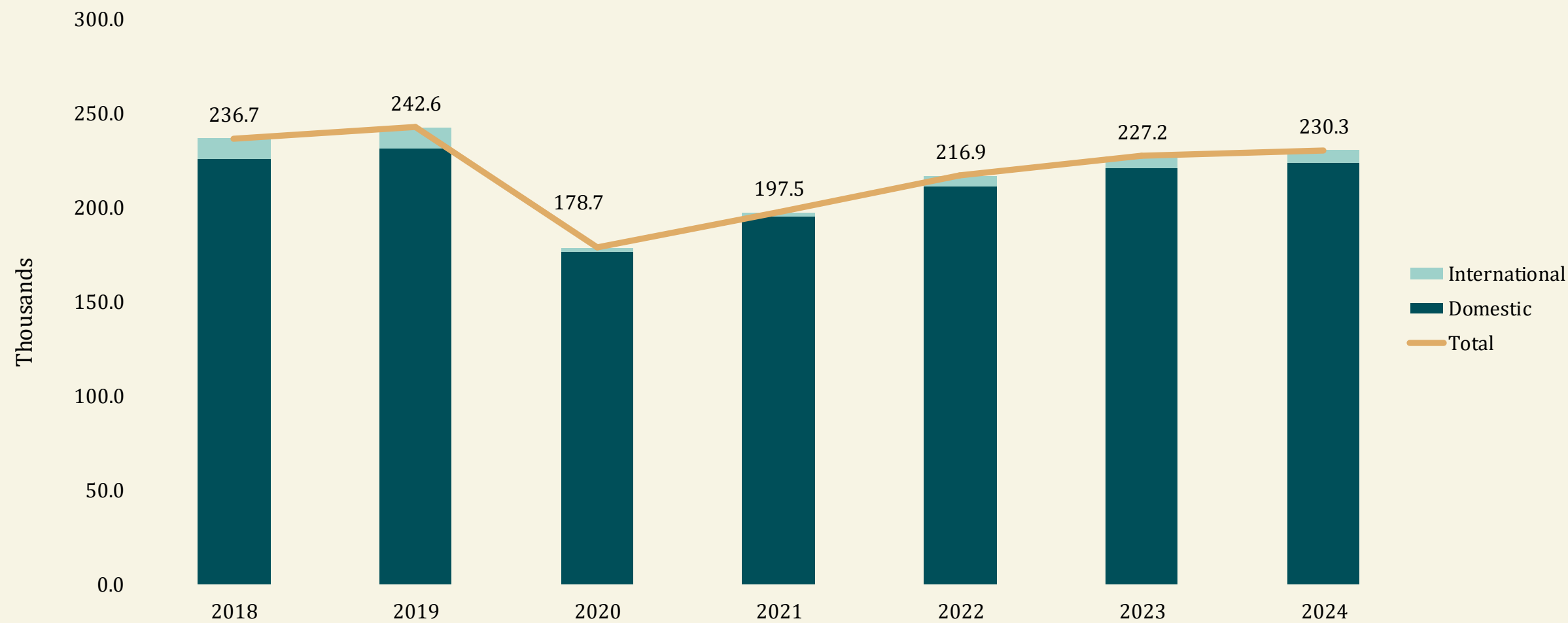
STATEWIDE RESEARCH OVERVIEW



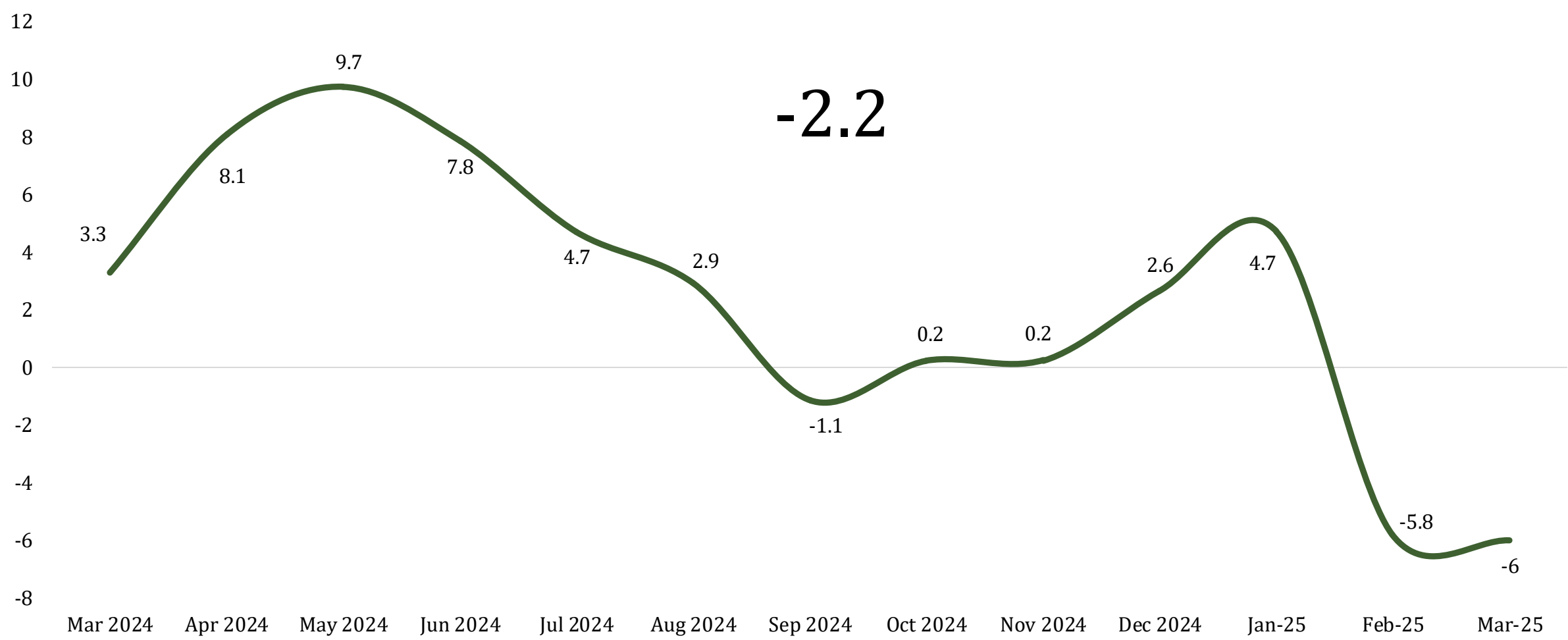
HISTORICAL VISITOR SPENDING IN NORTH CAROLINA



HISTORICAL TOURISM RELATED EMPLOYMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA



NORTH CAROLINA VISITOR ECONOMY INDEX - MONTHLY

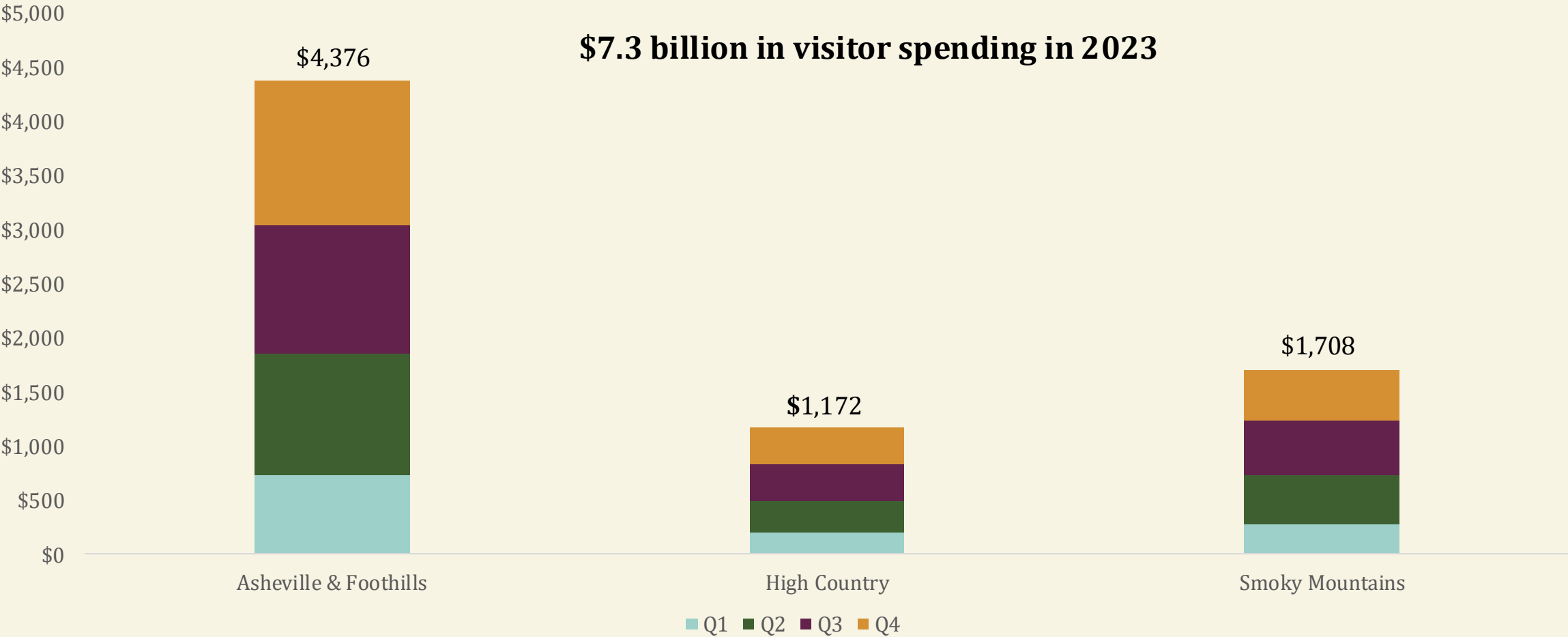


Visitor Economy Index is comprised of commercial lodging demand and revenues, AirDNA demand and revenues, available credit card data and visitor device counts

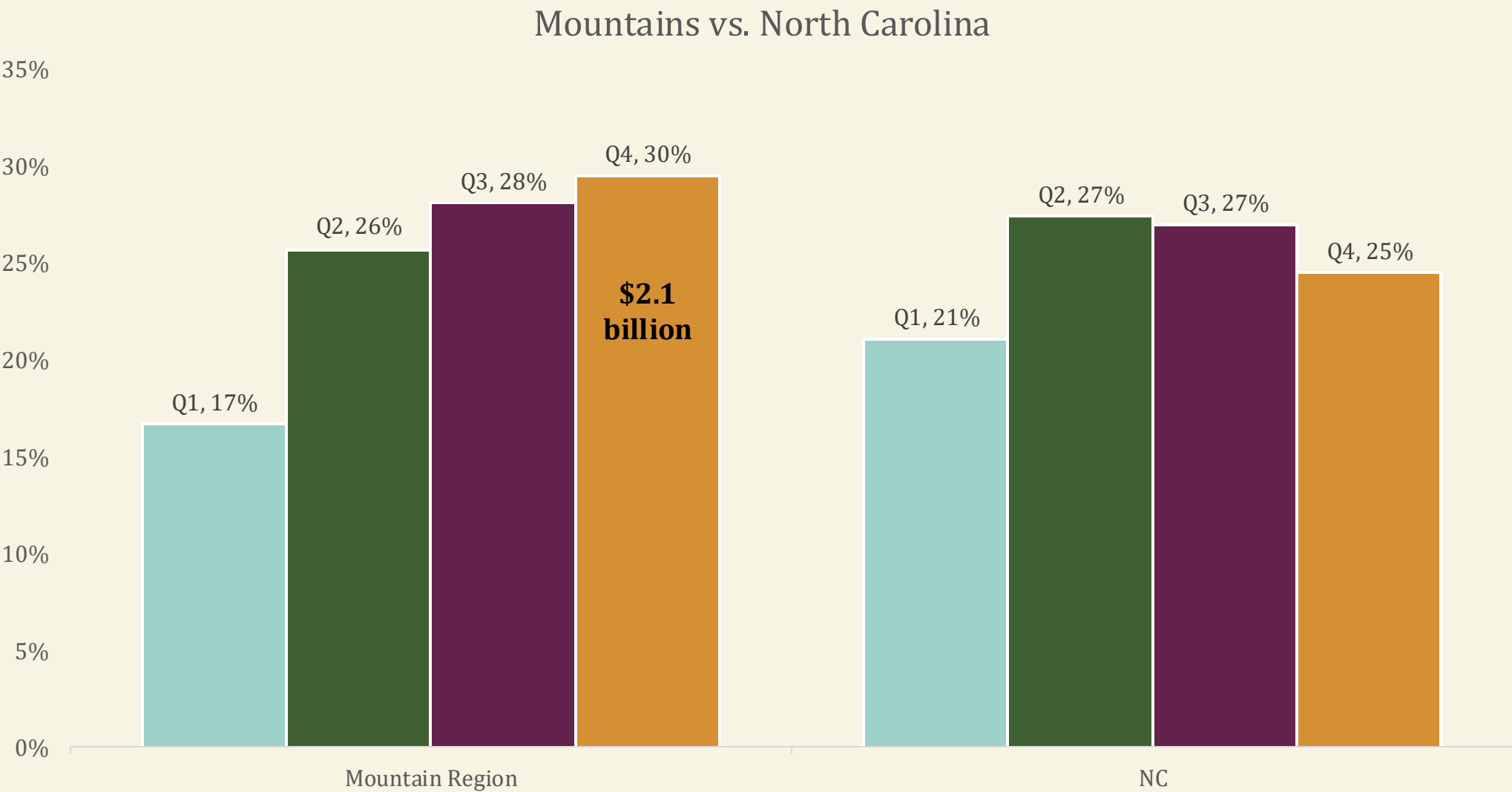
Source: Zartico 2025



VISITOR SPENDING IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



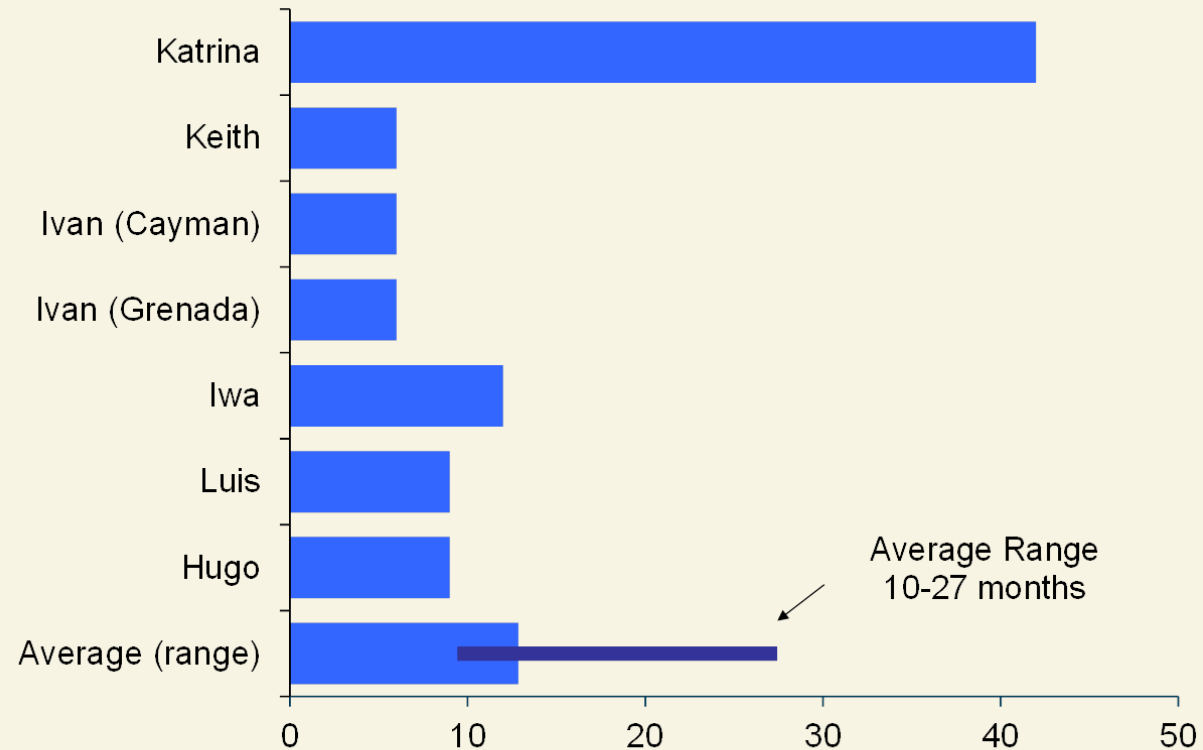
QUARTERLY SHARE OF VISITOR SPENDING



DURATION OF HURRICANE TOURISM IMPACTS

Duration of Hurricanes Tourism Impacts

Months after initial disruption for visitor spending to return to baseline



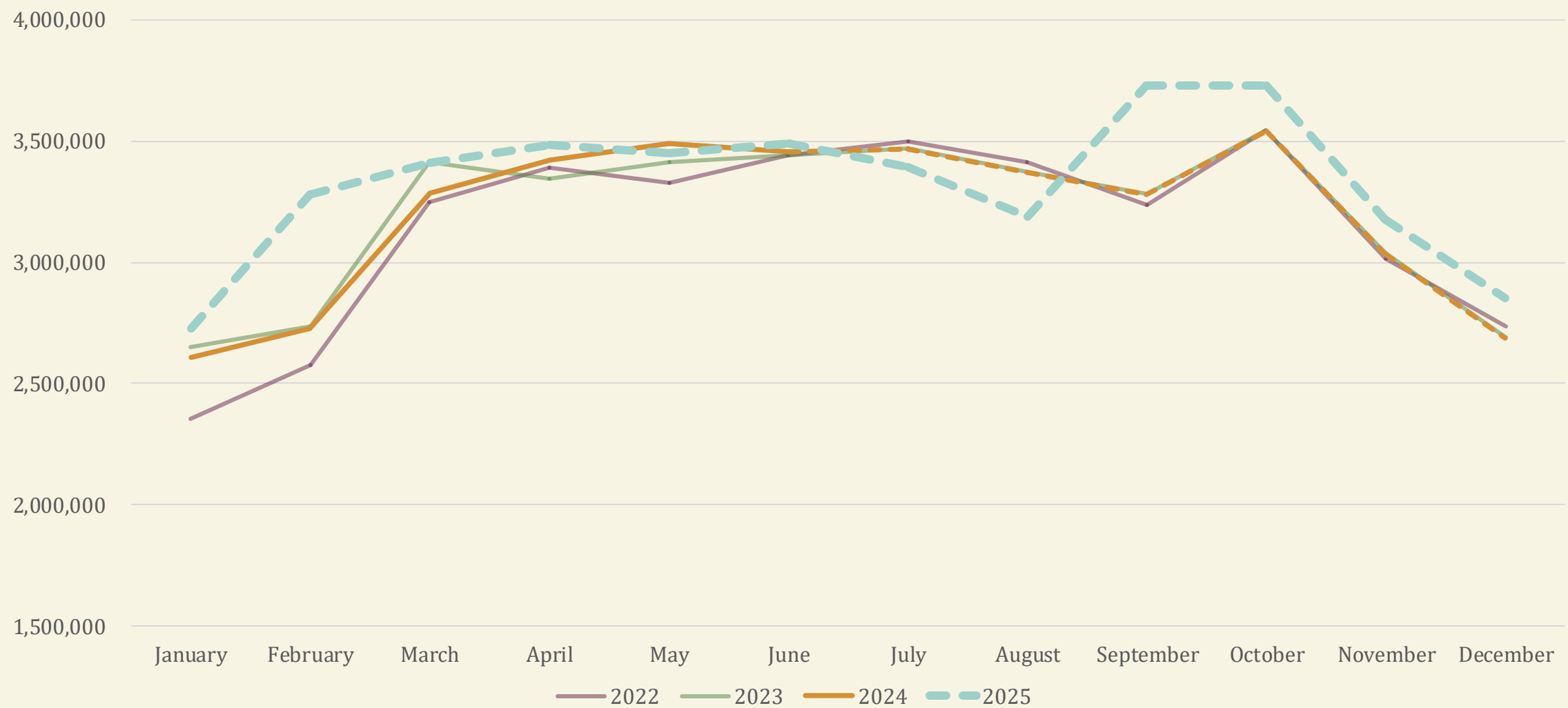
Source: Tourism Economics

2025 YTD STATEWIDE LODGING DATA (THROUGH MARCH)

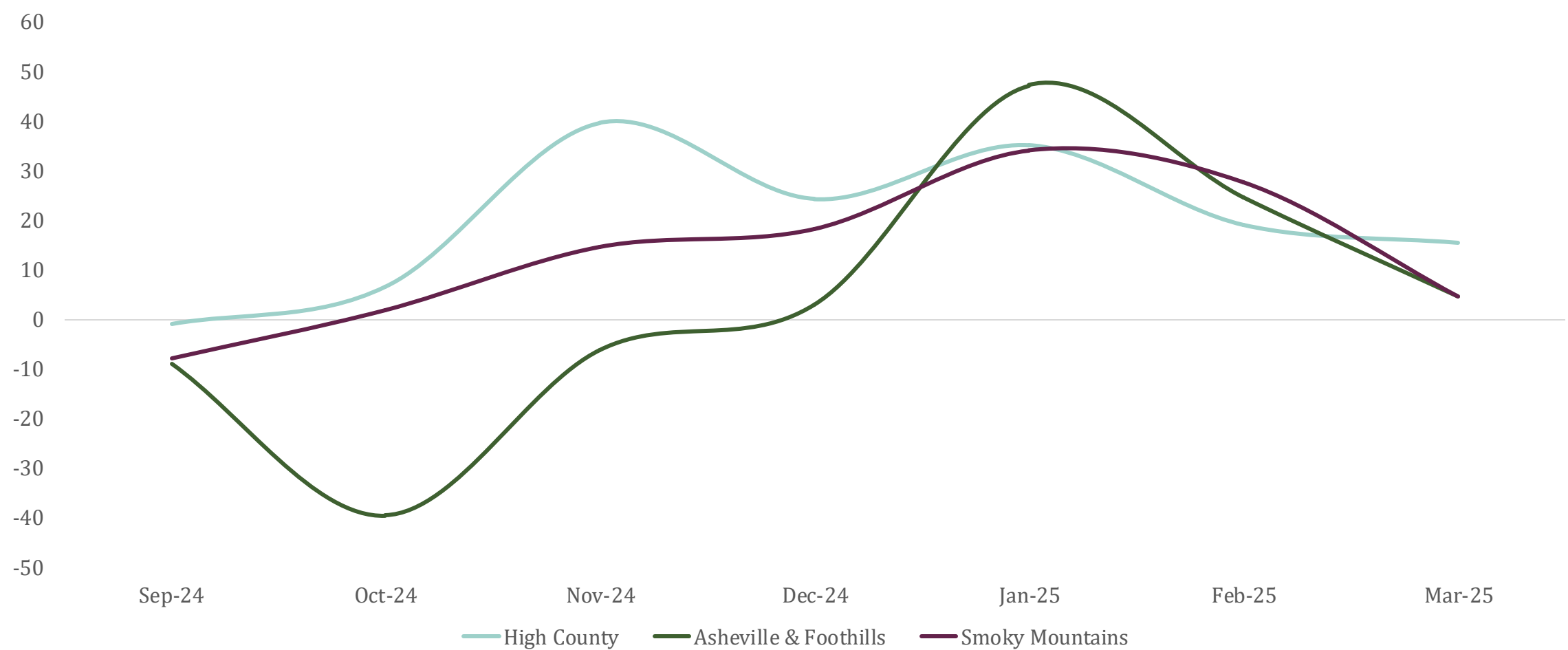
| Measurement | Commercial Lodging (STR) | Airbnb/HomeAway entire home rentals (AirDNA) | Vacation Rentals (KeyData) |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Occupancy | Up 3.4% | Flat | Flat |
| Room Rates | Up 5.3% | Up 4.1% | Down 8.6% |
| RevPAR | Up 8.9% | Up 5.0% | Down 10.2% |
| Revenues | Up 10.0% | Up 5.1% | Down 10.8% |
| Demand | Up 4.5% | Up 0.7% | Down 1.9% |
| Supply | Up 1.0% | Down 0.1% | Down 2.0% |



STATEWIDE COMMERCIAL LODGING FORECAST - DEMAND



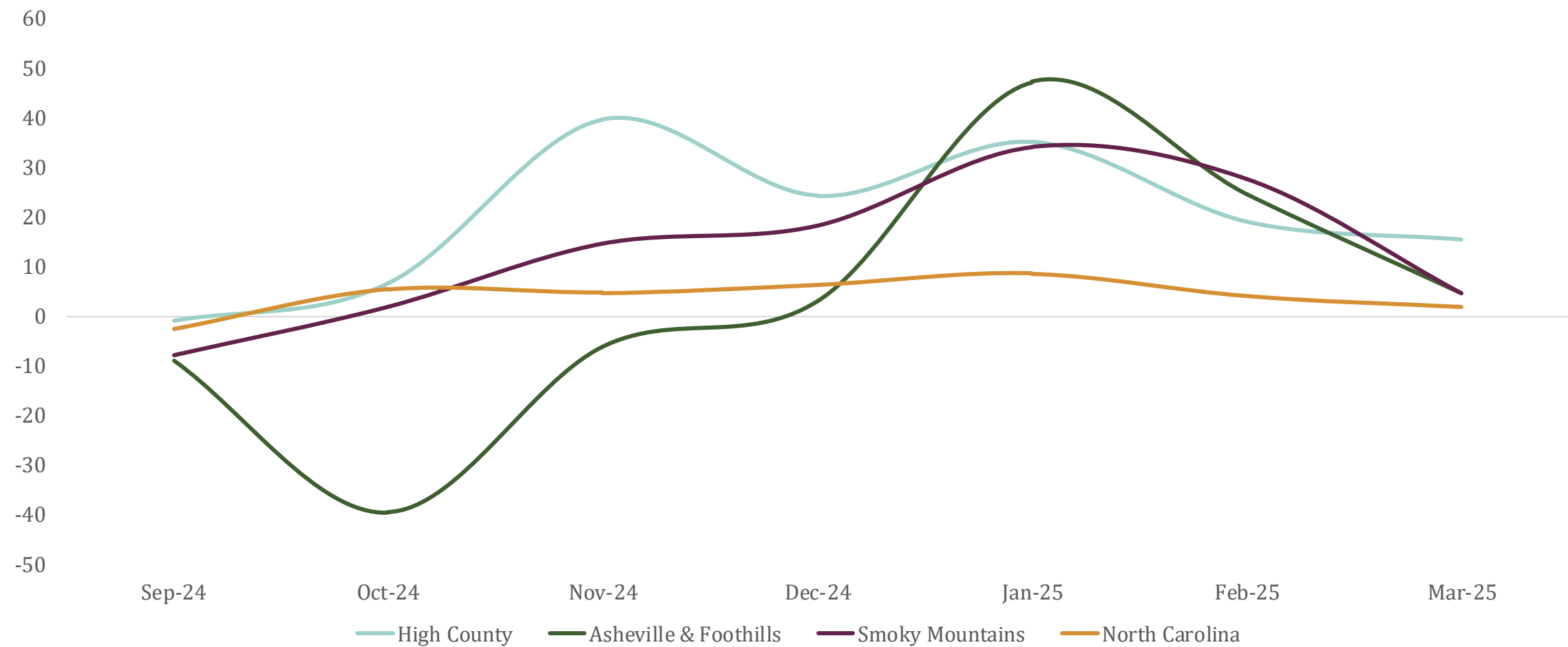
WESTERN NC DEMAND DATA



Source: STR, 2025



WESTERN NC DEMAND DATA

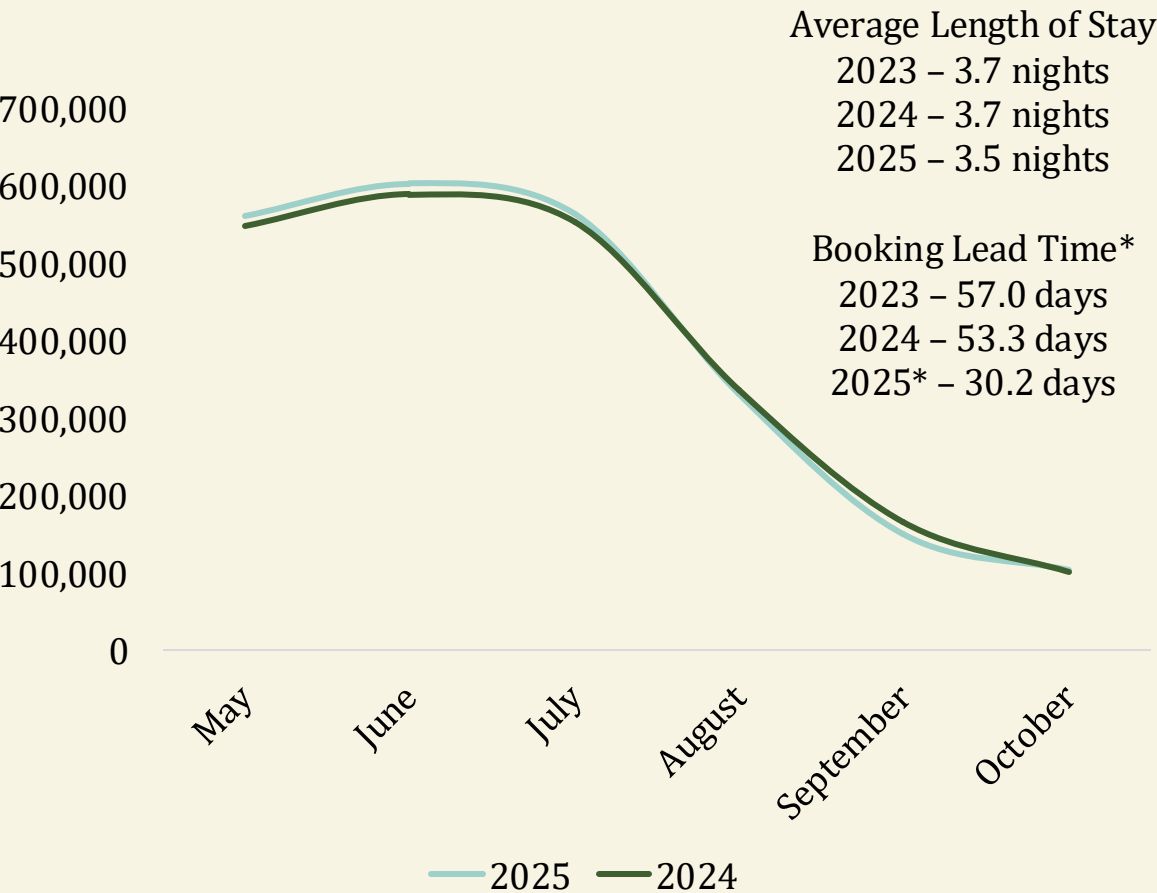


Source: STR, 2025

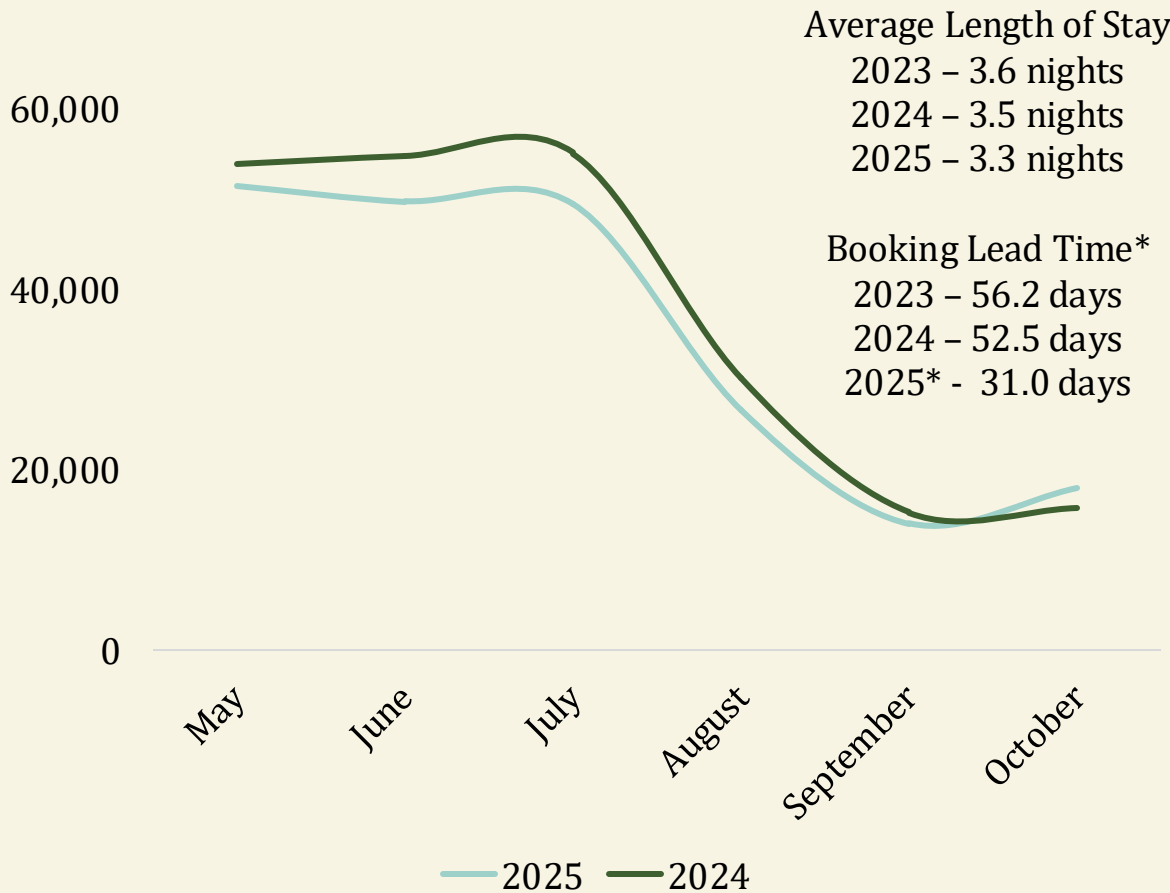


VACATION RENTAL OUTLOOK

North Carolina - Guest Nights Booked as of May
of 2024 & 2025



Smoky Mountains- Guest Nights Booked as of
May of 2024 & 2025



Source: AirDNA, 2025
*Only representative of bookings January-April of 2025.





RECOVERY MARKETING & RESEARCH

RECOVERY RESEARCH

Visitor Perception Data

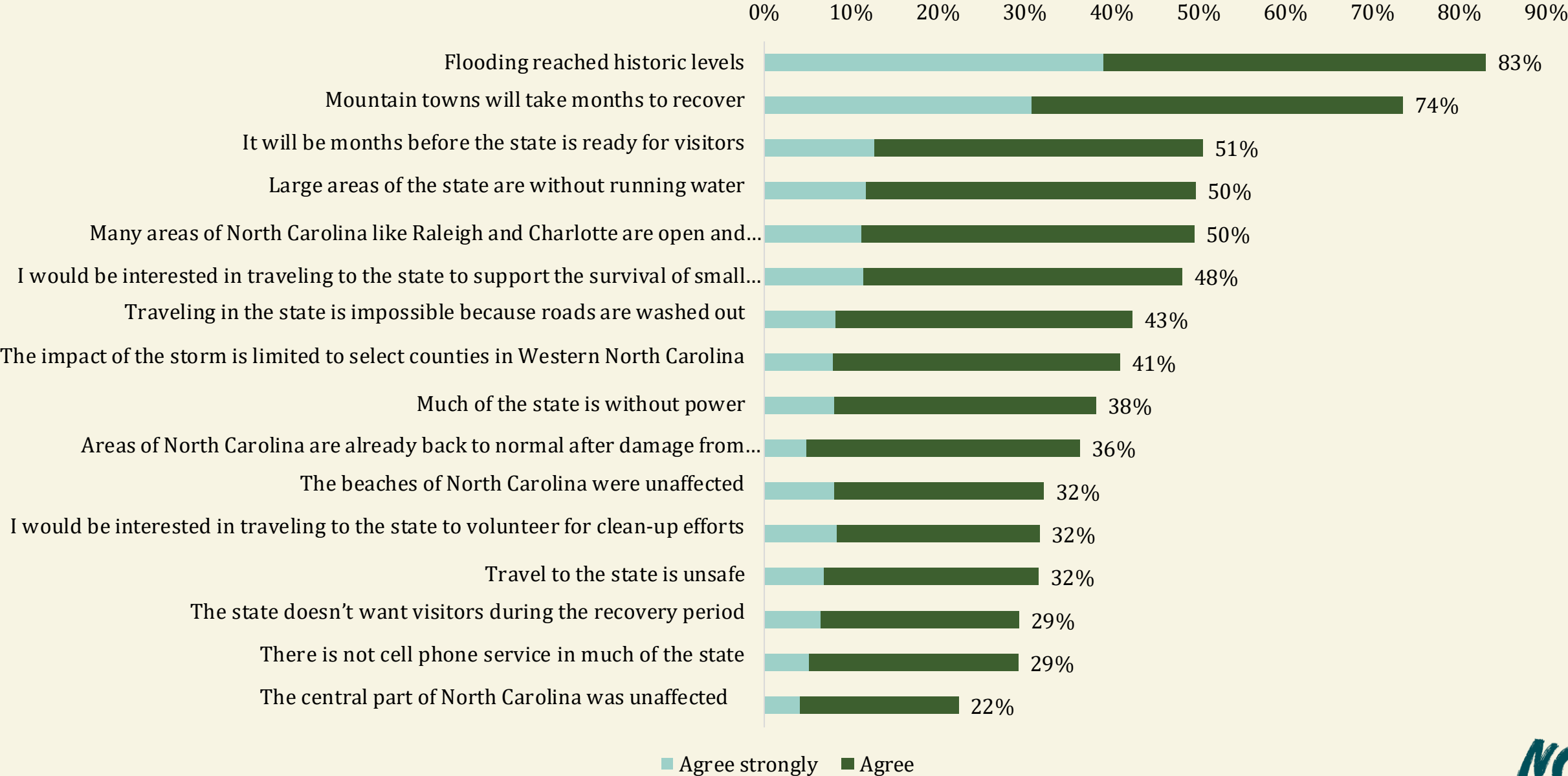


CHANGE IN LIKELIHOOD TO VISIT

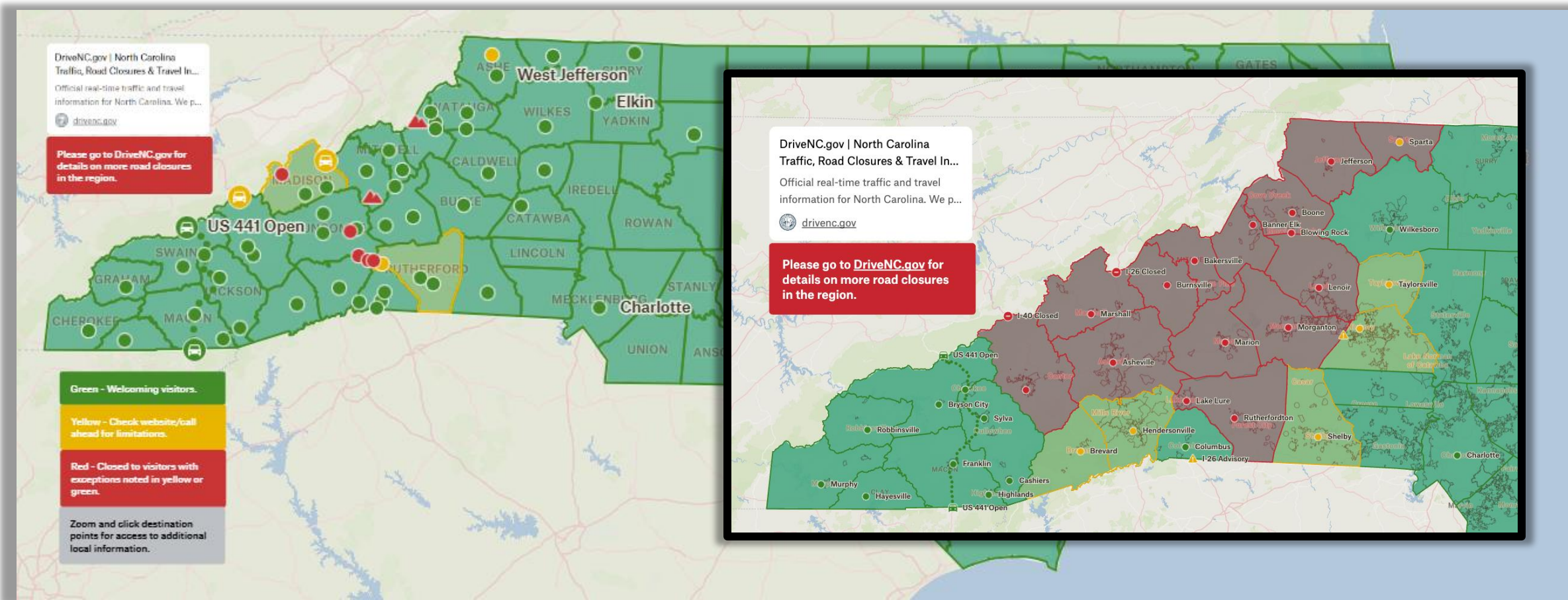
Likelihood to Visit North Carolina (Extremely Likely & Somewhat Likely)



Knowledge of Hurricane Impacts



MOUNTAIN STATUS MAP



PUBLIC RELATIONS



PUBLIC RELATIONS






GARDEN GUN


ARTS & CULTURE

Get a Jump on Holiday Shopping and Bolster North Carolina Artists Who Need Help

From Black Mountain to Asheville to Boone to Chimney Rock, creatives in Western North Carolina need support during what would have been their busiest season

By **AMY BRECOUNT WHITE**
October 16, 2024





Previously, visitors gathered at Marshall High Studios for the annual holiday market. Due to flood damage from Helene, the studio is in the process of restoration, but the Marshall Handmade Market will continue this year at Odonata Farm in Mars Hill, North Carolina.

PHOTO: MELINA FERRIS COOGAN

Southern Living






FOOD HOME GARDEN TRAVEL HOLIDAYS CULTURE STYLE NEWS SHOPPING ABOUT US

Q SUBSCRIBE

These North Carolina Towns Are Open And Need Your Business

"We appreciate your support to our local economy this fall, as we rely on this season heavily."

By [Lisa Cericola](#) | Updated on October 18, 2024



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In This Article

Highlands

Franklin

Cashiers

Bryson City

Robbinsville

Brevard

Shelby

Murphy

Hayesville

Hendersonville




PHOTO: VISIT SMOKIES

North Carolina is a beloved travel destination all year round, especially in the fall and early summer, when its natural beauty really shines. While much of the western part of the state is still recovering from widespread devastation caused by [Hurricane Helene](#), some areas are open for business and in need of visitors.

Visit North Carolina has released a [helpful interactive map](#) that shows the most up-to-date [road closures](#), areas that you should avoid, and where it is safe to travel. (Check out [DriveNC.com](#) for more detailed information on road closures.) Based on that information, we've rounded up our recommendations on where to go, what to do, and where to stay.

If you do decide to travel, be sure to double check any reservations or plans before leaving, as this information is changing frequently.

RELATED: [The 15 Most Beautiful Places In North Carolina, According To Locals](#)

Earn 2 Ways On 2-Night Stays


Join and register, then earn up to 4,000 bonus points on each stay.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

GARDEN OF GUN

TRAVEL


These Western North Carolina Communities Are Open and Need Your Patronage This Fall

“Above all, your presence shows that the outside world cares”

By ELIZABETH HUTCHISON HICKLIN

October 23, 2024

[f](#)[x](#)[p](#)[e](#)[i](#)



Downtown Waynesville, North Carolina.


THE POINTS GUY

NEWS CREDIT CARDS POINTS + MILES TRAVEL TOOLS

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NEWS

Following Hurricane Helene, these western North Carolina towns are open and eager for tourists

Jason Frye

Oct. 24, 2024 • 8 min read



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Great offers from our partners

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

TRAVEL

In the aftermath of Helene, Asheville tells tourists: 'We're open for business'

Hurricane Helene ravaged parts of the popular tourist destination during its peak season. But hospitality businesses are steadily opening again with a focus on the Christmas season.

By Sara Murphy

October 25, 2024

[f](#)[x](#)[e](#)[i](#)

PUBLIC RELATIONS



RALEIGH, NC

THE STATE OF TOURISM IN NC FOLLOWING HELENE

AccuWeather

North Carolina Welcomes Visitors Back After Helene
RALEIGH, NC



FOX WEATHER

TOURISM RESILIENCE
NORTH CAROLINA'S COMEBACK: OPEN AND READY FOR VISITORS

WEATHER COMMAND



HELENE AFTERMATH
PARTS OF NC MOUNTAINS READY TO WELCOME TOURISTS

9:40 Norwalk Hourly 10a 65° 11a 70° 12p 72° 1p 76°

Check your LOCAL FORECAST ON THE TV APP

FALL COLOR MINI-CAMPAIGN

Southern Mountain Communities



RECOVERY MINI-CAMPAIGN | SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS FALL COLOR

Initial post storm mini-campaign promoting
Fall through October 31

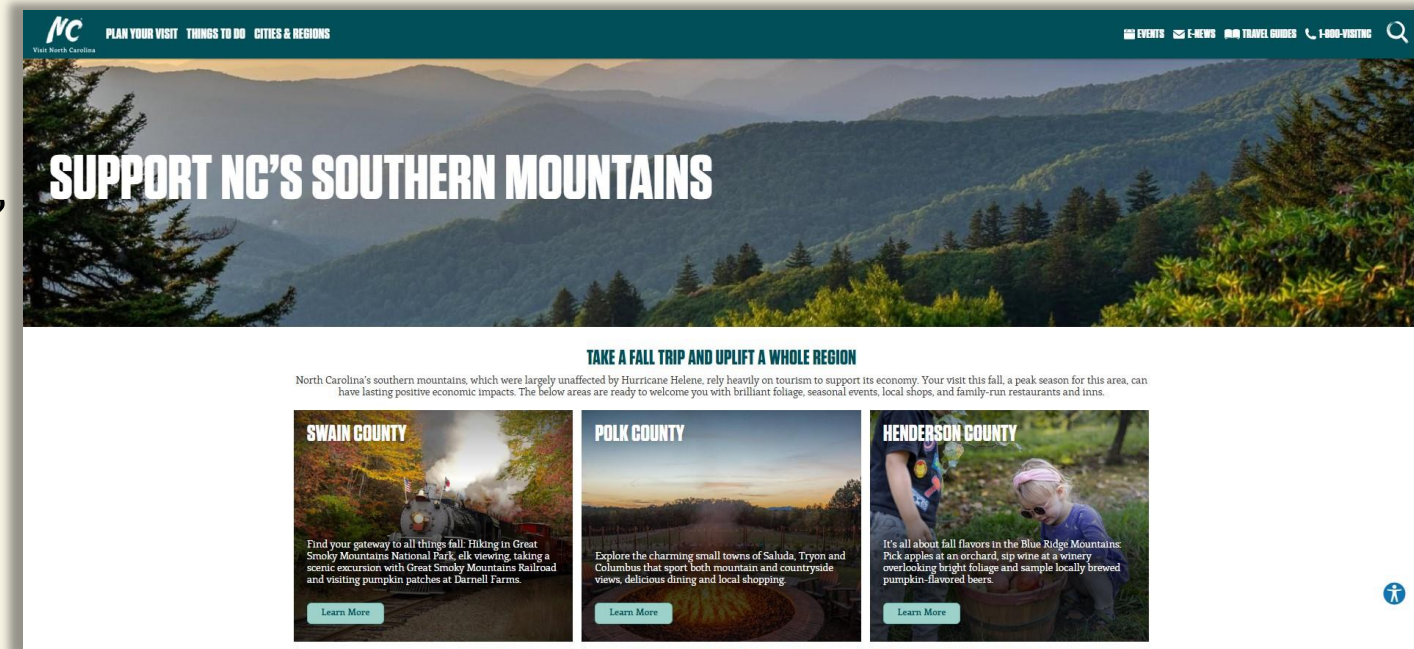
12 largely less affected destinations

“Take a Fall Trip and Uplift a Whole Region”

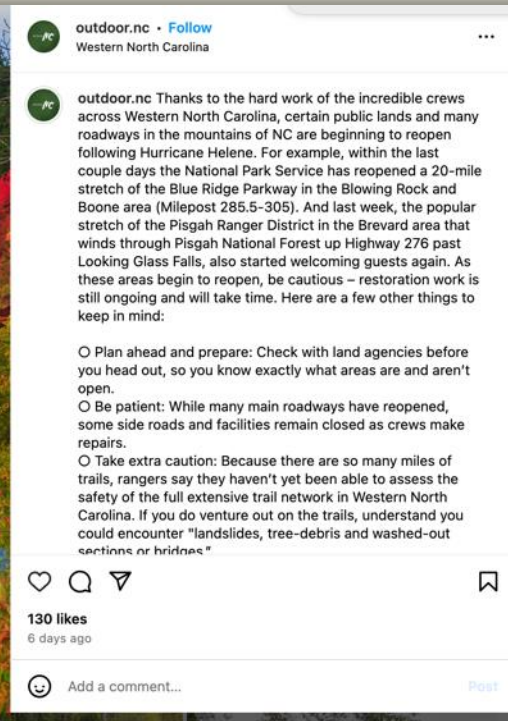
Instagram, Pinterest and organic social

Select target markets in NC, SC, GA,
TN and AL

Customized VisitNC.com landing page
featuring all 12 partner destinations



RECOVERY MINI CAMPAIGN | OWNED AND ORGANIC CHANNELS



RECOVERY MARKETING UPDATE | SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS

Initial post storm mini-campaign promoting
Fall through October 31

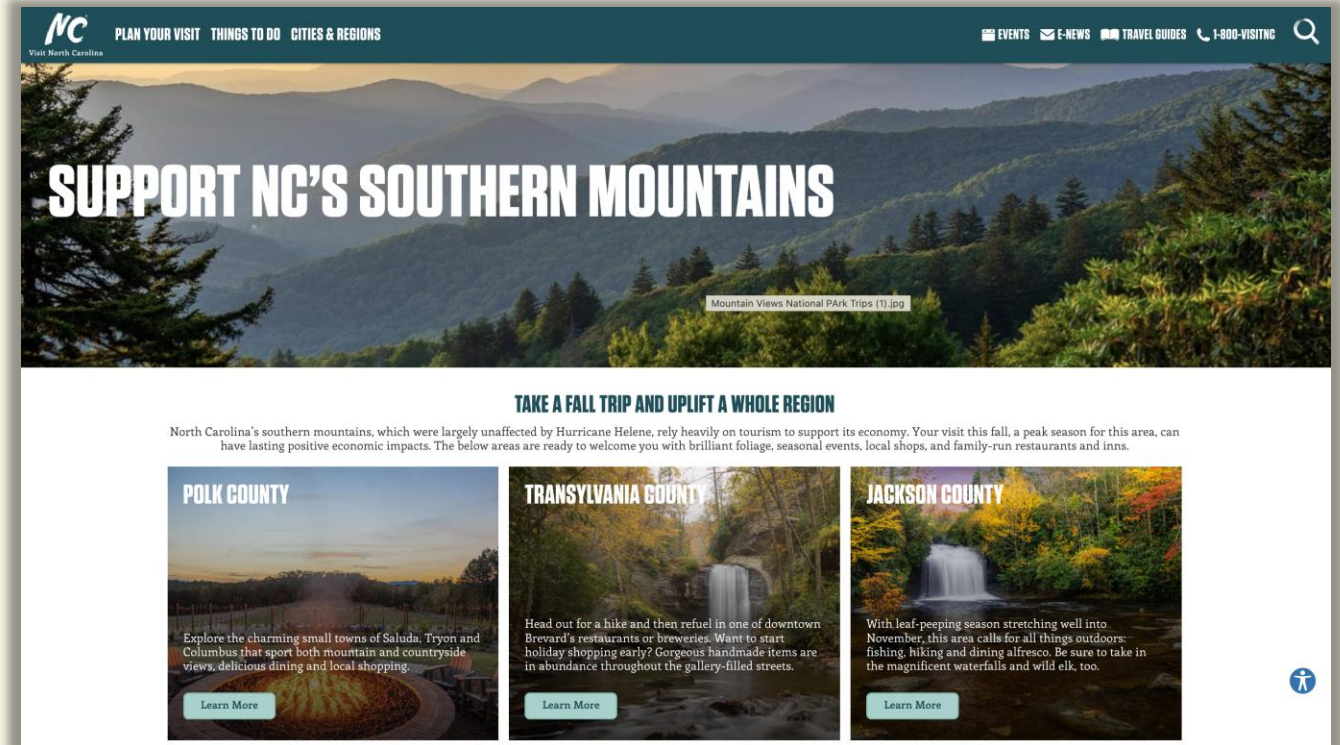
12 largely less affected destinations

“Take a Fall Trip and Uplift a Whole Region”

Instagram, Pinterest and organic social

Select target markets in NC, SC, GA, TN and AL

Customized VisitNC.com landing page
featuring all 12 partner destinations



RECOVERY MARKETING UPDATE | SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS



DEDICATED MOUNTAIN RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

\$9 Million, Full Year

RECOVERY CAMPAIGN | PAID MEDIA

Mountain-focused recovery paid media

- Four seasons Nov '24 – Oct '25
- Top markets of origin for region
 - Proximity to state
 - NC, SC, GA, FL, TN and AL
- Plus International

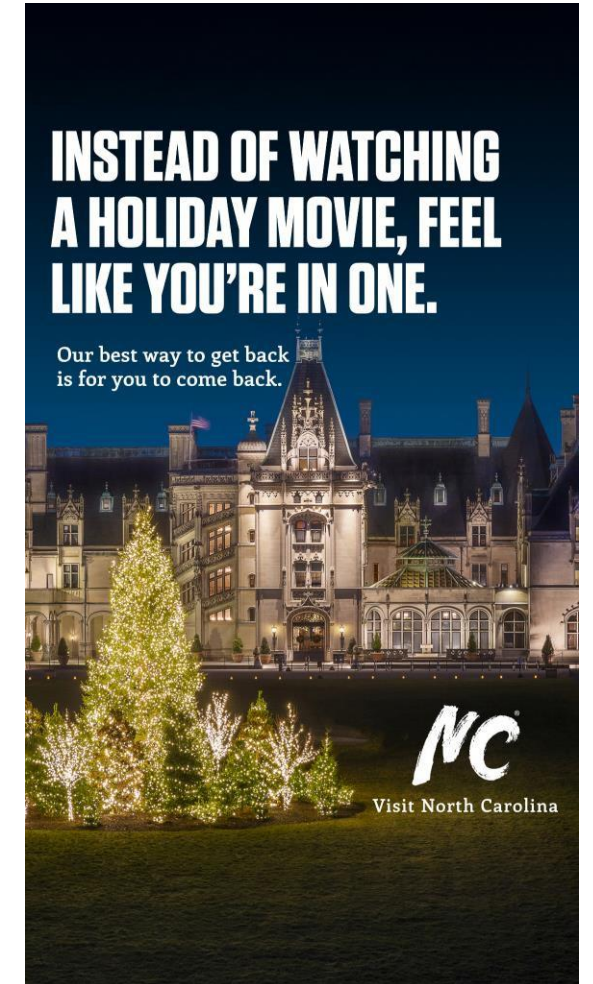
Piedmont and Coast messaging benefiting from modest core budget increase



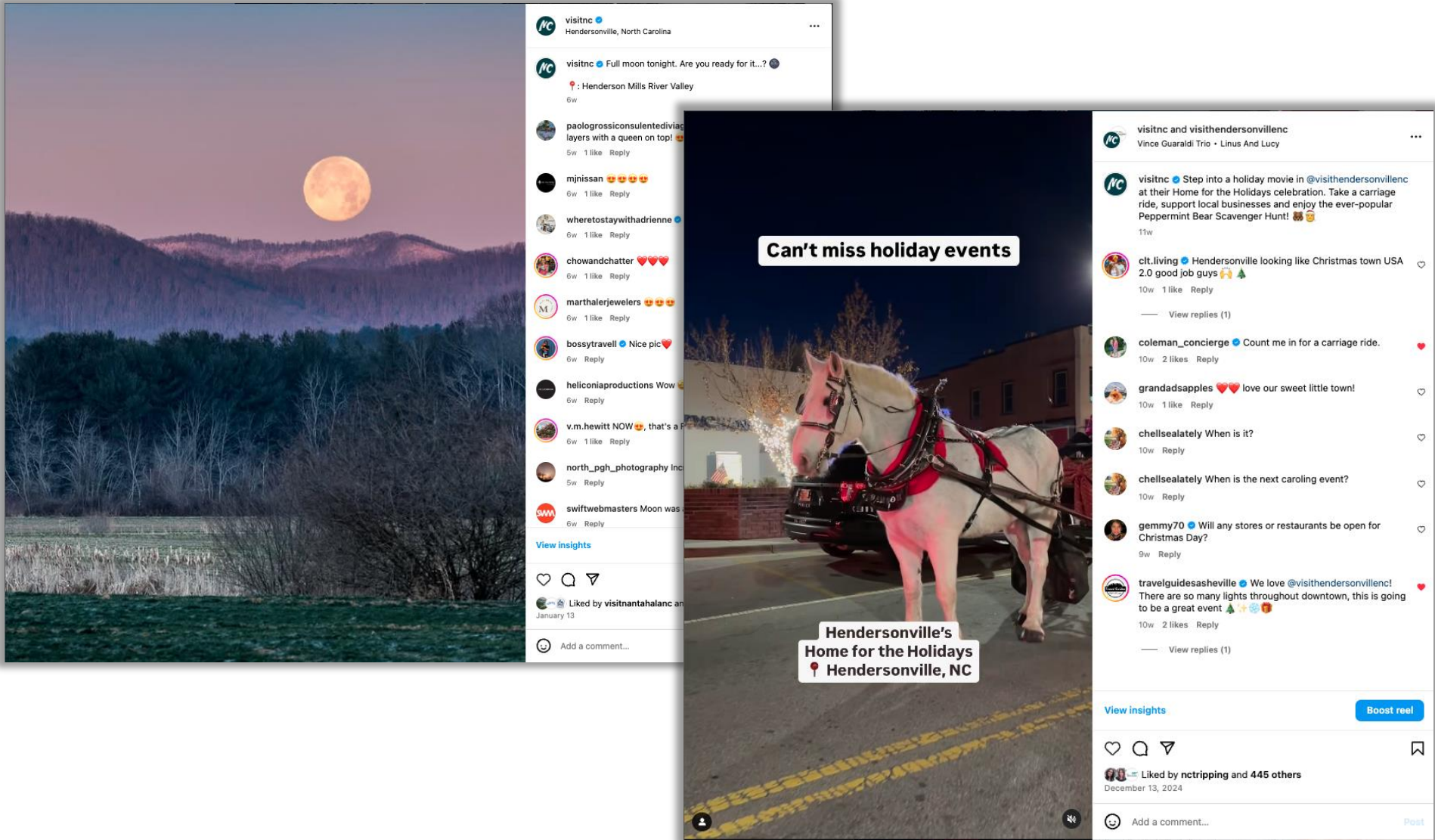
MOUNTAIN RECOVERY HOLIDAYS 2024



RECOVERY MARKETING | MTNS HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN



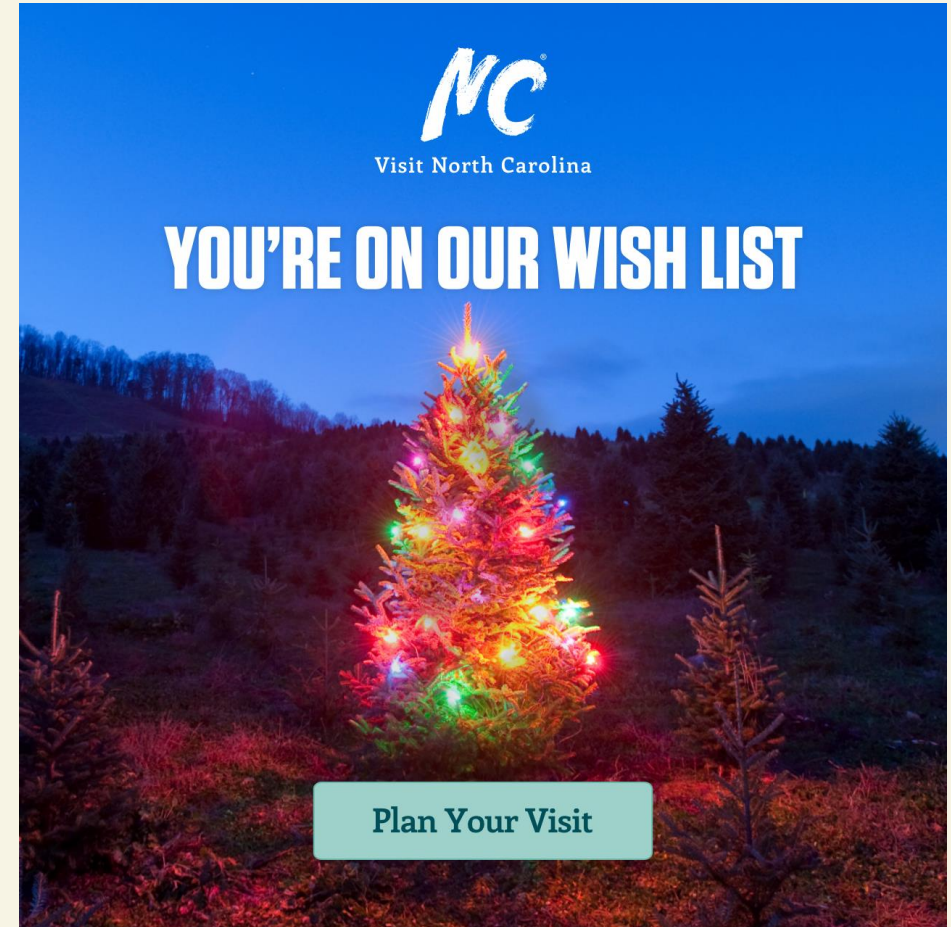
RECOVERY CAMPAIGN | WINTER SOCIAL MEDIA



RECOVERY CAMPAIGN | HOLIDAY STREAMING AUDIO

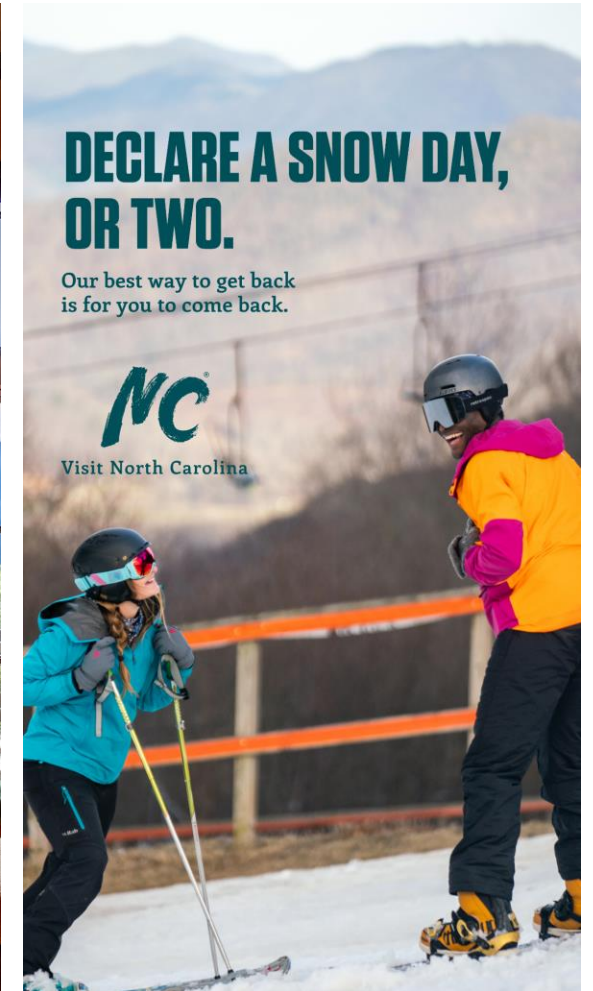
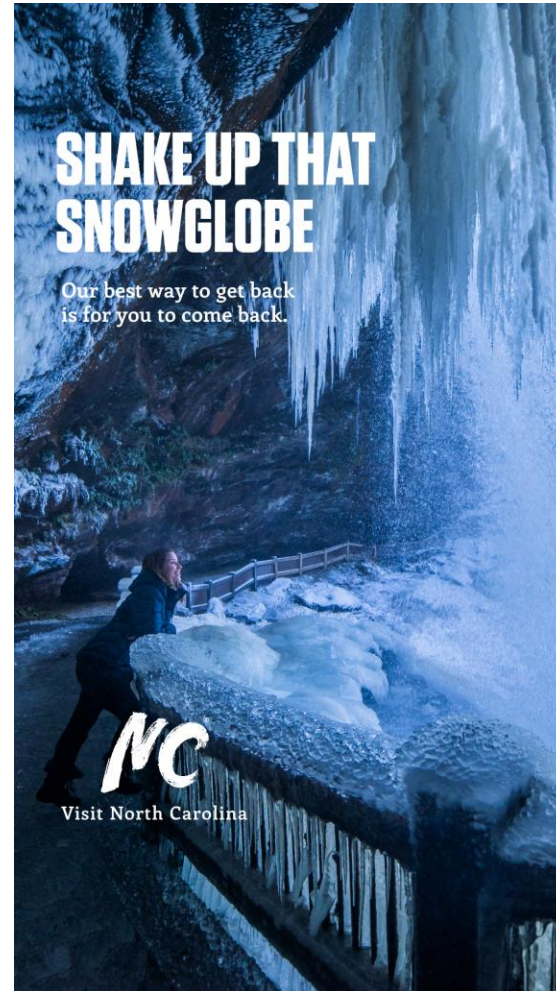
:30

They say “tis the season for giving.” So how about you give you and yours a new tradition, like a trip to the mountains of North Carolina? We’re open and have all the holiday trimmings. Fresh cut trees. Check. Twinkling Lights. Check. You? Well, you’re on our wish list, because the best way for us to get back is for you to come back. Sounds like a great gift for us all and a chance to say, “Bless our hearts, everyone.”

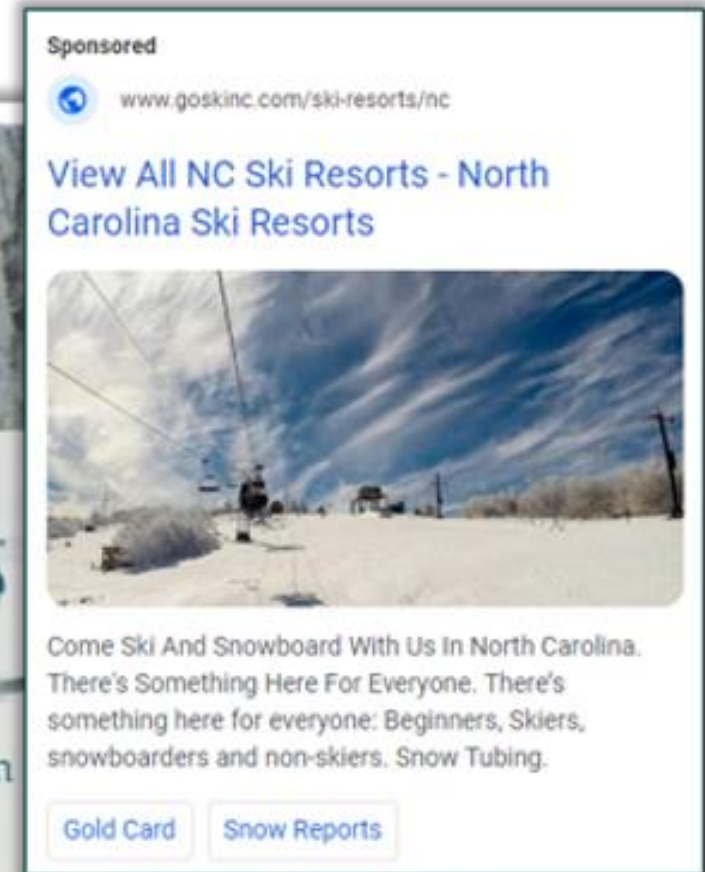
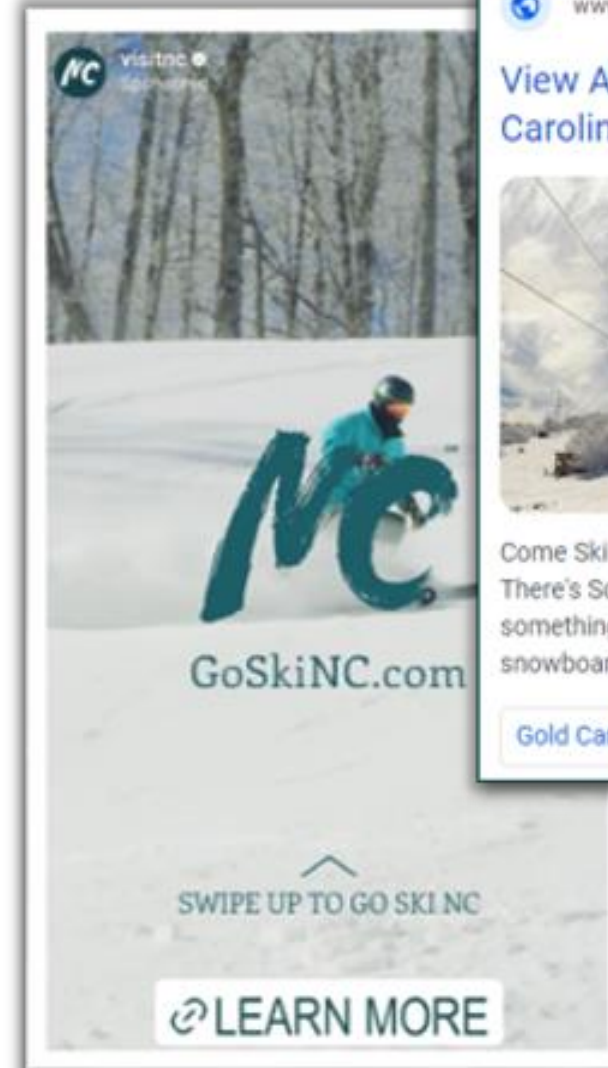
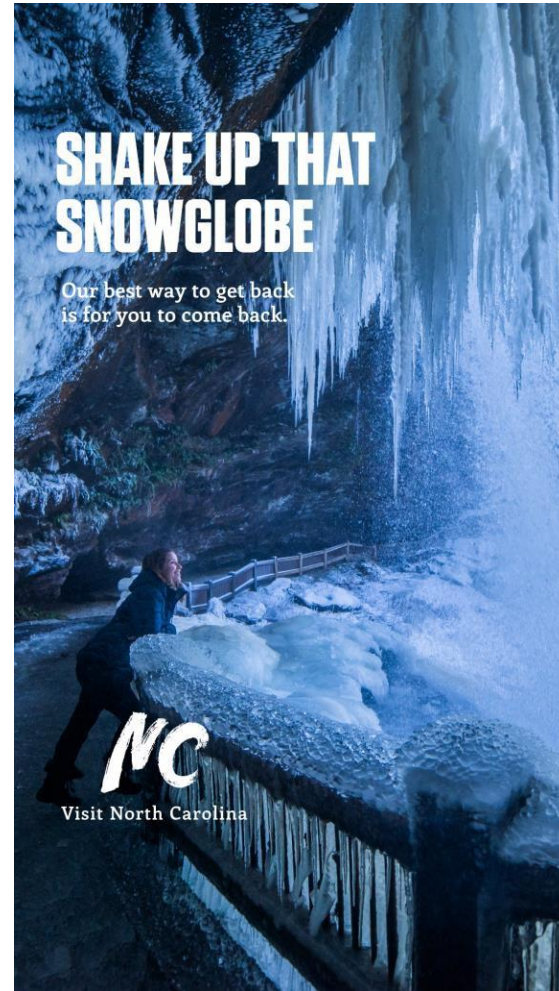


MOUNTAIN RECOVERY WINTER 2025

RECOVERY MARKETING | MTNS WINTER ADS



RECOVERY MARKETING | MTNS WINTER ADS





CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

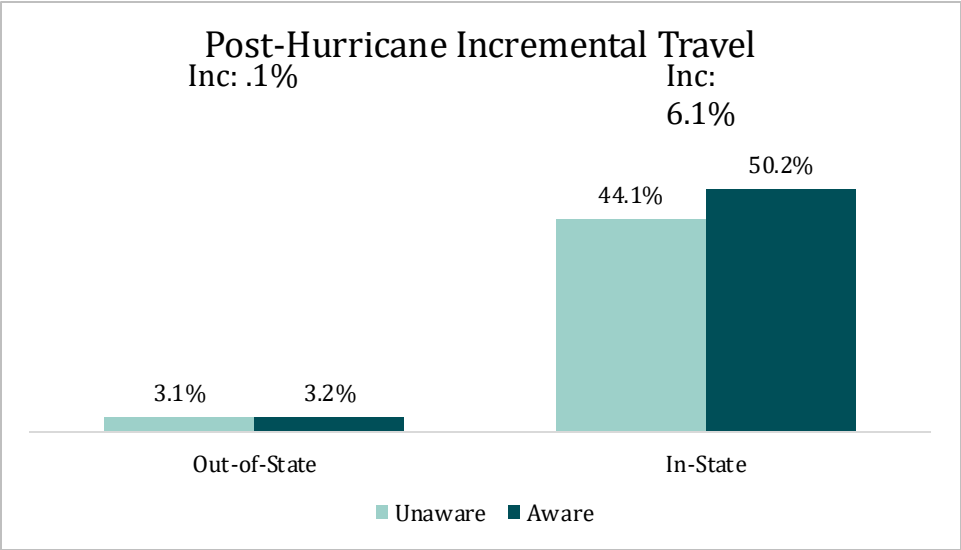
Is it Working?



POST-HURRICANE INCREMENTAL LIFT

Media investment generated nearly 90,000 influenced trips after Hurricane Helene.

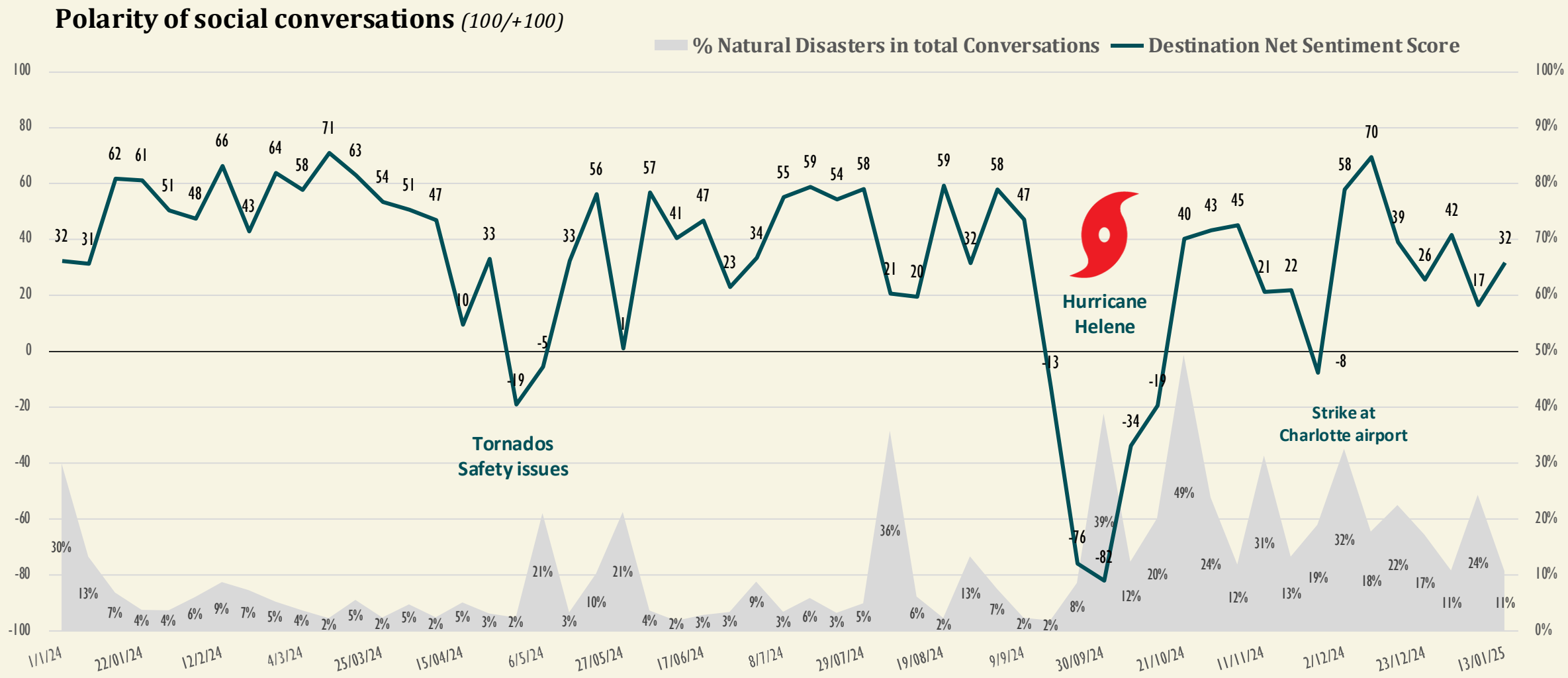
- Of the 530,000 out-of-state trips influenced by North Carolina paid media throughout 2024, just 10,000 of those occurred in the last quarter of the year.
- Targeted investment in-state to drive recovery after the hurricane influenced nearly 80,000 trips from residents.



| | Post Hurricane Recall | Aware HHs | Incremental Travel | Influenced Trips | Media Spending | Cost per Influenced Trip |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Out-of-State | 25% | 11,958,189 | 0.1% | 10,761 | \$368,241.48 | \$34 |
| In-State | 41% | 1,284,929.02 | 6.1% | 78,882 | \$79,397.16 | \$1 |



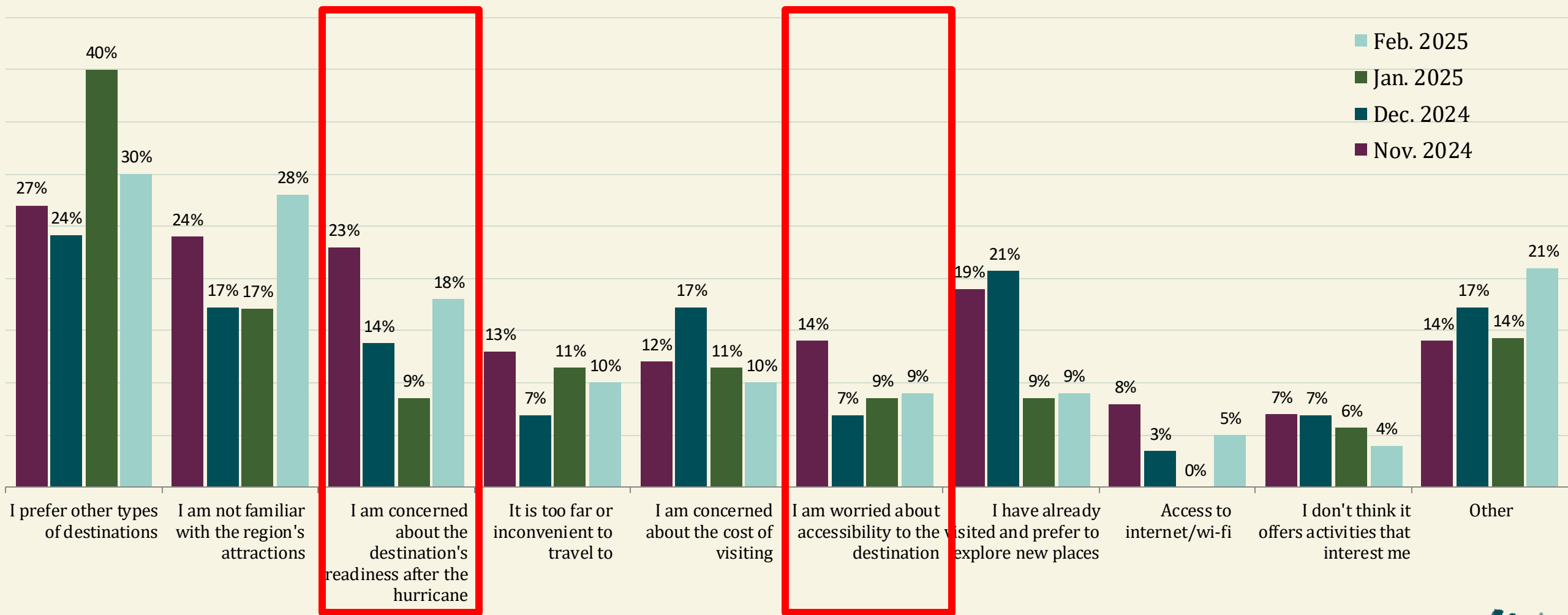
SOCIAL REPUTATION TRENDS FOR NORTH CAROLINA



Note: The Travelsat Net Sentiment Score measures the polarity of social conversations about the destination from a scale of -100 to +100 (% of positive - % of negative social mentions)



REASONS FOR DISINTEREST IN VISITING MOUNTAIN REGIONS



Base: Potential travelers who are not interested in North Carolina's Mountain Regions (n=130)
Source: MMGY, 2025



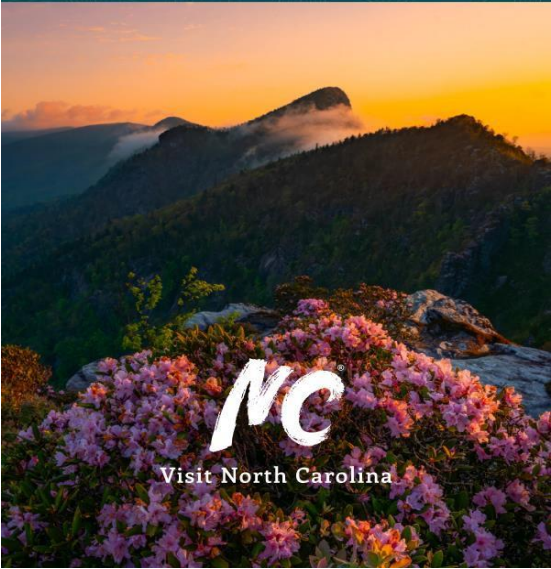
MOUNTAIN RECOVERY SPRING 2025

MOUNTAIN CREATIVE | SPRING FLIGHT

**SPRING IS A TIME
OF RENEWAL,
INCLUDING OURS**

Our best way to get back
is for you to come back.


Come Visit



**SPRING IS IN
FULL BLOOM
AND SO ARE WE.**

Our best way to get back
is for you to come back.


Come Visit



**SPRING IS IN THE
MOUNTAIN AIR**

Our best way to get back
is for you to come back.

Come Visit

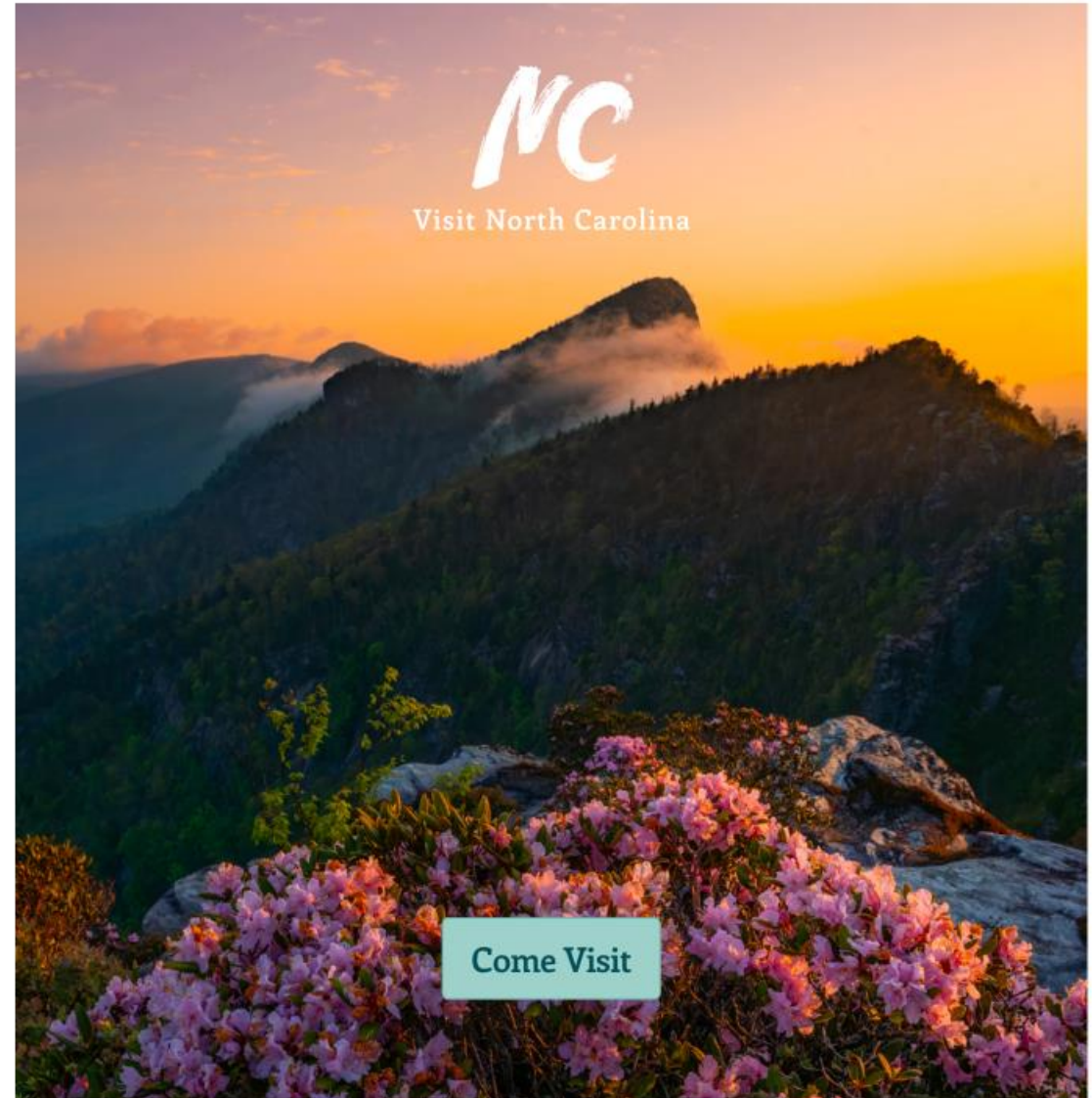


RECOVERY CAMPAIGN | SPRING AUDIO

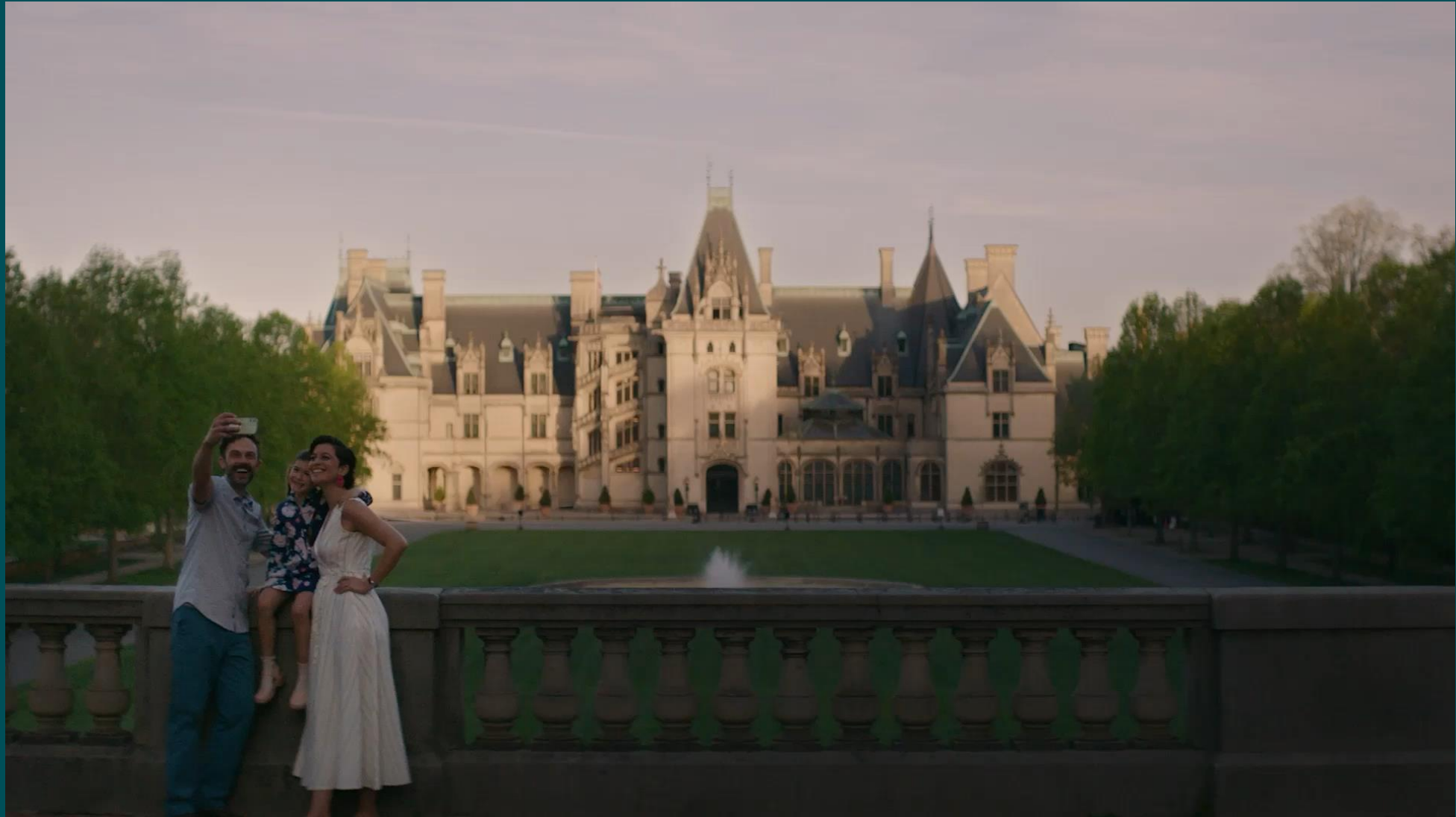
“Spring Cleaning” :30

The birds are chirping. The days are getting longer. And everything's starting to bloom, including us. So, instead of spending your Spring organizing your sock drawer or alphabetizing those spices, how about you plan a trip to the mountains of North Carolina instead?

We guarantee it will be more rewarding because the best way for us to get back is for you to come back. Now that's sure to put a spring in your step. See what I did there? For real, visit North Carolina.



FAIRYTALE :30



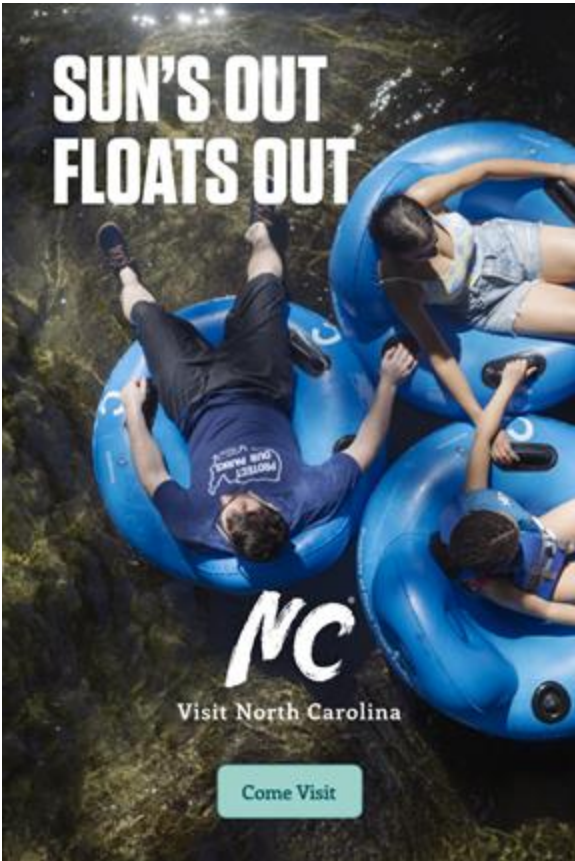
DRY FALLS :15



A large, dark teal, hand-painted style graphic of the word "No" is positioned in the background, spanning most of the width of the image. The letters are thick and have a rough, textured appearance.

MOUNTAIN RECOVERY SUMMER 2025

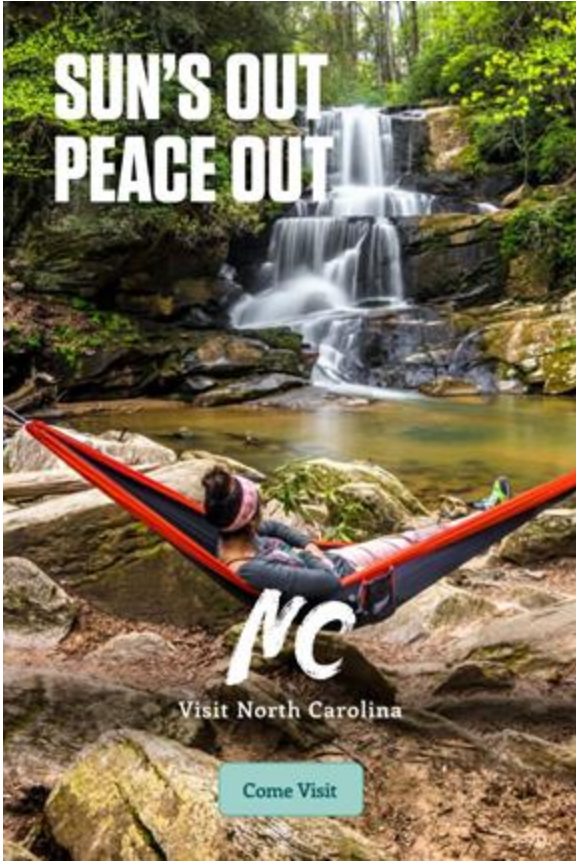
MOUNTAIN RECOVERY | SUMMER CREATIVE



carousel frame 1



carousel frame 2



carousel frame 3



carousel frame 4

RELAXING & REFRESHING :30



NO BAD DAY :15



GO WITH THE FLOW :15



CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

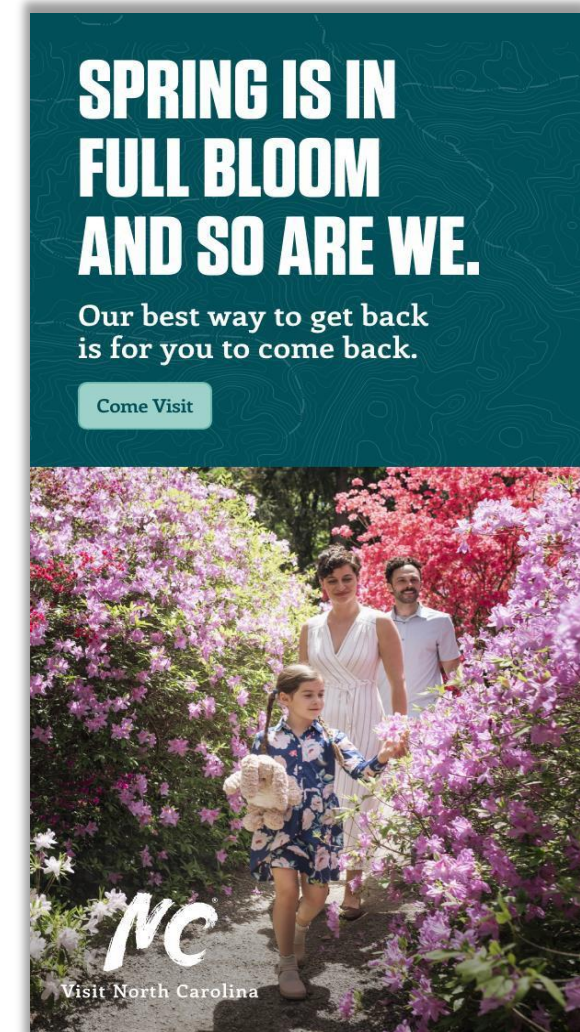
Is it Working?



WESTERN NC RECOVERY | AD CAMPAIGN SNAPSHOT

Performance highlights October through April

- 307,932,610 paid impressions
- 978,800 visits to mountain campaign landing page
- 2,682,027 engagements w/ Facebook and Instagram posts (likes, comments, shares, clicks)



WHAT'S NEXT

Campaign Updates



REMAINING BUDGET SPENDING PLAN

- \$579k remaining of the \$5M appropriation (SL 2024-53)
- Still awaiting \$4M appropriation (SL 2025-02)
 - Plan is to deploy that immediately to help with summer travel season.
 - Continue the campaign through the one-year anniversary/Fall.



FALL SEASON CAMPAIGN

- Ads will go live last week of July.
- PR program around the one-year anniversary:
 - Hosting national and international media and travel influencers throughout the summer/in advance of the anniversary.
 - Satellite Media Tour the week of to discuss recovery and promote travel.



CAMPAIGN APPROACHES

| Brand Campaign (thru June 2025) | | Mountain Recovery |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Markets | Contiguous states, Northeast, Midwest, Mid-Atlantic | NC, SC, GA, FL, TN, AL |
| Tactics | Cable, CTV, Sponsored Content, Display & Rich Media, Audio, Paid Social, Paid Search | CTV, DOOH, Sponsored Content, Audio, Display, Paid Social, Paid Search |
| Messaging |  |  |

THANK YOU

Scott Peacock

Director of Marketing and Communications

Visit North Carolina

Scott.Peacock@VisitNC.com

919.447.7760



WNC Strong Updates: NC Department of Transportation

Brian Skeens, Assistant State Construction Engineer – Western Region



NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Transportation



WNC STRONG

Helene Update

Brian Skeens, PE

WNC Strong Program Manager

May 2025

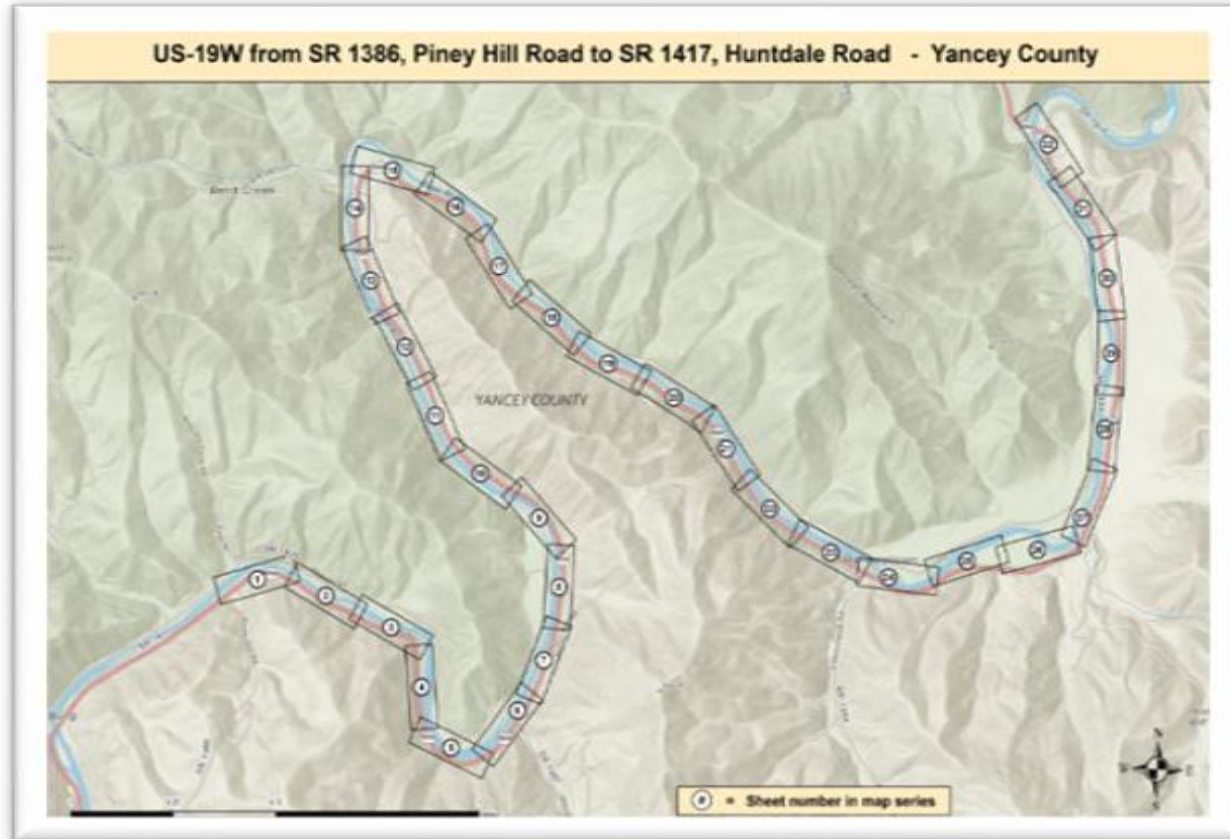


Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

Major Corridor Projects

- **Division 13 Corridor Projects**
 - US 64 Corridor Project
 - US Hwy 19W North Project
 - US Hwy 19W South Project
 - NC 197 South Project
 - Toe-Nolichucky River Basin Project
- **Division 14 Corridor Projects**
 - I-40 Pigeon River Gorge Project
 - US-74A Project
 - US-64 Project

US Highway 19W North



- **Project Scope**

- 14 miles of roadway repair
- Repair/replacement of 7 bridges

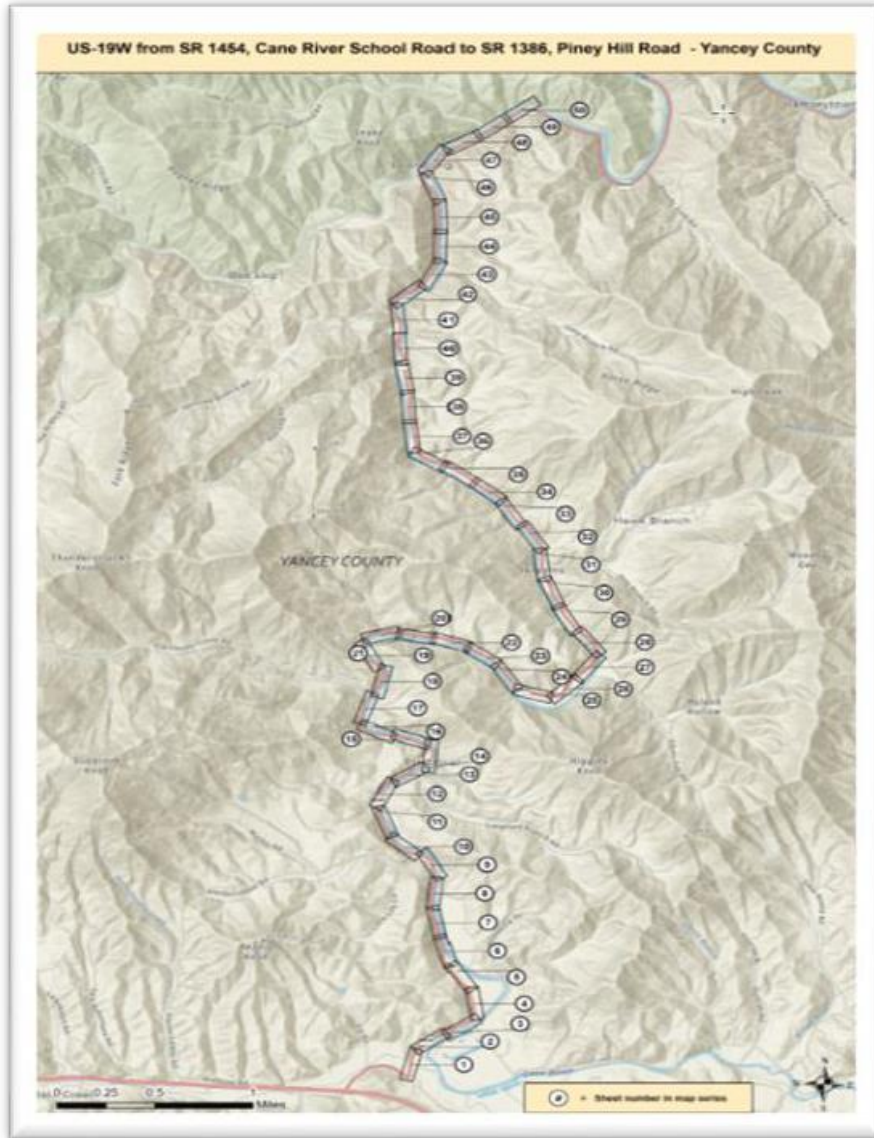
- **Project Information**

- Estimated Cost: \$318M
- Procurement Type: Progressive Design Build

- **Timeline**

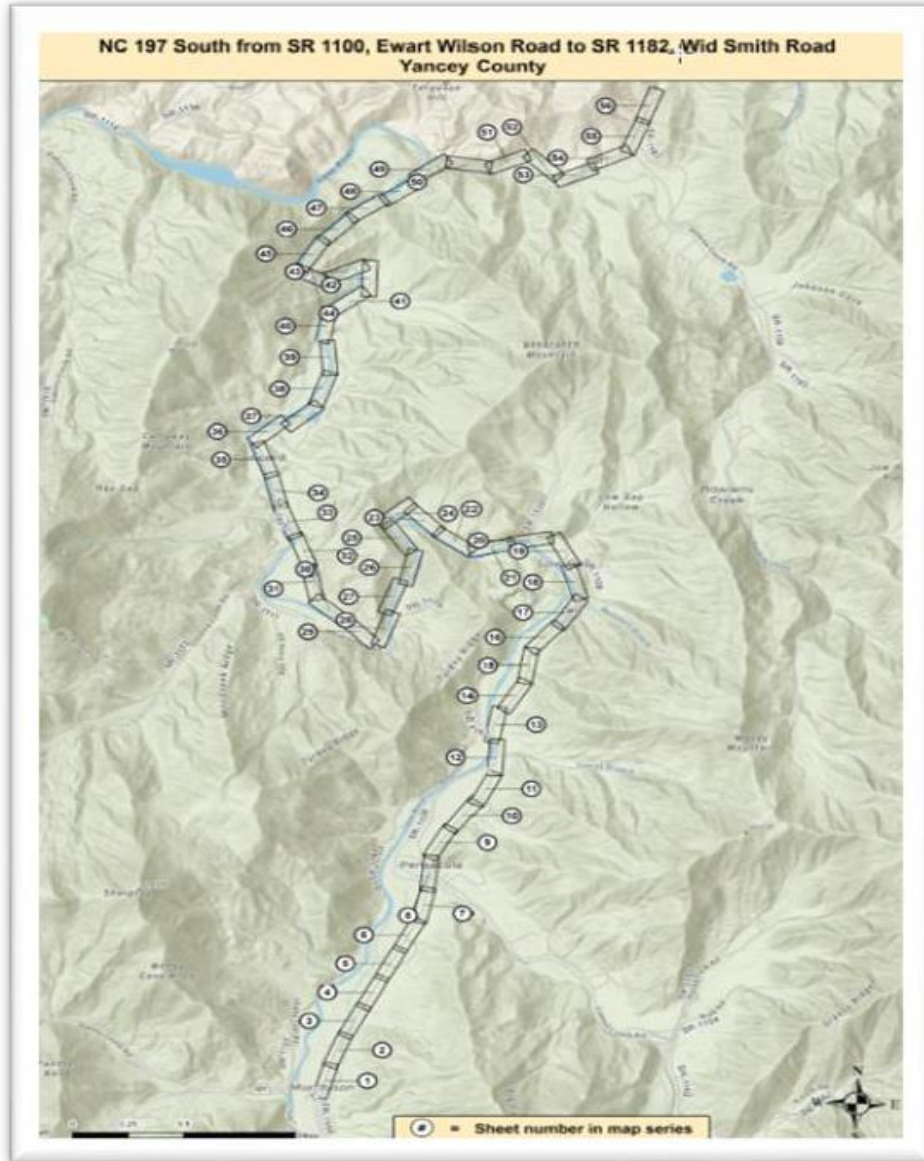
- Award Date: January 14, 2025
- Anticipated Construction Start: September 2025

US Highway 19W South



- **Project Scope**
 - 10 miles of roadway repair
 - Repair/replacement of 10 bridges
- **Project Information**
 - Estimated Cost: \$198 million
 - Procurement Type: Progressive Design Build
- **Timeline**
 - Award Date: January 27, 2025
 - Anticipated Construction Start: September 2025

NC 197 South



- **Project Scope**
 - 30 miles of roadway repair
 - Repair/Replacement of 11 bridges
- **Project Information**
 - Estimated Cost: \$291 million
 - Procurement Type: Progressive Design Build
- **Timeline**
 - Award Date: February 13, 2025
 - Anticipated Construction Start: August 2025

Toe-Nolichucky River Basin

NC 197 Toe-Nolichucky River Basin - Yancey County



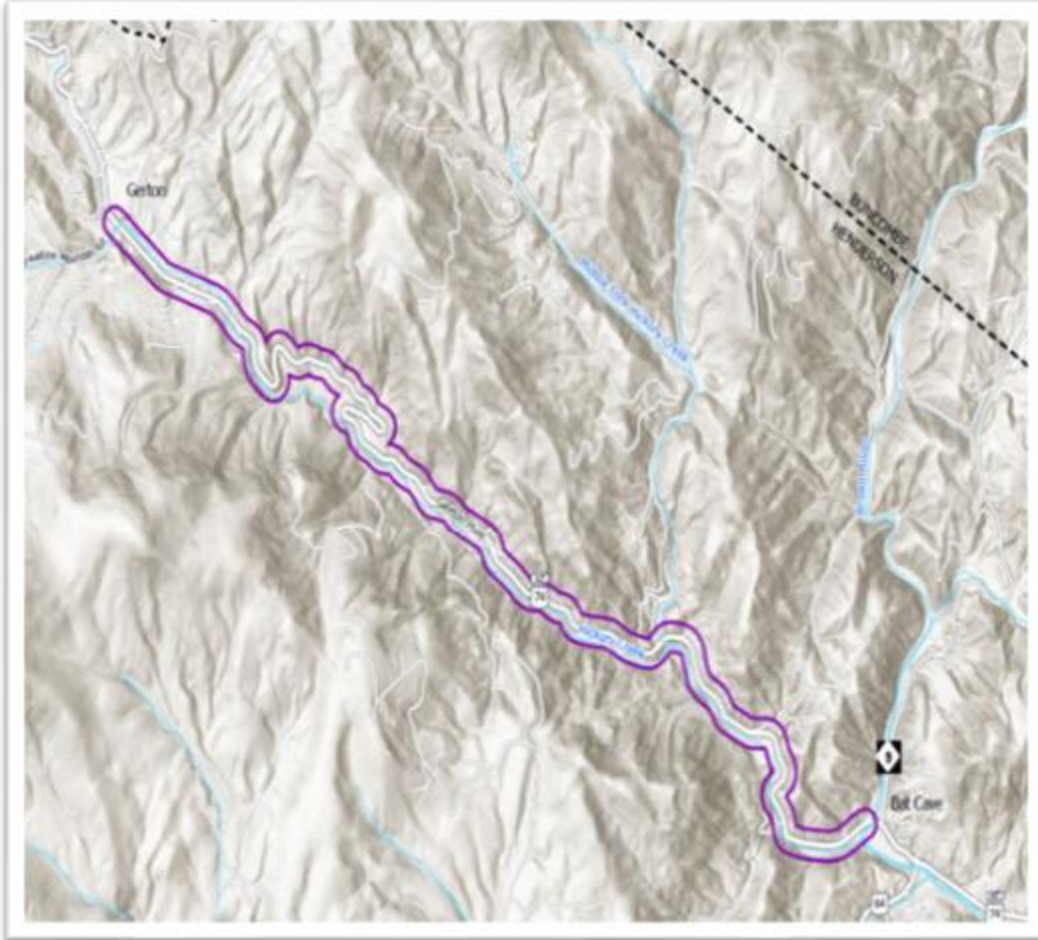
- **Project Scope**
 - 18 miles of roadway repairs
 - Repair/replacement of 7 bridges
- **Project Information**
 - Estimated Cost: \$345 million
 - Procurement Type: Progressive Design Build
- **Timeline**
 - Award Date: February 28, 2025
 - Anticipated Construction Start: August 2025

US-64



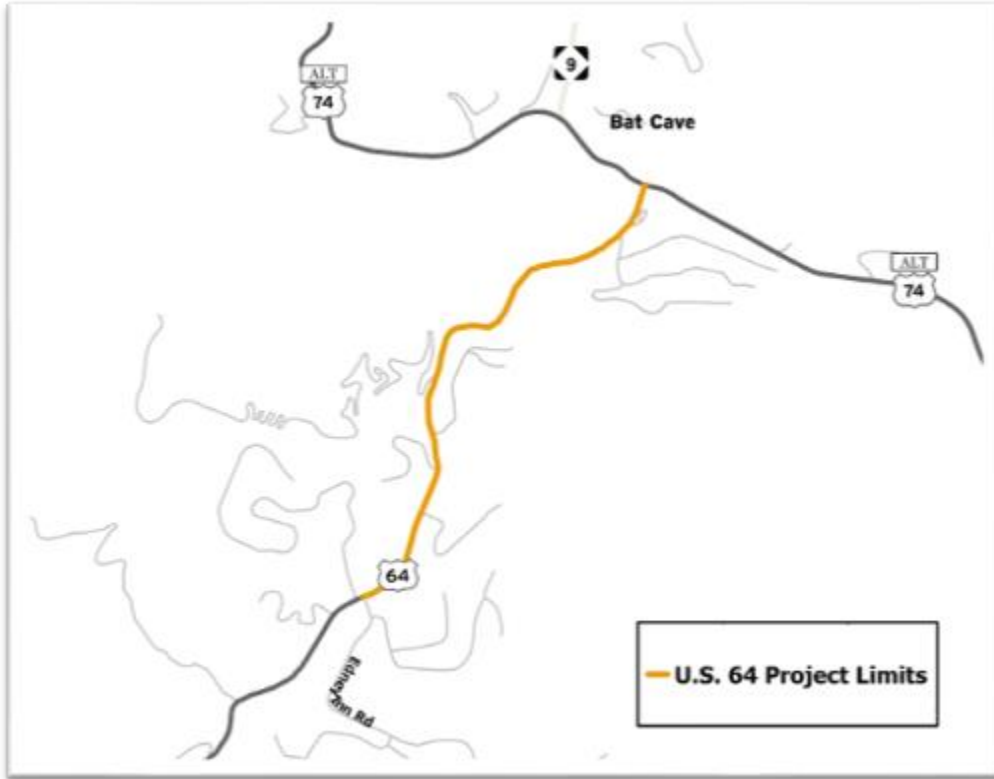
- **Project Description**
 - 2.6-mile stretch of highway and a bridge damage
- **Project Information**
 - Estimated Cost: \$286M
 - Procurement Type: Progressive Design Build
- **Timeline**
 - Award Date: November 11, 2024
 - Anticipated Construction Start: August 2025

US-74A



- **Project Description**
 - 2.6-mile stretch of highway and a bridge damaged
- **Project Information**
 - Estimated Cost: \$126 million
 - Procurement Type: Construction Manager General Contractor
- **Timeline**
 - Award Date: November 25, 2024
 - Anticipated Construction Start: June 2025

US-64



- **Project Description**

- Replacement to match pre-Helene, two-lane condition

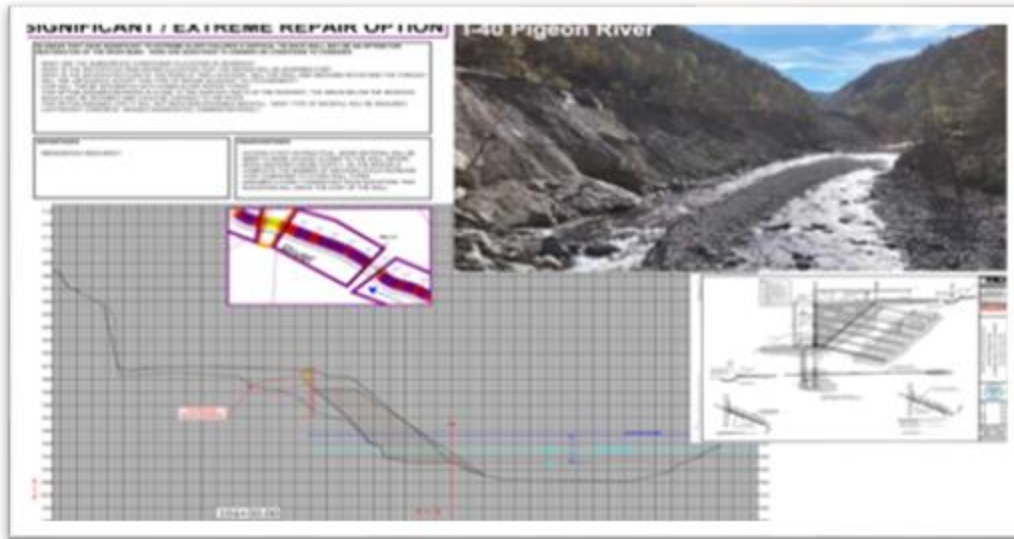
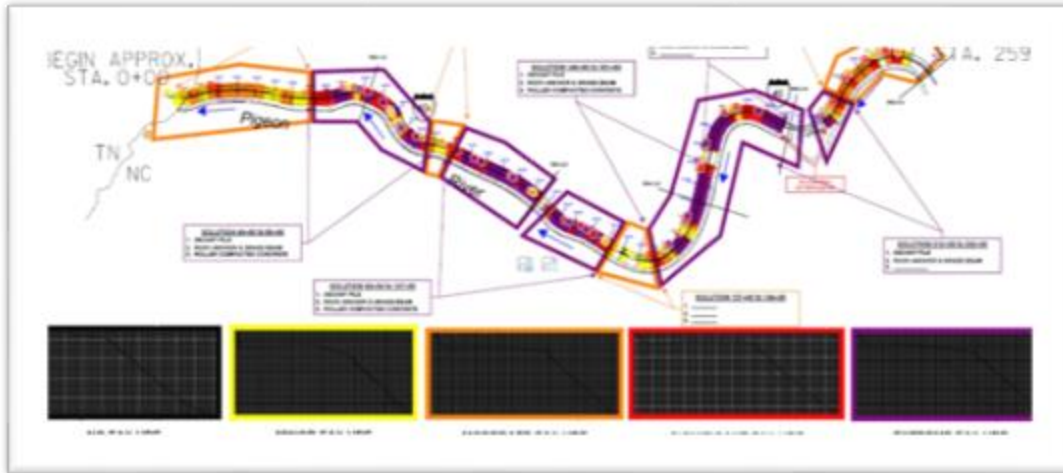
- **Project Information**

- Estimated Cost: \$32 million
- Procurement Type: Design Bid Build

- **Timeline**

- Award Date: January 21, 2025
- Construction Started: March 3, 2025

I-40



- **Project Description**

- 12-mile stretch of I-40 damaged at the Pigeon River Gorge

- **Project Information**

- Estimated Cost: \$1B
- Procurement Type: Construction Manager General Contractor

- **Timeline**

- Award Date: October 31, 2024
- Construction Started: February 27, 2025

Lower Brush Creek Rd



1,127 Pipes Damaged
1,085 Pipes Completed
4% Remaining

843 Bridges Damaged
427 Bridges complete
13 Permanently Replaced

NC 81





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Next Steps and Wrap Up

Next meeting: June 9, 10 am to 12 pm
Virtual



WNC Recovery

POWERED BY GROWNC